

BATTLETECH

HISTORICAL REUNIFICATION WAR



ONE SPECIES, ONE REALM

In 2570, the six Great Houses of the Inner Sphere united to create the Star League, promising to bring an end to the generations of warfare that engulfed the worlds mankind now called home. Shortly thereafter, to seal their alliance, they turned against the various independent realms of the Periphery. Over the next twenty years, the so-called Reunification War would rage, claiming more lives than the savagery of the Age of War before it, all to realize House Cameron's dream of a united humanity—at any cost.

Historical: Reunification War describes the first grand military campaign of the newborn Star League against the collected realms of the Periphery. Covering each of the four major campaign theaters in detail, this book provides a hard look at the formative years of the first Star League, and the fateful decisions that led them to usher in a new Golden Age for mankind by unleashing their armies against its most far-flung worlds.



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REUNIFICATION



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Dedicated to the memory of Doug Chaffee.

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BATTLEFIELDS

Wars are not won on the field of combat. Battles are, but those are only ever part of the story. To win a war you need to break the enemy's resolve, to force him to accept defeat. Otherwise the war will never end. Too many conflicts persist because battles are won but the hearts and minds of the people are not. Winning involves every level of society, from the generals and politicians to the shop girls and street cleaners. The infantryman with his rifle may be the blunt weapon used to win this fight, but he is neither the instigator nor the concluser.

—Anastasius Focht, 3058

DRESSED TO KILL

Charon City
Cerberus
Outworlds Alliance
2 April 2583

"You're good." Delacour released his grip on the armor plates of the chestpiece and took a step back, opening his arms wide and bracing his legs, inviting a return favor.

Phillips reached up and grasped his squadmate's armor and gave it a sharp yank. A frown crossed his face and he tugged at a shoulder strap before jerking the chest armor again. He grunted then punched his companion's chest, his armored gloves and the chest plating clattering. "Solid," he said simply. He wasn't one to bandy words, but three years into the campaign after Dieu knew how many worlds Delacour regarded the large stoic man as a brother. All of the squad were close—relying on each other in combat forged that bond of comradeship—but Delacour and Phillips had a particular kinship. They were chalk and cheese—the short, slight New Avalonian and the giant from Dieron— but the effectiveness of their partnership was unquestionable.

"Okay kiddies, sixty seconds," Sergeant Kohler chivvied them on. The troopers felt the floor shift as their transport changed heading and decelerated. Some reached out for handholds and restraints but Phillips and Delacour took the maneuver in stride; they'd lost count of the number of combat drops they'd made. Each readied their weapons and checked ammo feeds, Phillips with the squad SRM-pack and an assault rifle, Delacour a set of rangefinding/designating optics as well as his rifle.

"Thirty seconds. Take hold." Even the diehards grabbed at the supports but the veterans did so nonchalantly, the other hand cradling their weapons. You could spot the rookies—either still seated or else hanging on for dear life with both hands. "Fifteen. Ten. Five."

Gravity shifted suddenly and each felt their weight double. There were grunts and curses, but also some hollering and laughter. There was a thump and a jolt as the transport kissed the landing zone. The exit ramp dropped.

"Move it!" Kohler yelled, as the troopers charged out of the transport. She waved them onward, pushing a few of the more hesitant clear of the vehicle. The ex-LCAF NCO was the last out of the VTOL, turning to run alongside the transpex canopy of the cockpit and giving the crew the thumbs up. The engine revs increased and the squat vehicle hauled itself back into the sky, the sparks of hostile small-arms fire visible on the hull. The departure of their transport and its kin made clear the landing zone. It was a park, or had been—the ground had been churned up by combat vehicles and explosions—surrounded on two sides by housing, on a third by an industrial complex and with a river forming the southern boundary.

The sergeant sword and Delacour glanced back to see Kohler adjusting the combat monocle attached to her helmet. "They set us down short. Corporal Delacour, get your squad onto the knoll." She gestured north-east towards the industrial complex. "And set up an OP. We need to know what's between us and Point Alpha."

Oh joy, thought Delacour. Another miss-drop. He grunted. They shouldn't call us the SLDF. We should be the SNAFU.

Delphi City
Canopus,
Magistracy of Canopus
2 May 2584

"I thought you said this bloody place was secure?" General Ian Marik growled through clenched teeth. Small arms fire ricocheted of the *Orion* as it marched down the boulevard.

"Just rats," Darley called. PeriphRats had become the derogatory slang among some of VII Corps for the Canopian opponents. Small, scuttling foes ... with a bite that could be deadly.

Ian scanned for heavier fire—man-pack missiles or worse—but there was none. Targeting overlays highlighted the multiple points from which fire originated; one in particular had a specific concentration. Ian tagged it and selected a target interlock circuit. The corner office of a high-rise building disappeared in an explosion of dust and debris as the BattleMech's Kali Yama Class 10 autocannon pulverized the structure. The incoming fire slackened. *Rats scurrying for cover.* The whole campaign had been like that—overwhelming firepower brought to bear against a tiny, almost invisible foe.

"Marion won't like that much," his XO warned, being unduly familiar with the Captain-General. Debris continued to rain down on the street.

"Hang my mother." *True, she won't like the collateral,* he thought. *But then she's not being shot at.* There were times he wished Captain-General Marion Marik, leader of the Free Worlds League and commander of the SLDF VII Corps, would heed the First Lord's call to suspend the Ares Conventions. Carrying out mop-up operations under their strictures was like fighting with both hands tied behind your back. "And get squads in here and here." He tagged several floors in the surrounding buildings. Marion couldn't object to infantry clearing the buildings room by room. The precious infrastructure would be undamaged—well, mostly—and the threat to the SLDF removed. In his peripheral vision he saw black-clad troopers detach themselves from the APCs that followed in the Mech's wake. He advanced the throttle a notch. "Let's keep on."

The squeal of armor plates, actuators and tank tracks were the only sound echoing in the ferrocrete canyons as the command lance advanced through the street, his firepower demonstration dissuading further attacks. It was almost too calm. At least when

they were shooting you knew where the threat was and adrenaline could do its work. Now it was just taut nerves as you waited for the next inevitable assault.

The *Orion* strode forward into the great plaza before the Magestrix's palace, flanked by Darley's *Griffin* and Ahmed's *Rifleman*. Kaushik's *Victor* brought up the rear. Ian walked straight to the grand staircase while his companions took up supporting positions. The procession of vehicles fanned out through the square, disgorging their passengers. Ian waited, scanning his surroundings while the foot soldiers moved through the buildings. Several squads moved into the palace but he continued to wait. One minute. Five. His radio crackled. "Objective secure. Prepare Eagle Two's detail."

He triggered parking mode on the 'Mech and pulled off his neurohelmet. He saw a platoon fanning out around his 'Mech's feet as he pulled a jumpsuit on over his shorts and cooling vest. An armored jacket went over the jumpsuit, then a light helmet. As a MechWarrior he felt overdressed, but he remembered the bruising he'd taken to his back on Eleusis when some hidden MAF sniper had taken the opportunity to take down an FWLM general. The armor had saved him then. Not that it would do him much good in the clash that would come next. He undogged the hatch and prepared to descend into the plaza.

La Vilette
Milvano
Rim Worlds Republic
9 September 2586

The metro doors whooshed open and they almost fell out, giggling. Mari and Sally were arm-in-arm and she followed them out, maintaining a faux-haughty expression. "Children ..." Alice burst out laughing and joined her arm with Mari's as they made their way to the exit. A bunch of airhead office girls on their way home from work. No one paid them any mind.

"*Papier*." The harsh voice broke her from her reverie. An armored trooper with the Steiner fist sigil on his chest below the lopsided Cameron Star had had moved to block her path, his left hand outstretched and his right cradling a wicked-looking rifle. Other commuters flowed past the SLDF soldier, some to be stopped by other soldiers but many passing straight out onto the concourse. "Papers."

She reached into her purse and withdrew the newly-issued documents, handing them to him. She couldn't see his eyes but she just knew they were focused on her, not the ID documents. She lowered her chin slightly and angled her eyes to look at him through her lashes. She smiled slightly. "Is everything okay?"

The trooper pretended study the papers for a few seconds then grunted. "*Ja, Fräulein*." He handed the papers back and made a dismissive gesture. The trio of girls simpered at the sorder then proceeded up the stairs. "Leaguer goons. Why do they always pick on you, Alice?" Mari asked.

"Because I'm just the farm-girl type they thought they were coming here to rescue." She straightened to her full height, a good eight centimeters taller than the other girls. "And I'm not a skinny waif like you two," she added primly. That was true enough; she had the complexion and curves of someone who didn't sit behind

a desk for a living. Many of the Spheroids had been shocked at Milvano, expecting to find some wild-west farming community and while such places existed, La Vilette was a thriving metropolis of almost a million people. "Besides, had he gotten fresh I'd have dazzled him with my—"

"Wits?" Sally interjected, feigning an innocent expression. Alice was what the local boys described as "pretty" while unconsciously holding up their hands and miming squeezing some yarrow fruit. It has caused more than one fight between her brothers and the swarm of cousins and age-kin on the farm.

"Exactly." She reached up and tucked a loose strand of copper hair behind her ear. That was another reason for their fascination; not many girls in La Vilette had hair like flame, and even in a prim bun like now it was distinctive.

"So, tonight?" Mari asked. "Silver's?"

"I'm going to Jon's," Sally replied. "He's taking me out somewhere nice." The other girls hooted mirthfully.

"I'll be there."

"Perhaps fritz-soldier boy will be too and we can let him get a proper eyeful," Alice declaimed, striking a pose. More laughter. "Well, this is me." She detached her arm from the other girls and hugged them, blowing air-kisses. "See you later, Mari."

She half-ran up the three flights of stairs to the apartment, keying the lock and throwing her purse onto the table. She triggered the shower, and while it warmed threw open her wardrobe, regarding the contents. *Vixen or victim?* she wondered. There was the saffron dress. *No, not until summer.* The black? Hard to go wrong with that, but perhaps a little too aggressive for what she wanted. She lifted out the blue. Oh yes, that would be perfect.

STALKING PREY

Charon City
Cerberus
Outworlds Alliance
4 April 2583

"You see the bastard?" Delacour spat from his position, hunkered down behind the remains of a ferrocrete wall, crouching on lumps of debris and machinery. Phillips and one of the greenies, Chu, were half a dozen meters away on the other side of the breach. The rookie was in a near-fetal crouch and hugging his rifle like his life depended on it. The giant calmly peeked around the wall with the camera-scope on his rifle. None of them looked at the body played out in the gap.

"Nada." Phillips continued to pan the weapon around, regarding the micro-screen mounted above the stock.

"Got to be in the fractioning tower. Greta was on the ground before we heard the shot." It was a cold analysis, but hard to fault. One moment the sergeant was directing the next move, the next she was on the floor. It was perhaps two seconds later that they heard the report, so at a ballpark the shooter was 700 meters away, and by implication a decent shot. Most of the low ground was a clutter of pipes and buildings so the industrial tower was the only candidate.

"I'm looking, I'm looking." The giant's stoic facade was cracking. He froze for a moment, regarding the display. "Got 'im. Second,

story just to the left of the red—"The weapon exploded, fragments of metal and plastic spalling in all directions. Phillips swore and Delacour saw blood striping his comrade's face where it hadn't been protected by his goggles. "The red pipe," he continued, spitting blood from where it was running into his lips. He reached into a belt pouch and drew out a dressing that he used to wipe off the thickest of the blood. Numerous pockmarks continued to ooze.

"There go your looks," Delacour deadpanned. "And you were oh-so-pretty."

Phillips snorted. "Try it yourself. Stick your Davvy head out and see if our friend over there blows it off."

"Fat chance." He grinned and hit a toggle on his comm. "This is Bravo-Nine-One. AP fire mission at reference twenty-two, nineteen." He cited the specific grid reference.

"BHQ roger. Firing."

Delacour counted under his breath. He'd reached twenty when there was a sound like ripping linen and a deep rumble. He mimicked his companion's actions, extending his weapon and its optics out beyond the wall, using the micro-display to aim without exposing his body. Unlike Phillips' dumb sight, his rifle mounted spotting optics and they didn't need to be quite so precise. Smoke rose from the ruins of machinery to the west of the tower. "Adjust left fifty, range plus fifteen." He pulled the weapon back.

"Fire mission away, two rounds self correcting."

Delacour counted again. At eighteen he peered round the wall again, imagining the panicked sniper trying to flee after the first round. There was a double-crump, the first round clipping the edge of the tower but the second was a direct hit. A massive fireball engulfed the structure as high explosives and petrochemicals consumed each other. Delacour had to blink to clear his vision and when he could see clearly only a stump of the tower remained, smoking furiously in the wake of the barrage. Delacour started to grin, then his eyes fell on Sergeant Kohler's body and his mouth turned into a scowl. More to add to the butcher's bill. Would it ever end?

Delphi City
Canopus,
Magistracy of Canopus
2 May 2584

Flanked by a squad of heavily armed and armored troopers, Ian pushed open the apartment doors. The woman lounged on a divan. *Lounged!* He bristled. *Doesn't she realize her situation?* "Magistrix Crystalla Centrella, Canopus is now under Star League jurisdiction and you are now my prison—"

Dressed in a thin white gown that made very clear what it wasn't quite concealing, the honey-colored woman smiled as she cut him off. "Given your reputation, my Lord, I'm looking forward to it."

Ian blinked. *Nervy minx.* "Your planet is, at this very moment, occupied by eighteen 'Mech regiments, four of them elite. I believe that's roughly the same number as your entire armed forces."

She flashed a condescending smile and him and waved away his veiled threat. "Well, it has been a little dull around here lately." She smoothed her gown as if to emphasize the type of entertainment she preferred.

His eyes narrowed. *This isn't how it was meant to go.* "Pursuant with SLDF Directive 97, all Magistracy government offices are here-

by closed and institutions suspended. All governmental functions will hereafter be directed from my command post."

That got a laugh. "Fine by me. I hate the day-to-day business. The union reps can be tedious. Watch out for Brendan Sai—he's the actors rep and as tedious as any diplomat." She put the back of her hand to her mouth as if to conceal what she said from all bar him. "Reminds me of Ian Cameron," she declaimed, *sotto voce*.

He resisted the impulse to draw his sidearm and threaten the too-pretty witch. Instead, he forced his voice to be calm. Mostly calm at least. "These apartments are hereby requisitioned as my headquarters so you—"

She cut him off. *Again.* "Then it seems we're going to be seeing a lot of each other from now on as I'm staying put. Shaw will have the guest quarters made up. Unless ..." her grin morphed into a leer as she looked him up and down. *Hell, she's half my age but was eying me like a lamb to the slaughter.*

"As the military governor of Canopus IV, I expect you to obey my commands without question, not bandy words." If anything Crystalla's grin broadened.

"Anything you say, governor. Coffee? Tea? Or would you prefer me, governor? I can provide whips and handcuffs if you think I need punishing." She batted her eyelashes.

Ian swallowed hard. *God, this is going to be a long occupation.*

La Vilette
Milvano
Rim Worlds Republic
9 September 2586

Alice was lost in the music, swaying to the beat, her hands weaving an intricate ballet of their own above the flaming nimbus of her hair. Her eyes were almost closed, a dreamy expression on her face. It would be so easy to just drift, to forget all her worries and the terror of the war. She spun and shimmied, flowing with the intricate sounds. She'd lost track of Mari half an hour after getting here. She was no doubt spinning a web around some unsuspecting ox. Sometimes they went home together, almost as often apart. Either way, they were rarely alone.

The tempo switched as a new song started. The feeling of charged euphoria slipped away. She glanced around at the other dancers then decided she needed a drink. She pushed her way through the crowd to the bar, earning sharp stares from some and admiring glances from others. The barman looked harassed. "A McKinney and a water." She took another look at the crowd. Drink, dancing, debauchery—staples since the occupation began.

The barman returned a few moments later with two glasses and placed them in front of her. She offered her credstick but he waved her away and pointed to a figure two places to her right. "Gentleman paid."

Alice pushed past the intervening drunk to the indicated figure. Military, she guessed by his haircut, and a veteran by the tracery of fine scars on his face. Not young, either. Maybe thirty-five. He turned to look at her and she met his gaze, steely eyed. Not local either. Most of the RWA troops were off cowering in the hills. He didn't look like a Drac. An Elsie? "I hope you don't mind miss. You looked a tad thirsty." *Oh God,* Alice thought, taking in the precise clipped tones. *Davion.*

"You're a long way from home." She ran her gaze down his body—good trim for someone his age. "And no spurs. What happened, out looking for damsels to rescue?" Her tone was challenging but her eyes twinkled and she had the hint of a smile.

"Ah, you mistake me for one of those blue-bloods. No, I'm just a simple soldier." She raised an eyebrow. Not likely with that diction. She'd bet on NCO. "Looking for respite from the days travails." Make that an officer.

Alice sipped on her drink. "Well, Lancelot, that's the first time I've heard it described like that." She brought her chin down and smiled at him coquettishly. She held up the glass with its blue spirits; McKinney Water, the local *eau de vie*. "But plying a girl with drink? Not chivalrous." Her face was faux-severe.

"You mistake my intentions, miss ...?" He hesitated.

"Bridget," she lied smoothly. "Do I?"

"Indeed. A fellow likes to soak in the atmosphere and admire the local ... culture." Somehow he kept a straight face. Alice didn't.

"Does this prince charming routine usually work?" She asked, laughing.

"Fairly often." Honesty? Wow, that was an unusual trait for this place.

"The devil was a charming man." She gently swayed from side to side, the glass clutched in both hands and her lower lip imprisoned by her teeth.

"It's said he could dance, too."

Alice set down the glasses and delicately extended her right hand. He took it. "Show me.

COUP DE GRACE

Charon City
Cerberus
Outworlds Alliance
5 April 2583

The concussion threatened to drive Delacour to the pavement but the newly-minted sergeant pressed on, scrambling across the rubble-strewn street. The SLDF *Griffin* continued its barrage of fire into the Alliance *Thunderbolt*, neither war machine taking much notice of the gnat-like troopers dashing around their feet, engaged in their own petty war. Delacour fired from the hip and an Alliance trooper went down, the enemy's own rounds whip-snapping past the sergeant's head. "Baker, on me," he screamed.

He slid in to the lee of a rubble pile like a runner at a base, disappearing momentarily in a cloud of dust. The rest of Baker Squad slid in a few moments later, gasping for breath and trying to clear their goggles. "Sanchez, you and Sato get some fire on that nest." He pinged a position on the map displayed on their goggles. "They'll murder us unless we keep their heads down." He ducked involuntarily as more 'Mech ordnance passed low overhead. "And we need to get that bastard out of the way, to even the odds." He left it hanging as to which of the 'Mechs he meant—there was no love lost between the grunts and the 'Mechjocks. He clicked his mic. "Phillips. Feeling lucky?"

"You want me to stick my head into that ant nest?" Despite his size and slow speech, the brevet-corporal was quick on the uptake.

"Yeah, just piss him off. Harsh language should do, though I'm sure Vera would like a dance. She hot to trot?" He grinned and peeked over the rubble; the *T-bolt* was about thirty meters away, advancing slowly as the *Griffin* gave ground.

"She's good. Say when."

"Malone, Richter. You know what to do."

"Sarge!" the leaders of Delta and Charlie griped. He knew they'd be prepping, pulling satchels from around their necks.

"Phillips, on three." He counted down.

Twin missiles lanced out from a position to the right of the Alliance 'Mech, Phillips' "Vera" barking her disapproval. It was an odd habit, naming your weapons, but Delacour wasn't complaining. The *T-bolt* paid the incoming warheads no heed; infantry SRMs were little more than a nuisance. The rounds detonated five meters short of the target, spraying fire and shrapnel, coating the 'Mech with burning gel. That got the pilot's attention. The heavy machine turned toward its tormentor.

"Now," Delacour screamed at Richter and Malone. Peeking over the rise, he saw them charging toward the hulking machine. While Baker and the other squads laid down covering fire. Malone's team was there first, hurling their charges at the Alliance machine's vulnerable knee joints. Richter's squad joined in a second later, angling their charges at the other knee. They dropped away, pulling at the arming cords and sprinting clear. Two soldiers fell, cut down by the burst of small-arms fire but the rest ducked back into cover. There was a puff of smoke and a dull thump. The *Thunderbolt* wobbled. Not dead, far from it, but it would be limping, easy prey for the SLDF. He glanced up at the *Griffin* that had resumed its bombardment of the crippled 'Mech. *Typical*, he thought. *Not a jot of thanks*

"Okay, kiddies, no rest for the wicked. Form up on Baker. We have some buildings to clear."

Delphi City
Canopus,
Magistracy of Canopus
Canopus, 15 Jan 2586

"Mother wants additional troops. She sends detailed orders," Ian muttered to the lithe figure nestled in the crook of his arm, browsing communiqués on his data-slate, his feet up on the mahogany coffee table.

"Not this again." A small hand punched him in the ribs playfully. "Hang your mother. Next she'll be telling you not to share a bed with me. You're old enough to make decisions for yourself." *Old enough to be your grandfather, too.* Not that that had bothered either of them. "I told her so when she presumed to intervene back in '84." That had been a sight to see, Ian recalled. The titan-like Marion Marik facing off against doll-like Crystalla Centrella. Both were formidable in their own way and the clash was an honorable draw. Crystalla wouldn't interfere with the SLDF occupation, but neither would she be bullied into giving up her "toy" as she occasionally called him. At times Ian felt more like a prize bull being haggled over by farmers than the military governor.

"Well, it seems questions have been asked in Parliament." He refrained from adding, *as some of the conservatives don't like the idea of me literally sleeping with the enemy.*

Crystalla huffed and glared into his eyes. "I'm not your enemy." She pouted. "And this is ... a diplomatic negotiation."

Ian set down the slate and took off his glasses. "A very pleasant one." He leaned forward to kiss her and her lips rose to meet his.

There was an insistent knock at the door and they both burst out laughing. "Yes?" he called?

The door opened and Cyrus Shaw, the Magestrix's majordomo, entered. The small man's eyes took in the scene didn't react. Nothing ever fazed Shaw, though his timing could have been better. "A message for you, sir, from Atreus."

"Just push it to my slate. I'll deal with it later." An edge of irritation crept into Ian's voice.

"I cannot, sir. It is a certified message to be delivered by courier." The porcine man's eyebrows rose a fraction. That was a turn up for the books.

Ian grunted. "Better show him in then, Cyrus." Damn nose parliamentarians.

The majordomo returned as Ian stood and straightened his uniform, a gawky youth following in Shaw's wake. The newcomer froze on entering the chamber, not so much at being ushered into the presence of General Marik but rather at the languid figure of the Magestrix lounging on the settee. Ian reached out his hand but the stunned boy was slow to react. A click of his fingers brought his eyes and attention back to the job at hand.

"A message from Parliament, sir. Your eyes only?" A trembling hand held out a sealed tube with a biometric lock.

Ian pressed his thumb to the key panel and there was a click as the cylinder cap unsealed. He drew out the sheet of paper within and handed the tube back to the boy. "Thank you. Please wait outside in case I need to send a reply." The courier and Shaw withdrew, the boy almost scurrying.

"You're wicked," he accused the Canopian.

"Just the way you like me." She stretched like a cat. "And? What is so important they had it hand-delivered?"

Ian turned over the paper and digested its contents. He swore loudly, then again, kicking at the coffee table.

"That doesn't sound good ..."

"I've been recalled to Atreus." He thrust the paper at the curious woman. "It seems it's no longer a tolerable risk to have all of the senior family in a war zone." He gestured at the opulent chamber and a smirk tugged at Crystalla's lips. Uncle Regi was dead on the Taurian front a year ago and mother, Aunt Shannon and Ian himself had all been the target of potshots, but a recall? Hardly a new situation and a recall was well out of proportion to the threat.

"You know what that means?" Crystalla said, leering at him. "I'll have to throw you a lavish going-away party in Dandavella and really give you something to remember."

La Vilette

Milvano

Rim Worlds Republic

Milvano, 10 September 2586

"Not here." Her breath was ragged. Part of Alice didn't care, wanted to carry on, but a more rational part prodded her to move. The wall against which she was pressed was rough, sharp points

pressing through the thin blue dress and competing with the hands that roamed her body to stimulate her nerve endings. "Tom, not here," she whispered, as his lips caressed her jaw and neck.

He stopped and pulled back, his eyes only six inches from hers. His lips tightened and there was a hint of accusation. That she was teasing. Her right hand slid up and cupped his face, fingers lightly tracing his scars. "Not *here*." His eyes widened at the emphasis and she grinned, leaning forward to kiss him. "I have somewhere much better."

She slipped from his grasp and brushed down the dress, making sure the hem and neckline were back in place. She extended a hand. "Come on, it's not far."

A few minutes later and they were outside a glass and aluminum building. "You live here?" he asked.

"Live? No. Work, on the other hand ..." She grinned mischievously as she fished a set of keys from her purse. He regarded her levelly, both eyebrows raised. "You mean you never thought about, you know. The boss's desk?" The lock clicked and she pushed open the door.

"Oh," he said comprehendingly. *Was she too forward for his tastes? No matter.* She grasped his hand again and led him inside and through narrow corridors and up flights of stairs. "Nice place," he said appreciatively, reaching for her after they'd entered a spacious wood-paneled office. She dodged his grasp, giggling, and circled around the desk. He started to follow her but she gestured for him to stop and pulled open a drawer.

"Mikkel always keeps a stash here." She extracted a pair of glasses and a clear bottle filled with blue liquid. She decanted some of the liquid into each glass and handed one to the soldier. "To new friendships." She downed the liquid and he did likewise. When he reached for her again she didn't resist. He tried to kiss her, but she dodged his lips.

"The office is sound-proofed," she breathed hoarsely. Tom pulled his face a way and grinned at her. "And your McKinnys was drugged."

The shock hadn't begun to register on his face when he screamed in pain. The compact laser pistol she'd palmed from the drawer drilled a hole through his thigh. She pushed him away and he collapsed to the floor.

"I thought you were about to treat us to a show, Gallenne," a hulking figure said, pushing into the room.

"You're a pig, Anderson."

"But not a whore." The big man kicked the writhing trooper in the ribs.

"Alice, Mathieu, not in front of our guest." A gaunt figure followed in the brute's wake.

"He's not gonna care."

The fallen man spat a curse, the words unintelligible through pain and drugs. "Aren't you going to introduce us, Alice?"

"Mikkel, this is Major Thomas Hamilton. Tom, dearest," she forced a smile as he spat at her. "This is Mikkel Jespersen of the RRA."

He froze. "You're gonna kill me?" the words were slurred but comprehensible.

The gaunt man merely smiled. "My dear boy, no." From inside his jacket he pulled a small package which he unzipped to reveal a series of glinting knives. "Not for a long while yet."

INTRODUCTION

Devlin,

When David asked me to put this piece together I wondered why detailing a conflict half a millennia ago was so important to you. Surely, the battles were no more relevant to the modern era than the Battle of Naseby was to the NATO troopers thrown into the meatgrinder of the Second Soviet Civil War. Despite a personal family connection to the conflict, the history of the war was little more than a sidenote to both my Steiner and Davion heritage. I'm sure Isis would say much the same about the legacy of her Marik bloodline. Yet as I dug deeper into the conflicts, the moral of the war—and of Kerensky's campaigns in the Periphery and against Terra that took place two-centuries later—became clear.

George Santayana said "those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." In the aftermath of the Jihad that quote is particularly appropriate; there are hawks in the Senate calling for the full reestablishment of the Star League, with the Republic cast as a reborn Terran Hegemony. We must remind them of the price in blood paid to build the first Star League. The loss of life in the Reunification War was staggering and the cost immense, yet the hawks would have us fight not only the Periphery realms but also the Great Houses. Shattered by the Jihad they may be, but the Successor States and Clans wouldn't stand for any attempt to impose our will on them by force.

By settling for limited gains—the borders of the old Hegemony—we maintain the moral high ground and establish a buffer zone for Terra. The people—even in the Successor States—are grateful that the Jihad is finally at an end but now that the threat of the Blakists has been removed we can expect a resurgence of the self-centered attitudes that brought down both Star Leagues. We *can* make a new future, one of peace and prosperity, but only if we learn from the past and avoid backsliding into factionalism and greed.

—Paladin Victor Steiner-Davion, Santa Fe, Terra, 3085.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Historical: Reunification War is the latest in a series of products that explore the major yet little-detailed conflicts in the past of the *BattleTech* Universe. In this case, we cover the conflict between the nascent Star League and its neighbors in the Periphery. As with the other books in the *Historicals* series, *Reunification War* is part sourcebook and part rulebook, detailing the background and major events of the conflict as well as providing tools relevant to players who wish to recreate battles of the historical era in question.

Battlefields, the introductory story, showcases the Reunification War from the perspective of different participants, ranging from generals to infantry and even simple office girls. The first full chapter is *The Birth of the Star League* and deals with the origins of House

Cameron and the Periphery realms as well as the politics around the formation of the Star League. *The League's Might* details the structure and practices of the SLDF as well as providing military overviews of all the belligerents. *Personalities* details the political and military notables involved in each of the campaigns, either directly or in a supporting role. The next four chapters detail the Reunification War itself: *The Taurian Front* details the SLDF/AFFS operation against the Taurian Concordat while *The Outworlds Front* details the offensive against Grigori Avellar's Outworlds Alliance. *The Magistracy Front* covers the SLDF/FWLM campaign against the Magistracy as well as the MAF's counterattacks and the attacks by Capellan rebels known as the Freebooter's War. The fourth chapter, *The Rim Worlds Front*, shows how the Star League-aligned Republic collapsed into chaos and the SLDF's efforts to restore order. *Aftermath* provides information on what happened to the Periphery nations after their incorporation into the Star League as territorial states, as well as the impact their incorporation had on the six founder-members.

Deployment Tables are included for the SLDF forces and their Periphery opponents while the *Rules Annex* includes a number of items designed to aid play in the early Star League era. *Creating Reunification War Scenarios* provides all the information needed to create scenarios set within this time, including Random Assignment Tables for the combatants. *Advanced & Prototype Components* details the weapon systems developed by the Hegemony and Star League in the years immediately preceding the Reunification War and during the conflict, including availability to other powers. *Reunification War Militaries* provides unique talents and abilities for key units of the conflict while *Running Notable Personalities* likewise provides rules on incorporating the key Reunification War leaders into games. *Weapons of Mass Destruction* provides details and rules on the use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in Reunification War campaigns while *Irregular Troops* provides game mechanics for militias and mobs. *New Combat Units* provides game states for several iconic units used in the Reunification War as well as refits to several existing designs.

A NOTE ON SOURCES:

Select details of the Reunification War have appeared in numerous volumes: *House Steiner*, *House Marik*, *House Davion* (and their modern *Handbook* equivalents), the *Star League Sourcebook* and *Periphery*, 1st and 2nd Editions (and *Handbook: Major Periphery States*). The conflict serves as a backdrop for the first half of the *BattleCorps* novel *Fall From Grace* as well as the short story *The Theseus Knot* by David McCulloch. *Technical Readout: 3075* contains details of several Reunification War-era 'Mechs and *Jihad Secrets: The Blake Documents* details the "primitive" *Dervish* of the era, and the PDF-exclusive *Primitives* series of *Technical Readouts* have details of numerous Age of War-era designs still in use during this era. The PDF supplement, *Era Digest: Age of War*, provides additional information on the years of conflict prior to the formation of the Star League, most notably the Ares Conventions.



THE BIRTH OF THE STAR LEAGUE

FOUNDATIONS

A common thread binds the major Periphery states—all were founded by those who fled the troubles of the Inner Sphere, whether military, political or personal, and sought to build a new home for themselves in distant space. Dozens of worlds were settled, but most were isolated colonies, many of whom faltered in the harsh existence among stars over 500 light years from Terra. In four cases, however, the peoples prospered.

Taurian Concordat

The first of these was the Taurian Concordat, founded by Samantha Calderon. Calderon had left the Inner Sphere after being exposed to Terran Alliance brutality during the Outer Reaches rebellion. In 2250, after organizing an expedition of twenty-five ships and over 2,000 volunteers on her native Aix-la-Chappelle, she departed for terra incognita. The voyage took almost two years, but the flotilla reached the outskirts of the Hyades Cluster. Exploring the Cluster cost the expedition two vessels and more than 500 colonists, including Calderon's husband, Victor Taurens, but what they found was amazing: There were eight star systems linked together in an elaborate dance by interlocking gravitational fields, around which dozens of worlds orbited (eventually thirty-seven were identified, some in complex orbits around multiple stars). On 23 January 2253, Calderon landed on the world she dubbed Taurus after her late husband and the Calderon Protectorate came into being.

Though Samantha was killed in an accident in 2268 the Protectorate endured. Over the next eighty years it expanded to encompass numerous worlds in the Hyades and environs. Samantha's successor, her son Timothy, laid the groundwork for the new nation, building a society where social equality and "the common good" were central. Timothy demanded his fellow citizens take an active part in their citizenship, or else be denied it.

Ironically, it was trouble in the Inner Sphere that prompted the birthing of the Taurian Concordat proper. During the short reign of Sandra Calderon, Timothy's daughter, the expanding Protectorate began to encounter waves of refugees from the newly formed Federated Suns. These people were welcomed with open arms, and by the time Sandra's son Richard came to power in 2335 a new order was needed. Announcing

To our modern sensibilities the Star League was a golden age—two hundred years in which humanity worked together for the common good. Compared to the dark years of the Age of War that preceded it, such beliefs have a basis in fact but there is a fair degree of rose-tinted spectacles. Standards of living were higher than before (or since), but political ambition was central to the workings of the League and armed might was its background. Nowhere is the mixing of these two aspects—and the damage they could cause—more apparent than in the founding years of the alliance, the Reunification War.

A CONTINUATION OF POLITICS

Empire building has long been a staple of the human condition, playing a central role in the advancement of science and technology. Some empires have prospered and survived a thousand years, while others collapsed as soon as the charismatic leader at their heart died. Rome dominated the Mediterranean region for over 500 years, a republic that became an empire 2,000 years before man journeyed into space, and was one of the technological powerhouses of its age. Conflict between empires was a driving force for social and technological change, the desire for victory bringing new forms of weaponry and warriors. Improved ship designs allowed European colonists to establish footholds in North and South America, eventually displacing many of the native inhabitants, with scientific and engineering skill drastically enhancing navigation and performance. As a consequence the scope and scale of wars grew.

In 2011 the assassination of Oleg Tikonov plunged the USSR into civil war. With Europe threatened by the conflict, the Cold War became hot and NATO intervened to protect both itself and the people of shattered Russia. The conflict that ensued, variously called the Second Soviet Civil War or World War III, lasted until 2014.

On the back of this conflict, in which the Western Orbital Defense Network (WoDEN) played a vital part, the Western Alliance and the Alliance Space Command succeeded NATO, though President Giuliani resisted committing America to the alliance until almost a year after its founding. Under their aegis the first permanent lunar base was established in 2016, followed by a manned mission to Mars in 2017. Both missions used extant chemical rocket technologies little different from the latter part of the Twentieth Century to achieve their goals, but in 2027 a new era began when the Alliance Ship *Columbia* launched from Crippen Station. Equipped with a fusion drive, it was able to journey to the other worlds of the Terran system in days rather than months or years. Mankind quickly established footholds throughout the Terran system, with the first permanent Mars base established in 2035 and the first Venusian balloon station two years later. Commercial operations soon followed, first in Crippen's industrial modules and later in the asteroid belts.

The existence of extra-solar planets had been suspected for centuries but was not proven until 1988. Over the next few decades increasingly refined techniques allowed the discovery of smaller and more distant worlds. Distant observations were limited in what they could glean about these systems and so, in the late 2020s, the Magellan series of deep space probe missions were launched to several nearby stars, some using nuclear pulse propulsion and others using Bussard ramjets. By 2050 the first of these probes had reached their targets and were beaming back detailed scientific information on the systems and worlds they found. The hook was baited, but it would be another half-century before mankind would finally visit these new worlds.

The Western Alliance gave way to the Terran Alliance in the late Twenty-first Century and, building on the work of Thomas Kearny and Takayoshi Fuchida, the Alliance instigated the Deimos Project. This team developed the first faster-than-light spacecraft, the TAS *Pathfinder*. On 5 December 2108, *Pathfinder* made its maiden voyage, making the instantaneous translation from a stable point above Sol to the equivalent point above Tau Ceti. On the system's fourth world they found a veritable Eden that they named New Earth.

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Within two years a permanent base was established, with mass colonization of New Earth (and other systems) commencing in 2116, using transports patterned after the *Pathfinder*.

Within half a century there were more than 100 off-world colonies (the Grand Survey of 2172 listed 112) and a century after *Pathfinder's* first voyage that figure was closer to four hundred (the Second Grand Survey of 2199 listed 395, the Third Survey in 2216 had 461 and the Fourth Survey in 2235 totaled 619). At first these daughter worlds were obedient to the whims of the Terran Alliance, dependent as they were for water, supplies and technology, but the establishment of the Ryan Ice Cartel in 2177 gave the colonies a measure of independence. The decades that followed saw relations between Terra and its colonies become increasingly strained.

By the early Twenty-third Century, Terra's government was weak and factionalized. The declaration of independence by Denebola in 2236 (followed by numerous other colonies) prompted the ruling Expansionist faction to send the Alliance Colonial Marines to regain control. The military operation against the Outer Reaches Rebellion failed and the opposition Liberals swept to power. Believing in individual freedoms over all else, the new Terran authority immediately issued the Demarcation Declaration and granted independence to all colonies more than thirty light-years from Terra, irrespective of their desires. The Alliance intensified colonization and terraforming efforts on Mars and Venus, making new Earths in the Terran system. Cast adrift, many of the former colonies failed and news of these failures triggered further political instability and a wave of emigration referred to as the First Great Exodus. In the early Twenty-fourth Century, Terra collapsed into *de facto* civil war. The Alliance Global Militia largely remained aloof.

On 2 June 2315 Admiral James McKenna used the weapons of the *TAS Dreadnought* to destroy several islets near Scotland and Australia, shocking the combatants into ceasing hostilities. In the broadcast that followed he called on the factions to end their strife, and made clear his willingness to use the Alliance Global Militia (AGM) to force a peace on all factions. With the fighting stopped, he put forward the Hegemony charter, establishing a strong framework for Terra's government and its relationship with its colonies. Populist history has McKenna declaring himself leader of this new Terran Hegemony, but in truth he was elected to this role in February 2316, the post being "until death or voluntary retirement."

The Hegemony was surrounded on all sides by independent worlds, some of which were banding together into the forerunners of the modern states. The Free Worlds League had come into existence in 2271 and the Federated Suns and Draconis Combine would emerge within years of McKenna's rise to power, in 2317 and 2319 respectively. The Lyran Commonwealth followed in 2341 and the Capellan Confederation in 2366. The internecine conflict between these new states (and their sundry forerunners) prompted additional waves of colonization, small bands striking out on their own and founding colonies, and in some cases nations: the Taurian Concordat emerged in 2335 (though it had existed as the Calderon Protectorship for 80 years), the Rim Worlds Republic in 2250, the Outworlds Alliance in 2417 and the Magistracy of Canopus in 2531.

Political and military clashes with the nearer neighbors were inevitable, but the Hegemony secured its position through technological innovation, including the development of the BattleMech in 2439. Perhaps the greatest change of the era, defining the Age of War itself, was the political agreement known as the Ares Conventions.

Agreed to in 2412, the Ares Conventions came about in response to the Tintavel Massacre and sought to place legal and moral limitations on the use of warfare to settle disputes between powers. For almost fifteen years, the conflicts of the Age of War had raged unchecked, but Tintavel had sent shockwaves of horror around the Inner Sphere. The Conventions limited where and when battles could be fought in an effort to minimize collateral damage. However, in ritualizing warfare the Ares Conventions legitimized it as a means of dealing with disputes, something humanity has yet (despite occasionally abrogating the Conventions) to escape. In effect, the Conventions turned Von Clausewitz's assertion that "war is the continuation of politics by other means" into hard reality. The next century and half would see near-continuous conflict.

plans for a loose defensive association with the same socially egalitarian principles as the Protectorate, Richard spoke eloquently to the colonists, both in the six Hyades colonies and the twelve external worlds. Each would have free choice in joining the association and no stigma would be attached to those who did not, but as with Protectorate social policy if you did not contribute to the common good, the commons would not aid you. Only one world declined and, on 19 December 2335, the Taurian Concordat was born.

Later years saw the Concordat clash with both the Capellan Confederation and the Federated Suns. It was during this era that the Federated Suns became the Concordat's bugbear, with Richard Calderon convinced that Davion would turn and attack them (the Federated Suns was, in fact, more concerned with the nascent Capellan Confederation). Relations with the Confederation blew hot and cold—at some points bloody clashes, most notably during Ariana's War (2520-2527) when Kalvin Liao executed his wife, Ariana Calderon. At other times the two nations teetered on the edge of formal alliance. Through the Age of War the Concordat prospered, with many of their policies adopted by their neighbors.

Rim Worlds Republic

Hector Rowe was a sergeant in the Alexandria Militia and fought against the Alliance in the Outer Reaches Rebellion. Originally a classics student, he was drafted like many civilians to defend their homelands in the rebellion. Rowe struggled to reintegrate with civilian life after the fighting ended and became involved with politics. The society he founded metamorphosed into a paramilitary force. A hatred of the Terran Alliance was central to Rowe's outlook and when, in 2244, he learned of an Alliance unit stranded on Lucianca, trouble was inevitable. Leading his paramilitaries, Rowe hijacked several JumpShips and assaulted the Alliance troops.

The Lucianca Massacre was among the most brutal actions of the era, with Rowe's men executing the 350 Alliance "war criminals" in terrible manners. When one of the hijacked JumpShips escaped with news of the massacre, Rowe knew he needed to escape and, after stripping the garrison, headed into deep space. Taking refuge in the Dark Nebula, Rowe's force explored the surrounding worlds and on 8 September 2250 settled the world dubbed Apollo, proclaiming it the capital of the Rim Worlds Republic.

Rowe modeled society in the Republic on classical Greece, establishing a caste-based society in which

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END OF AN AGE, DAWN OF AN EMPIRE

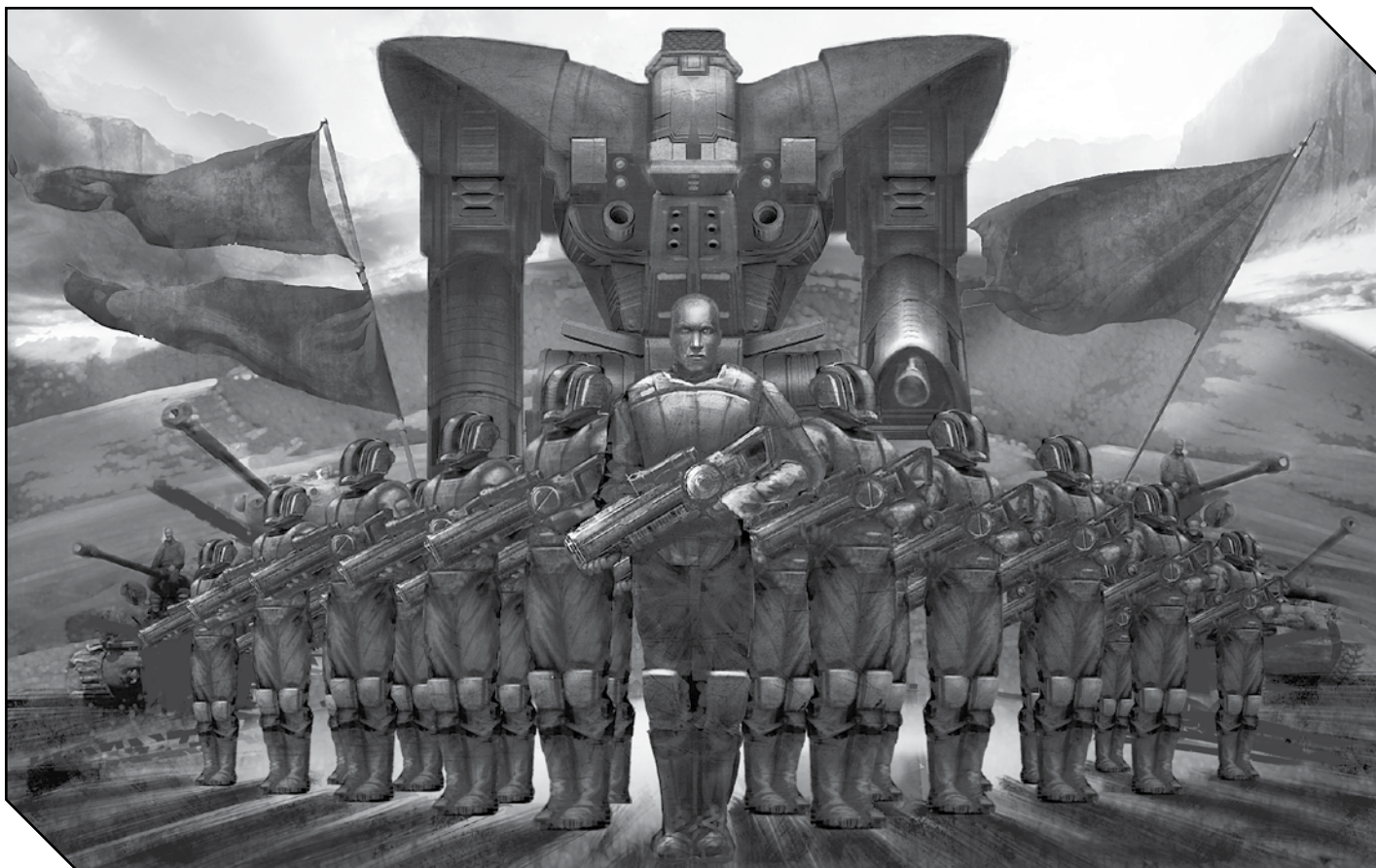
While the end of the Age of War is commonly attributed to Ian Cameron, it was Deborah Cameron who paved the way by advancing the Hegemony as mediators in the Second Andurien War between the Free Worlds League and the Capellan Confederation, at the start of her Aggressive Peacemaking doctrine. Though only lasting two decades, that doctrine showed that dispute resolution need not be along the barrel of a gun, something Ian would utilize constantly in the early years of his reign, though his rise to power was not without incident or controversy.

In 2542 Joseph Cameron had succeeded his mother Deborah after a career in the Terran Marines and the Department of Foreign Relations, including a stint as ambassador to the Lyran Commonwealth. A decorated veteran who bore the physical scars of his service, his decision to continue his mother's policies caused waves of resentment in the Hegemony Armed Forces (HAF), particularly among the so-called Warrior Cabals. In one of the great intelligence failures of the Age of War, the Hegemony Central Intelligence Bureau (HCIB) dismissed this growing dissatisfaction and continued to focus its attention on the Capellan Confederation. In the early hours of 21 September, Marine Captain Henry Green, a radical cabalist, albeit one who had never seen action, shot the

Director-General as he exited his limousine. From 270 meters, a qualified marine shouldn't have missed his target but Green's first shot went wide. His second, however, caught the Director-General in the upper torso. Joseph died six days later and the Hegemony teetered on the brink of chaos.

Blaming itself for the disaster, the HCIB launched a witch-hunt against the cabals within the HAF, unmasking the largest within a few days. The cabals were themselves shocked that one of their own had stooped to violence, but found themselves in a difficult position. Many backpedaled and distanced themselves from Green, advancing themselves as loyal members of the Hegemony.

Into this chaos stepped Ian Cameron, Joseph's younger brother who, realizing the fragility of the situation, declared himself the new Director-General and moved to secure the reins of power. Though decried by some as a blatant power grab, for the most part Ian's move was accepted as a necessary evil. However, some disgruntled cabalists chose to use his unconventional (and in many regards unconstitutional) accession as a pretext for a coup. The Fifty-first Dragoons, the Green Devils, left their barracks late on the evening of 29 September, quickly moving to seize key buildings in Geneva. Not yet moved into his official residence, the new Director-General escaped the coup attempt and took steps to ensure his control over the HAF. He required an oath of loyalty to the



Camerons and the Hegemony from all troops. Most units complied, and Ian ordered loyalist troops to isolate Geneva. Within ten days the siege was over, but not before Loyalist troops had been forced to intervene to protect civilians from feuding rebels. It would be another month before the last pockets of rebellion were dealt with, and Cameron soon found himself walking a fine line in his treatment of the rebels. He recognized that the sidelining of the HAF was counterproductive, but rebellion could not be tolerated. The sentences imposed on the rebel leadership were severe but fair—a number were executed and the remainder imprisoned—but the HAF as a whole was spared. Suspect commanders and troopers found themselves retired in favor of Cameron appointees. The Director-General bolstered the HAF's budget, with particular emphasis on technological advances, but also expanded the HCIB, adding the Department of Military Investigations to ensure the loyalty of the armed forces.

UNITING THE HOUSES

It was during these early years of his reign that Ian dreamt of restoring Terra to its prominence as the home of humanity. Alongside his revitalization of the HAF he expanded the Department of Foreign Relations with a view toward building political and economic bridges to the neighboring states. The first reference to this "Star League" appears in his private journals in 2553, but it is clear from his comments that he expected the task to take the rest of his life to complete.

The mid-2550s saw little in the way of hostilities, with trade becoming the principal interaction between nations. Free trade zones sprang up along borders and it seemed everyone stood to profit. Many wondered, though, how long peace and prosperity could last without formal structures?

In 2551 hostilities resumed between the Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League. The Third Andurien War threatened peace everywhere, and in 2556 the Director-General intervened to negotiate a settlement between the feuding states. The Andurien Peace Treaty of 2556 is commonly acknowledged as the end-date for the Age of War but it is often overlooked in favor of the Treaty of Geneva agreed in parallel. While the Andurien Peace Treaty ended the political and military clashes over Andurien, formalizing the deal between the Confederation and the Free Worlds with the Hegemony as combined witness and arbiter, the Treaty of Geneva was signed by all three powers. Cameron hadn't wanted to reveal the details of the Treaty of Geneva to the public but its scope was so large that it proved impossible to keep secret.

Similar to the Treaty of Rome that bound European economies together in the Twentieth Century and the Berlin Accords that founded the Western Alliance, the Treaty of Geneva committed the Hegemony, Free Worlds League and Confederation to a political and economic partnership. He found in Albert Marik, the diminutive captain-general of the Free Worlds, an active partner in the quest to unify humanity. Marik's willingness to concede Andurien to the Confederation had opened the door for the second treaty, convincing the chancellor to join their cause. The Capellan and Free Worlds economies surged at the prospect of an alliance with the Hegemony and the prospect of an unassailable tripartite alliance gave the other states cause for concern.

Though it wouldn't become clear for years, this pressure was a deliberate policy on the part of Cameron and Marik, who saw it as a great bargaining chip in their efforts to draw the other states into the Star League. Though never stated explicitly, the economic and military disadvantages of staying outside the union were immense. No state could afford to do so and risk the being marginalized.

those with technical or scientific skills were given great freedoms while a *helot* underclass was forced to undertake mundane work.

Under Rowe's heirs (his son Maxwell staged a coup in 2305) the Republic expanded, eventually clashing with the Tamar Pact. War loomed, but a political deal was reached between Maxwell Rowe and Kevin Tamar that gave both the Republic and the Pact a secure border, freeing them to focus their efforts elsewhere. Another coup saw Maxwell's daughter Arabella take the post of First Consul as well as the emancipation of the *helot* class, and both she and her son Michael Durant (the first First Consul not to gain office in a coup) continued to expand the Republic. By the early Twenty-fifth Century the Rim Worlds encompassed more than twenty-three star systems and had over twelve billion inhabitants. With the dawning of the Age of War, the Republic found itself in an interesting position, adjacent to the squabbling Lyrans Commonwealth and Draconis Combine. It became a neutral ground inside which both nations fought a bitter cold war while the Republican intelligence service, AsRoc, played both sides off against each other for significant profit.

The last Rowe-Durant Consul of the Republic was Lady Heather, Michael's sister, who maintained good relations with Terra and even, if rumor is to be believed, had an affair with the wife of the Hegemony ambassador (who was also an agent of the Terran Intelligence Services). The friendship between the two women was sufficiently strong that Heather granted the lady and her family joint Republic-Hegemony citizenship and appointed her friend as heir (Heather had no children of her own, nor any surviving siblings). When Heather died suddenly in 2463, a new dynasty took charge, that of Lady Terens Amaris, whose descendants would remain "loyal friends of the Cameron dynasty" until the tragedy of Christmas 2766.

Outworlds Alliance

In 2413, sickened by the carnage of the Age of War, Julius Avellar abandoned his career with the AFFS and sought refuge on Alpheratz, a minor colony just outside the Suns' borders. Despite the hard life on the new colony, Avellar was able to hone his sharp intellect and literary skills and published a series of polemics against the "military adventurism" of the Inner Sphere states. His reputation grew, as did his followers, and eventually the Omnis sect of Hsien in the Capellan Confederation uprooted their colony and relocated to Alpheratz. Eschewing technology and variously

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derided as Luddites or “space Amish” (though they were not Mennonites and in fact had no fixed religious beliefs), the Omnis swelled the Alpheratz population, which eventually spread to neighboring worlds. Avellar’s contemplative backwater became the capital of an interstellar nation, the Outworlds Alliance. Unlike the other Periphery realms the Alliance never sought expansion (certainly not by force of arms) but found itself inexorably growing as groups fled the troubles of the Age of War for a more peaceful and stable life.

Magistracy of Canopus

Like Avellar, Kossandra Centrella left the employ of a Great House military, the FWLM, but her flight was not prompted by philosophy. Rather, she was disgusted by the ineptitude and greed of her superiors. Abandoned on Highspire by panicked superiors, Centrella’s command fought their own way clear and back to the Free Worlds on a captured JumpShip, winning great accolades in the process. Despite being regarded as a national hero, she felt nothing but disdain for the FWLM and set about gathering likeminded individuals to her banner. Sent on a raid against House Davion, her “Black Brotherhood” severed ties with the Inner Sphere and fought their way to the Periphery, settling on Canopus where she established the Magistracy Free State in 2531.

Centrella immediately began to carve out a proto-state, using political negotiations and trade to lure worlds into her power. Styling herself Magestrix, her combination of charisma and determination brought great rewards and by 2548, seventeen years after landing on Canopus, she had incorporated thirty-six worlds into her Magistracy.

AUTHOR’S NOTE: WHERE ARE THE HOUSES?

You may be wondering what is happening with the Houses during this era and why they’re not being covered here. At best, only a cursory outline of events across ten powers would have been possible and so it was decided to focus on the Hegemony and provide sufficient information on the Periphery states to understand the events of the Reunification War. Full details of the Great Houses’ histories (and more complete versions of those of the Periphery nations) can be found in the relevant *Handbooks*. The PDF supplement, *Era Digest: Age of War*, provides additional information on the period prior to the founding of the Star League and the Reunification War.

Archon Craig Steiner of the Lyran Commonwealth had been Ian Cameron’s first target almost as soon as he came to power. Economic ties between the two powers were already strong, with cross-investment between the Hegemony and Commonwealth commonplace. However, Steiner feared that joining Cameron’s alliance would hamper his nation’s buoyant economy. Some Lyran analysts suggested it was a deliberate attempt to shackle the Lyran economy by rivals in the Free Worlds or Hegemony. Craig’s daughter, Tracial, who succeeded him in 2555, was more receptive to Ian’s overtures, particularly when details of Star League Defense Force (SLDF) academies to be built on Tharkad and Skye were made clear, academies whose graduates would bolster the mediocre LCAF officer corps. After some economic sweeteners, the Archon and Director-General signed the Tharkad Accords, bringing the prospective membership of the Star League to four.

The Federated Suns and Draconis Combine proved more difficult to persuade. Mutual animosity and internal politics made association with the Star League a difficult topic in both realms. Both powers were fearful of showing weakness to the other and faced serious domestic political issues. Alexander Davion’s realm had only recently emerged from civil war and he was wary of appearing weak and hiding behind the skirts of the Terran Hegemony. Hehiro Kurita, on the other hand, faced severe cultural issues: Kurita supremacy was a cornerstone of the Combine’s culture; how could it be subservient to the Star League?

Persuading the Suns was a matter of leverage, with Ian and Albert playing good-cop, bad-cop. Ian dangled the prospects of alliance with the Hegemony and access to advanced technologies much as he had with the Commonwealth. At the same time, Marik’s Free Worlds secretly continued to undermine the Davion economy, slowing the post-war recovery. Membership in the Star League would allow the Federated Suns economy to escape the doldrums and, on 27 October 2567, Davion signed the New Avalon accords after assurances that the SLDF would side with the Federated Suns in any conflict with the Combine, acting preemptively if needed. Backed into a corner, Hehiro Kurita found himself isolated, but Cameron soon made the same offer of military assistance and on 15 August 2569 the final piece of the Star League fell into place with the signing of the Treaty of Vega.

Now the hard work could begin.

THE STAR LEAGUE ACCORDS

The treaties between the Great Houses affirmed their intention to join the Star League but the legal framework for the agreement had yet to be reached. Preliminary working parties had already met but the signing of the Treaty of Vega pushed the negotiations into high gear. Over the next two years nineteen working parties met on Terra to discuss the sundry political, economic and military aspects of the Star League. Special interests could easily have sunk the deal but a mix of horse-trading and persuasion whittled down the problem areas. The thornier problems were delegated to subcommittees, rather than bog down the main negotiations and, on at least three occasions, the direct intervention of a House Lord cleared away seemingly intractable issues. Sections of the draft were examined by lawyers of each realm, both in Geneva and in their respective capitals (which in this pre-HPG era was a long and drawn out process) but by the summer of 2571 the Star League Accords were approved.

On 9 July 2571, the six House Lords met in Geneva to sign the 2,000-page document. Hehiro Kurita was the first to sign, a political concession intended to show the Combine leading the way. Alexander Davion signed next, passing the quill to Viola Steiner-Dinesen, then Ursula Liao and Albert Marik. As befitted his central role in the drama, Ian Cameron was the last to sign, having shaken hands with each House Lord and reciting the Star League preamble from memory. His dream had become reality.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WAR

Courier JumpShips took news of the Star League to every corner of the Inner Sphere, though it was several months before copies of the Accords reached every world. By that point many of the Star League institutions were well on their way to becoming reality, including the Department of Social Relations, the Department of Revenue and the Department of Education and Information, all of which operated under the umbrella of the Bureau of Star League Affairs (BSLA), itself founded in 2573. The Department of the Attorney General began work on harmonizing the legal and penal codes of the member-states, a task so massive it would not be concluded until the middle of the next century.

Efforts to build a Star League military, the SLDF, proceeded at a much faster pace. By the end of 2571 Cameron appointed his wife, Shandra Noruff-Cameron, as Chief of Staff and Commander in Chief of the SLDF, charging her with merging the six different militaries into a unified whole. The HAF would form the backbone of the new force, bolstered by substantial numbers from each House military. The member-states (with the exception of the Hegemony) would retain their own armed forces to handle internal matters, but each was charged with drawing down the numbers from the extravagant forces of the Age of War. The SLDF would brook no rivals. Many military commanders (particularly in the AFFS and DCMS) grumbled at these reductions, saying it left them weak and exposed, but the reduction in member-state military power and increased reliance on the SLDF was a key part of the Accords. Ian Cameron's plan to ensure peace in the Inner Sphere, to counter the martial permissiveness of the Age of War, was to remove the tools of the trade.

Integrating the troops of the SLDF into a cohesive whole—and gaining acceptance from the member-state militaries—would not be a simple process. The issuing of common uniforms and paint schemes gave the appearance of a unified force but reality was very different. Equipment varied considerably between troops (even down to the calibers of ammunition) and training levels and doctrine were politely described as inconsistent.

PREAMBLE TO STAR LEAGUE ACCORDS

We, the Lords representative of the six Inner Realms of the Human Sphere, in the name of Peace, free Commerce, and our people, do hereby enter the Covenant to be henceforth be known as the Star League.

We do so in recognition of the greatness of each Member State, and of the qualities that made it great. We do so willingly, in recognition that it is in the best interests of our Realms, our Lands, our Resources, and our people.

We do so with hearts open to Friendship with one another's Realms, and look forward to an epoch of Prosperity and Security.

After one and one-half centuries of warfare, we are ready to set aside the quarrels that have devastated our Realms. No longer shall we be benighted by the evils that have torn our worlds asunder, nor shall we waste our Energy, Strength, Resources, or the lives of our people in warfare and brutal conflict.

Instead, we greet a new Beginning, an Opportunity unprecedented in the Human Sphere, an Opportunity for every Realm to realize its full Potential, for every Government to work together in Harmony and Understanding, for every man, woman, and child to be safe, secure, and prosperous.

We pledge unto each other our Lives, our good Faith, and our Sacred Honor.

(signed):



OUT OF WORK, OUT OF LUCK, OUT OF HERE

Though the political necessity of reducing the Great House militaries is hard to dispute, the mechanism for doing so—forced downsizing—caused almost as many problems as it solved. Many House troops suddenly found themselves without employment, made redundant to meet the quotas established by the Star League Accords, and a number turned to banditry. Others attempted to make an honest living, gaining employment with planetary militias and the like, but the demobilizations are acknowledged as a key factor in the significant upsurge of violent crimes in the 2570s.

In 2572, scarcely a year after the League's founding, many of the House Lords contemplated abrogating the elements of the Accords that required downscaling of their militaries. Only Ian Cameron and Viola Steiner-Dinesen opposed the proposals to solve the chaos being caused by the "demobbed" troops. The First Lord disagreed, proposing instead to find employment for the former troops during the massed exercises he had in mind.

The garrison duties required during the United Triumph exercises provided one short-term outlet for these troops but the longer-term prognosis wasn't good. The Reunification War was in some regards fortuitous (suspiciously so in the minds of some), bolstering the need for garrison troops but also offering a host of opportunities for private security consultants: mercenaries.

A profession almost as old as war itself, the mercenary trade had fallen off markedly during the Age of War as each of the Great Houses tried to build up their own forces to the maximum extent. The dawn of the Star League, and the Reunification War in particular, prompted a resurgence in the mercenary trade as planetary governments and private concerns—particularly those near the Periphery—sought to bolster their defenses. While the Star League refused to sanction private armies, mercenaries did prove useful on several occasions during the Periphery campaigns. Many mercenary companies found themselves, directly or indirectly, in the employ of the member-states, allowing them to bolster their armed forces without contravening the letter (if not the spirit) of the Star League Accords.

—from *Sons of Mars: Contracts and Warfare Through the Ages*, by Colonel Jaime Wolf, Outreach Press, 3043

Even the unified rank and TOE structures (based on the HAF structure) proved problematic, alien as it was to many of the new SLDF soldiers. External issues played a role, too: SLDF protocols placed severe limits on the number of SLDF troopers who could serve in their home realms and so most transferred troopers found themselves in foreign lands, regarded with suspicion (and in some cases outright hostility) by the locals. After two ex-DCMS troopers assigned to the SLDF on Robinson were killed in what the local constabulary described as a racially-motivated attack the SLDF was forced to consider political sensitivities in its assignments. Such consideration was at best a stopgap measure. The SLDF would have to be accepted everywhere, irrespective of national origins. The troopers' loyalty had to be to the Star League above all others.

Even the SLDF's Royal units (the elite core that had been the HAF) found themselves in the difficult position of winning the trust of member-state populations who regarded them as little better than occupiers. On Milos, the Twenty-second Royal Regiment found itself under attack by CCAF troops after the Capellans had called the SLDF in to deal with rampaging brigands (who were in fact CCAF deserters and whom the CCAF troops had refused to fight). The repercussions of this embarrassing incident, which thankfully cost few lives, echoed through the Star League.

UNITED TRIUMPH

A solution to the integration and excess manpower issues soon arose; First Lord Cameron ordered the staging of a massive series of exercises. Codenamed United Triumph, these exercises were designed to provide participants with simulated battle conditions to hone their skills and forge bonds within and between SLDF units. The first exercise involved thirteen SLDF divisions (around forty regiments) with around thirty regiments of Great House troops as opponents. The participants' operational duties were covered for the duration of the exercise by contractors who formed temporary regiments.

Staged across fifty worlds near the Periphery in the fall of 2572, the exercises revealed the poor state of the SLDF, with bad coordination and communication leading to needless losses and no few defeats. The worst was some very expensive damage to naval vessels in collisions. That the SLDF was technically more proficient than its opponents and had greater stockpiles of materiel exacerbated the embarrassment of their defeats. The only good to come out of the debacle was the establishment of a series of logistical bases for the exercises and the passing, in late 2572, of the Border Guards Agreement that allowed for the establishment of bases throughout the Inner Sphere. Returning to Terra, General Cameron-Noruff faced difficult questions over the performance of her troops while the people of the Periphery breathed a sigh of relief; without a well-honed war machine, they couldn't be compelled to join the Star League. Or so they believed.

A CLASH OF IDEOLOGIES

Albert Marik died in 2573, and with his passing Ian Cameron found himself bereft of his closest ally and advisor. His vision of a united humanity remained, and the founding of the Star League was a great step forward. The recalcitrance of the Periphery states was galling, though. Only the Rim Worlds Republic, with its longstanding ties to the Hegemony, showed any sign of wanting to join the Star League.

Within the High Council different ideologies found themselves in opposition. On one side were Marion Marik, Albert's heir, and Ursula Liao, both of whom advocated a measured, peaceful approach to incorporating the Periphery realms into the League. On the other side were hawks like Hehiro Kurita and, to a lesser extent, Alexander Davion, who saw military intervention as the only viable option. Davion's approach was pragmatic—the Taurian Concordat was an ever-present (if not overly significant) thorn in the side of the Federated Suns and needed to be neutralized if the Suns were to maximize the benefits of the Star League, particularly the mandated force reductions. Additionally, he believed

that the best way of forging the SLDF into a unified whole was in the crucible of war, not a game like United Triumph. Hehiro Kurita, on the other hand, saw in the Periphery realms a way of expanding the Combine's wealth and influence. Though the samurai trappings of the modern Combine would not come into being for another seventy-five years, the idea of "might makes right" was already ingrained in the Kurita psyche. So far as Kurita was concerned, the peons of the Periphery be made to bow before the betters in the Star League.

The First Lord was caught between these camps. He couldn't—or wouldn't—accept the Periphery states' refusal, but neither would he sanction the use of armed force against them. He directed the Department of Foreign Relations to redouble their efforts to bring the "lost worlds" back into Terra's fold and called for a summit of the Periphery leaders on Terra, which all save Gregory Amaris refused to attend. Carrots were dangled before the realms—favored nation trade status for the Taurian Concordat, tax breaks for the Magistracy of Canopus—but to no avail. In any case, two incidents would soon make diplomatic negotiations irrelevant.

BLOODY SANTIAGO

In late 2572 the Star League learned of significant 'Mech forces in the Outworlds Alliance, something that escaped the intelligence services and immediately launched a police action under the auspices of the First Lord's Directive 21, which called on the Alliance to accept the presence of SLDF troops for protection and to control the outlaw forces that had been gaining a hold in the region. A mixed task force of SLDF and DCMS troops landed on several Outworlds planets, tasked with locating and neutralizing the threat posed by the 'Mech forces.

The SLDF operated with restraint, focusing their efforts on their assigned task and leaving the locals pretty much alone. The DCMS was more heavy-handed, terrorizing the population and causing untold damage to property. Matters came to a head on 14 December 2572 in Santiago City when the Seventeenth Galedon Regulars found itself facing hostile crowds. Demonstrations against the occupations were commonplace and generally peaceful, though vehicles and 'Mechs were often pelted with stones and fruit. Indeed, many of the local children had begun to see this as a game, daring each other to throw fruit and paint at the SLDF troops.

One Combine warrior took action against the children, throwing a can of coolant at her tormentors. The can burst and splashed over one boy, who immediately began to scream as the chemicals burned his skin. The crowd went wild and the 'Mech, a *Locust*, was isolated from its lancemates, tripping and crushing several people. The attacks against the fallen 'Mech escalated and, fearing for her life, the MechWarrior opened fire with the 'Mechs weapons. Twenty-seven people were killed and thirty more hospitalized.

The deaths sent shockwaves through the Star League and the Periphery. The damage to the League's image was irreparable. Demonstrations erupted across the Periphery and even on some Star League worlds. Both the Concordat and Magistracy temporarily broke off relations with the League.

THE MALAGROTTA CRISIS

The Omsol Accord of 2511 had established the world of Malagrotta as a jointly controlled and demilitarized system between the Concordat and the Federated Suns, its mineral riches exploited by both sides. The Accord held for sixty years until 19 February 2573, when a flotilla of Taurian naval vessels—four WarShips and an auxiliary vessel—on maneuvers after the Santiago Massacre strayed into the Malagrotta system. The vessels, suffering electrical faults that compromised their communications systems and life support, approached the mining colonies seeking aid. However, the Federated Suns' outpost, believing themselves under attack by the Concordat, dispatched couriers warning House Davion of the "sneak attack." The AFFS responded swiftly, dispatching a ten-ship task force that destroyed or captured all but one of the Taurian vessels in a three-hour battle.

THE POLLUX PROCLAMATION

My Lords and Ladies:

We stand poised on the verge of a great era, a time of realized potential, of peace, security, and freedom for every man and woman. We have taken strides toward these goals that are unprecedented in Human history by setting aside our regional, parochial differences and forging a union vaster and stronger than any previously devised.

In the course of this mighty achievement, we have struck down many barriers to harmony and understanding. One barrier that remains is the isolationism of certain areas that refuse to join in with this union, and thereby jeopardize everything for which it stands.

There is no good reason for the intransigence of people who will not recognize the greater good of laying down their independence for the sake of joining our League. There is no good reason for people to insist on resisting the superior wisdom of those who have come before them into the fold, nor is there reason for them to continue to seek their own lonely course far from the centers of culture and civilization.

This course of action is temporary. This course of action is provincial.

Furthermore, in consideration of the common goals we share, we must set aside our differences and pool our resources for the common good, once and for all. The Star League stands for a unified Humanity. As First Lord of the Star League, it is my solemn responsibility to protect the welfare of that Humanity wherever it may be found, be it on Sian or Santiago, New Vandenberg or New Avalon, Andurien or Apollo, Castor or Canopus. Through me, the Star League assumes the awesome task of safeguarding the welfare of Humanity. It is a responsibility from which the League will never shrink, a responsibility it shall never lay down. The dark days of barbarism are over—we will not let them return again.

The only way to ensure equal protection for all, the only way to safeguard the liberties of each individual, is for every Human being to accept the benefits we offer, freely and openly. So long as a solitary individual of the most distant planet in the Periphery remains uneducated, impoverished, or disadvantaged, all are equally stricken.

This situation is not now, nor shall it ever be, acceptable. We intend to see that the majority is not denied the benefits of culture and progress at the hands of a minority of radical isolationists. We intend to extend our benevolent protection into every corner of Human-occupied space, whatever the cost, until every man, woman, and child prospers and flourishes. Let no one stand in the way of Human progress. The

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time for reunification has come, but some have made the grievous error of failing to heed the call. Instead, they chant, jeer, and jump about claiming independence, as if they were somehow beyond the grasp of their mother world. It is truly sad, but it seems that the cost of a united Humanity will be paid in blood.

To the poor people of the Periphery who live under the thumb of isolationists, my message is as follows: Take heart! The true light of Humanity will soon come your way and away the darkness that has shackled your lives for so long.

To the isolationist governments of the Periphery, message is as follows: As you have shown by your uncivilized refusal to negotiate in good faith for better relations between us, I no longer restrain those of us who believe punishment is in order.

The purpose of the Star League is peace. The ideal the Star League is peace. The Star League is eternally committed to the principles of peace. If the recalcitrant leaders of the Periphery force our hand and require us to go to war, the war will be total. No prisoners will be taken. No holds will be barred. If the Star League is forced to fight peace, it will be a fight to the death.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

At the request of the Independent States of the Periphery, I formally reply to your demand that we submit to the Star League or else suffer the consequences. My reply is simply this: rest up, conserve your strength, and kiss your children goodbye because we have no intention of surrendering our sovereignty to a pack of politicians who think they are important because they huddle around Terra. Real men and women live free and independent of any feeble ideas about “the birthplace of Humanity” and other high-sounding drivel. Real men and women do not need Terra, and if necessary, we are willing to give our lives to prove it.

—Grendel Roberts, Ambassador from the Independent States of the Periphery, to Lord Ian Cameron, March 1, 2575

of the looming war. Such preemptive action did not sit well with all members of the government, prompting a number of resignations, but when the single ambassador from the “Independent Worlds of the Periphery” presented their response to the High Council on 1 March, the First Lord’s orders began to look prophetic.

A MOST PECULIAR WAR

The reply to the Pollux Proclamation marked the start of the Reunification War and within a year SLDF troops were engaged in the Periphery. Since war was not officially declared until 2578, the early campaigns were “police actions,” operating (officially at least) under more restrained rules of engagement. Reality was often bloodily more brutal and it soon became clear that even the improvements within the SLDF might not be sufficient to win against three opponents simultaneously—the Rim Worlds Republic not being initially regarded as a belligerent.

Simple mistakes on both sides—the Taurian navigation error and the Davion response—led to the crisis and either side could have backed down. Instead, intransigence accelerated the descent toward war. The AFFS, eventually realizing their misreading of the Concordat’s intentions, chose to hide their mistake and use the incident as political leverage. They lodged an official complaint with the Star League against the provocative actions of the Taurian Concordat. The AFFS geared up for war, and the Concordat did likewise, refusing to recognize the Star League’s right to mediate between the Suns and the Concordat. This refusal angered the First Lord, who realized that his efforts at finding a diplomatic solution to the “problem of the Periphery” were doomed to failure.

Cameron took an increasingly hard-line stance, siding with the Federated Suns and going so far as to propose unilateral military action. The Star League High Council divided on the issue—the First Lord, Prince Alexander Davion and the Coordinator Hehiro Kurita for action, Captain-General Marion Marik, Archon Viola-Steiner-Dinesen and Chancellor Ursula Liao against. Unless this impasse could be broken, there would be no military action.

The Council did, however, agree on economic sanctions and in March 2574 a series of trade restrictions and tariffs were imposed on the Periphery States, hampering their ability to undertake lucrative trade with the Inner Sphere. Initially this seemed to have the desired effect, with Periphery trade cut by almost eighty-percent, but the House Lords noticed their own economies faltering. Many companies, most notably in the Free Worlds and Lyran Commonwealth, but in all states, were reliant on cheap imports from the Periphery. Cut off from their source of supply, companies faltered and failed—some spectacularly—and numerous Periphery-facing districts saw their economies slipping into chaos. Despite the spin enacted by the Star League, it was the House Lords who bore the people’s ire, cited for intransigence and greed.

TO THE BRINK: THE POLLUX PROCLAMATION

Meeting away from prying eyes on the Hegemony world of Pollux in December, an emergency session of the Star League’s High Council discussed the crisis. Economic and diplomatic gambits had failed and there seemed little alternative to war. With her state in crisis, Archon Viola’s stance shifted toward support the hawkish camp, leaving Marion Marik and Ursula Liao in the minority. Lords Davion and Kurita wanted the SLDF to launch immediate offensives against the recalcitrant Periphery, but Marik and Steiner pointed out that doing so would be both unconstitutional and would likely drum up more support for the Periphery states among the dissatisfied Spheroids. There needed be, Steiner-Dinesen said, just cause for the conflict—she stopped short of saying pretext. There was one last chance for diplomacy to work, and if the Periphery refused that overture, on their heads be it.

The result, delivered to the Periphery capitals by courier-chains of JumpShips on 2 January 2575, was the Pollux Proclamation. It didn’t mince words and sooth egos—it wasn’t meant to, quite the opposite in fact. The Periphery governments had three months to reply. The response was a foregone conclusion, and no sooner had the couriers been dispatched than the BSLA began to whip up media support against the Periphery, in favor

Logistics played a role; it became apparent that while the SLDF had significant military might—270 regiments and 500 WarShips—they didn't have the supplies or the transport assets to utilize all of these resources at once. The decision was made, therefore, to stagger the offensives against the Periphery States and to bolster the SLDF with line troops from the Great Houses.

In April 2575, First Lord Cameron issued Directive 22, ordering each member-state to provide additional forces (with their own transports) for the military action against the recalcitrant Periphery, joining the allied Star League Expeditionary Force (SLEF). Already stretched by the mandated drawdowns of their forces, the move was not popular but the member-states had no legal ground to refuse the call. With these reinforcements, the combined SLDF and SLEF exceeded 300 regiments, though many of these remained in garrison within the member-states.

General Shandra Noruff-Cameron took overall charge of the operation but command of each of the four Regional Operations Commands (ROCs) fell to the general responsible for the seizing the Periphery states. For the Taurian ROC this was Major General Charles Manstein Wexworth; for the Magistracy ROC command fell to Captain-General Marion Marik; for the Rim Worlds front it was General Nathan Isaacson; for the Outworlds ROC, General Amos Forlough. Each ROC was allowed significant flexibility in achieving their goals, with total control over the ground and naval forces employed. The Star League Intelligence Command provided intelligence on their opponents, but much of the information was patchy and outdated. Some units went into action equipped with stellar charts dating back to the Fifth Grand Survey of 2389.

The choice of the SLDF's first target was never in doubt; the Taurian Concordat was the most heavily armed and belligerent of the Periphery realms and four of the seven SLDF corps were tasked with dealing with it. The generals and High Council hoped that a short, decisive campaign by the massed SLDF and allied forces would bring the Concordat to its knees and prompt the other states to capitulate without a shot being fired. What could go wrong? "We'll be home by Christmas 2580" they said....

THE WORST OF FRIENDS

Only one of the four Periphery realms chose to join the Star League—the Rim Worlds Republic—but political wrangling and domestic issues hindered the efforts of the First Consul to sign the Star League Accords. Regarded as the one "civilized" Periphery state, economic and political relations with the Inner Sphere were cordial and in 2572 Gregory Amaris sought to strengthen the ties (and his own position) by having SLDF troops train his own armed forces. To that end a battalion of SLDF troops was dispatched to Apollo.

Amaris' domestic position was precarious and his control of the military a key factor in his rule. Inviting in the SLDF upset this balance and sent the Republic spiraling into chaos. Dissent against Amaris' deal with the Star League grew increasingly bitter, with street protests commonplace. Bad decision was stacked atop bad decision and in 2575, after he announced his support for the Pollux Proclamation and issued the Manchester Directive banning the dissident Rift Republican Army, Gregory Amaris found himself isolated, with many of his troops refusing to heed orders to quell the unrest. He had no choice but to petition to the Star League for aid, but the League was deep in preparations for war with the Concordat. Aid would be a long time coming, and in that time the sole "civilized" Periphery realm collapsed into chaos.

—Robert Kendal, *Good Intentions: Headlong to Disaster*, Atreus Press, 3059

INTER ARMA ENIM SILENT LEGES

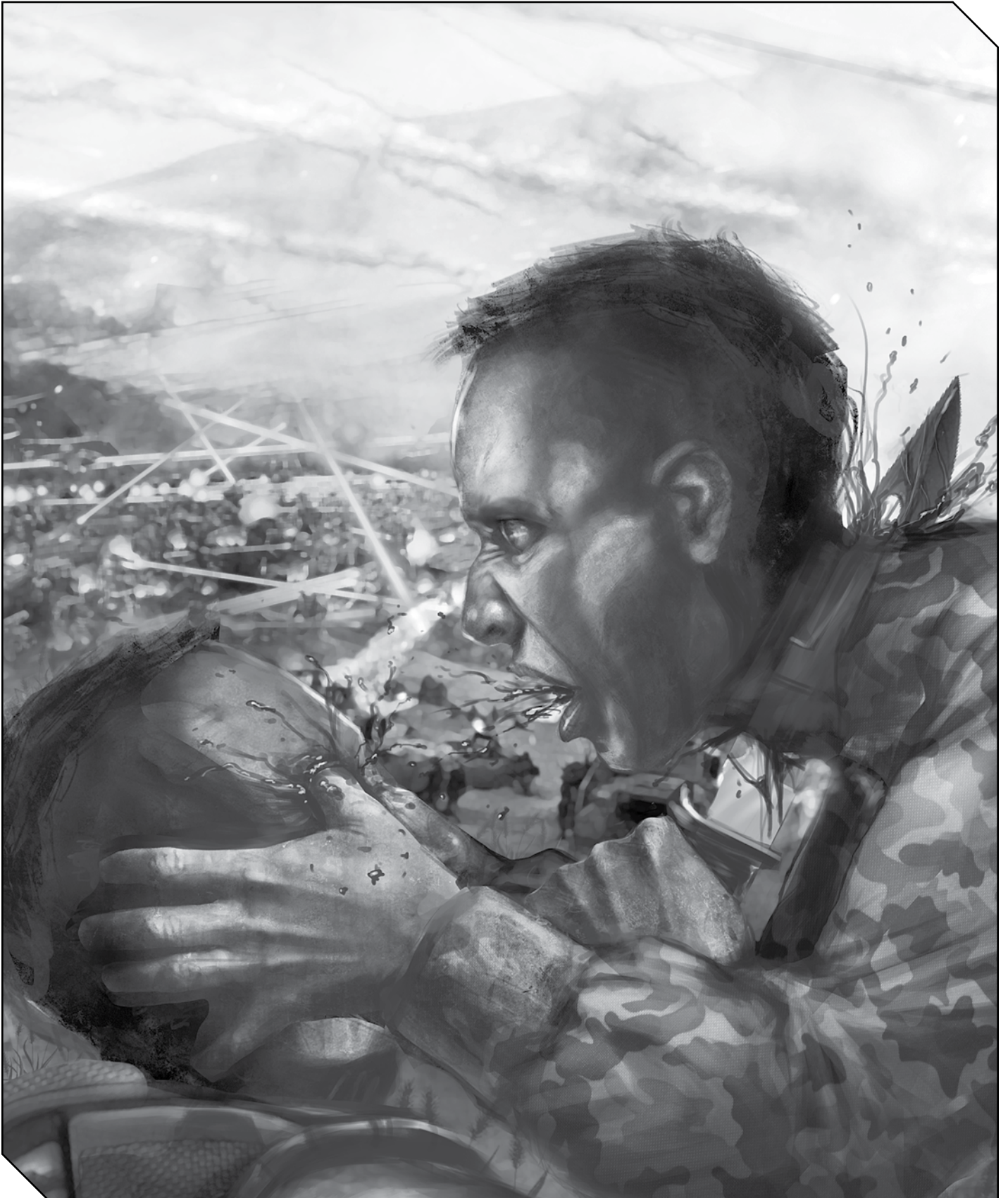
The Ares Conventions had shaped martial conflict between the Great Houses of the Inner Sphere for over a century and half when the Star League came into being and even today, almost 300 years since the Great Houses abrogated the Conventions on the eve of the First Succession War, most powers adhere to the spirit (if not the letter). The Third Andurien War, which ended in 2556, was the last major Age of War conflict in which the rules needed to be applied but as the Star League marched toward war with the Periphery realms, it was widely expected that these rules of civilized conflict would continue to operate.

First Lord Cameron decided that they did not, and Cicero's comment that "in times of war the laws fall silent" became horrifyingly real.

In his declaration of war that marked the official start of the Reunification War in 2578 (three years after the initiation of hostilities), Ian Cameron announced that the SLDF would not be bound by the Conventions (as, though rarely stated, not all of the Periphery states were signatories—the Taurian Concordat and Outworlds Alliance being notable in their refusal). "When combating barbarians, one must fight fire with fire," Cameron stated. The result was predictably bloody, as the nascent SLDF took increasingly brutal action in pursuit of their objectives and their opponents did likewise. Atrocities were rampant, ranging from poisonings and assassinations to human wave attacks and the employment of weapons of mass destruction.

Not all of the High Council agreed with the First Lord's decision, and though the Conventions were officially suspended Captain-General Marion Marik adhered to them rigorously during the Magistracy campaign. Her Canopian opponents exercised similar restraint. With the Magistracy campaign the shortest and least costly, it could be argued that Cameron's decision to abrogate the Conventions extended the conflict and colored relations between the powers that continue to the present day.

—Extracted from *Jurisprudence in War* by The Honorable Samuel Menket-Smythe (KBOD, MSAG, CSVO), *Proceedings of the New Avalon Barristers Association*, 3082



THE LEAGUE'S MIGHT

"Familiar yet different" is an apt term to describe the Inner Sphere at the dawn of the Star League. Many of the players and the tools they employed are familiar to modern denizens of the Inner Sphere and Periphery but there are many subtle (and not so subtle) differences. Though the Inner Sphere had spent centuries locked in the battles of the Age of War, it had been a mostly civilized conflict. Technology and standards of living were steadily improving. The glories of the Star League were still many years off, but so too were the horrors of the Succession Wars (let alone the terrors of the Jihad). To understand many of the strategic and operational decisions of the war it is necessary to understand the Star League's technological and military might and that of its member-states and opponents.

MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND DOCTRINE IN 2575

The Reunification War is often labeled the "first modern war." Unfortunately, that is a misnomer that has led more than a few historians and aspiring scholars down a path fraught with contradiction and anachronism. The trouble lies with one supposedly simple word: modern.

That single word brings to mind a hundred subtly different definitions in a hundred different people when discussing the Reunification War and the early Star League era. The reason? Everyone has their own unique perception of what they read and see and know about this era based largely upon the history of the *late* Star League, coupled with the tales of General Kerensky and his SLDF's brave crusade as they retook Humanity's homeworld from the insane and evil Amaris and his cruel Rim Worlders. Every one of us have been inundated from an early age with fantastic descriptions and fictional representations of the greatest conflict man has ever participated in—the Amaris Civil War—and that, coupled with centuries of Succession War history, creates an unconscious "picture" of what the Star League looked like during the Reunification War.

In almost every instance, the typical reader's perception of the state of affairs within the Inner Sphere and the Periphery in the late Twenty-sixth century is wholly inaccurate.

TECHNOLOGY

First things first: the Reunification War was the "first modern war" only insofar as it was the first conflict pursued by the newly-formed Star League, and it was the first war that involved the *entire* Inner Sphere and Periphery.

What it was not was the first war fought entirely with "modern" weapons. The "primitive" technologies that dawned during the Age of War and rapidly advanced into "modern" forms—the BattleMech primarily among them—were still used throughout the Human Sphere. While their "modern" forms had largely replaced "primitive" versions in most front-line combat units, countless second-tier, militia and private security units in both the Inner Sphere and the Periphery continued to use "primitive" weapon systems throughout the Reunification War and beyond. The militaries of each of the five Great Houses, and even the mighty Star League Defense Force, were forced to rely upon these decades-out-of-date technologies in their initial invasion forces and throughout the war. By and large, of course, the Periphery nations utilized a greater percentage of these primitive technologies than their Inner Sphere opponents, but they also were not solely limited to using nothing but old, outdated equipment. The Periphery did, in fact, field a great deal of advanced weaponry during the two-decade war, most of which they developed and built themselves.

In the same regard, the Periphery denizens were by no means the "dregs of humanity," "backward farmers" or "hooligans and ruffians that would just as soon slit your throat as buy you a drink." While the technology-shunning Omnisect in the Outworlds Alliance, among others, certainly gave rise to the mental image of "backward farmers," life in the four Periphery nations was not unlike that within the Inner Sphere. In fact, the pre-

ASSEMBLING AND MAINTAINING THE ARSENALS OF DEMOCRACY

At the outset of the Reunification War, logistics was a prime concern to more than just SLDF General Kimberly Vang, first Director of the Quartermaster Command. While the SLDF certainly had the greatest logistical challenges to overcome—not the least of which was somehow supplying the nearly 300 regiments from six different militaries that had joined together to form the Star League's military—both the Star League member-states and the Periphery nations alike knew that the coming war would bring with it hosts of difficulties in supplying their militaries with new equipment, spare parts, ammunition and other consumables.

Within the SLDF, General Vang's first acts were to begin constructing supply and maintenance depots throughout the Star League while also locking her most important military suppliers into long-term exclusive contracts. Ultimately, the SLDF would also move to standardize equipment within companies and battalions—so that the entire unit operated the same model of 'Mech, tank or machinery—but that would be an innovation that came nearly a century later. None of General Vang's decisions would prove completely sufficient for the needs of the Reunification War, but they were a start. The former was designed to keep commanders on each SLDF front supplied with the most common spare parts and other consumables that their field army needed, while also providing a place where heavily damaged combat units could be repaired and refurbished (in the past, heavily damaged equipment was typically scrapped or repaired at the factory). Her latter act ensured a steady stream of equipment flowing into the SLDF, but also imposed rigid manufacturing standards designed to ensure this equipment would remain in service longer and would utilize common repair parts. The lack of these standards was a major reason service life for so many Age of War-era pieces of equipment was so short.

Of course, General Vang faced opposition to these moves from the corporations, the Council Lords, and even the Bureau of Star League Affairs, each of whom was beholden in some way to concerns either locked out of contracts, who felt that Vang's contracts were too restrictive, or that the standards she was attempting to implement would be too costly to implement. General Vang had the Camerons on her side, though,

Continued on p. 24

as well as dozens of senior generals who knew that her reforms would benefit the SLDF in the long run.

By the beginning of the Reunification War, scores, if not hundreds, of a handful of different BattleMech, tank and fighter designs were rolling off of production lines on a monthly basis. Literally thousands of *Stingers*, *Phoenix Hawks*, *Shadow Hawks*, *Crusaders*, *Warhammers*, *Banshees* and *Victors* would be constructed during the war, but of course those alone would not be enough. Heavy losses would require the SLDF to contract for other stand-by designs, while newly designed *Highlanders*, *Lancelots*, *Pillagers* and *Stalkers* would also be purchased by the shipload. Pressures from the Star League Council lords would eventually force the SLDF to divert significant quantities of machines—at least any that could not be declared proprietary and ineligible for export by the SLDF—to the House militaries.

At the same time, the five Great Houses and the four Periphery governments all struggled to modernize and expand (in most cases secretly) their militaries, turning to their own military suppliers as well as those that the SLDF did not contract with. Classic 'Mech, tank and fighter designs—some stolen or otherwise “acquired” through less-than-legitimate means, especially within the Periphery realms—continued to be produced by local manufacturing concerns. Some, like the *Crusader* and *Dervish*, were licensed to select Inner Sphere manufacturers with little difficulty. Others, like the *Catapult*, caused significant legal problems for their manufacturers when they defied Terran Hegemony laws. Hollis Incorporated produced limited runs of *Catapults* from the signing of the Treaty of Vega through the end of the Reunification War and sold them to each Star League member-state in under-the-table deals; the resulting legal battles and other corporate issues caused cashflow problems that nearly destroyed the company.

methods advanced significantly. Nonetheless, hundreds and thousands of different ship designs continued to ply the star lanes. There was often little standardization between models, even those commissioned by a single government—at least until the coming of the Star League.

WarShips often fell victim to those same problems, though the typical “warship” of the Age of War was a DropShip retrofitted with heavy armor and bristling with weapons, often requiring years in shipyards as the ships' structures were reinforced while heavy weapons were mounted. Squadrons of “warships” travelled alongside military and civilian transports and massed for invasions or punitive strikes, but always relied upon JumpShips to move them between systems. The first true WarShip was the TAS *Dreadnought*, a mighty battleship bristling with guns and capable of independent jumps. After its debut in 2300, it cowed the other Inner Sphere powers, each of which took more than six decades to replicate the Terran Alliance's jump drive miniaturization and build their own true WarShips.

Nevertheless, Terra remained at the fore of naval design and construction. It wasn't until the final decades of the Age of War that the remaining Inner Sphere nations were able to build WarShip fleets that claimed any parity with Terra, or that the Periphery even built their first WarShips. Cost, of course, was a major factor, but so was the question of developing first the technology and then the skill to use that technology. The Reunification War would see humanity's first true massive naval battles in deep space. It would also give birth to the standardization of naval design throughout the Human Sphere.

Reunification War Taurian Concordat possessed a better per-capita standard of living than any nation other than the Terran Hegemony, and a *better* standard of education than any other, as well as boasting an advanced industry capable of producing anything the Inner Sphere could. Ironically, it was not until *after* the formation of the Star League, and later the post-war mass exodus of colonists into the Periphery, that the “dregs of humanity” began to truly appear in the Periphery.

MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Battlefield technology was not the only concept of war that had not yet matured during the Reunification War. The unimaginably huge SLDF of General Kerensky's time was nothing but a dream to First Lord Ian Cameron and his wife. Where the SLDF of the 2760s claimed a combat strength of effectively more than 480 divisions (or more than 4,300 individual combat regiments) of 'Mechs, fighters, tanks and infantry, the newly-formed SLDF that fought the Reunification War claimed but thirty organized divisions—just ten corps of about 270 regiments. This, after absorbing the entirety of the Hegemony Armed Forces and about a quarter of each of the five Great Houses' militaries. The Star League, and in fact each of the Inner Sphere and Periphery nations, would build up massive standing armies in the century and a half following the Reunification War, but those massive build-ups were still in the distant future.

COMBAT EQUIPMENT

Likewise, the battlefields of the Reunification War were not filled with the hundreds of different BattleMech, tank and fighter designs that we know today. Our research indicates that *less than five dozen different BattleMech designs* had been produced in any significant quantity by the nations of the Inner Sphere and Periphery before the Reunification War, and only a few more debuted during the war. Fighter and tank forces, though more diverse than BattleMechs, similarly only relied upon a relative handful of different designs compared to our modern era. Transnational companies constructed these designs by the thousands in factories across the stars, albeit with a wide variety of locally-sourced components that while presenting an outwardly homogenous set of designs (with some iconic national models) proved to be a logistical nightmare for the early SLDF.

NAVAL TECHNOLOGY

In space, matters were different. Before and during the Age of War there were few standards when it came to spacecraft design and construction. The early days of space exploration and colonization saw literally *thousands* of different spacecraft designs in use—most built in small quantities before the design was retired in favor of a better model. By their very design, these early spacecraft were often disposable—used only for a few trips before a group of colonists transformed it into their planetbound home. By the dawn of the Age of War, the colonization “craze” had passed while design and construction

LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS AND TRUST

Another key concern was that of communications. The hyperpulse generator was not developed until well into the Twenty-seventh Century, while other lines of research into interstellar communications had resulted in a number of technological dead-ends. From the time of the *TAS Columbia* until after the Reunification War, the *only* way to pass a message from one system to another was by courier.

Every nation had an established communications network, administered by a government or military office, that passed traffic much like a cross between the Pony Express of ancient Terra and a postal service. Individuals could record a tri-vid message, or otherwise compose a combination text/audio/video message, address it to another individual (or office or agency) on a different world, and pay a local interstellar message service (IMS) to ensure that message would make its way to the intended recipient. The cost depending upon how far the message had to travel and if any special priority handling was required. An IMS would then batch transmit all of its collected messages at a pre-determined time (on major worlds, that might be every four to six hours, while on minor worlds that might be once a day, or even as infrequently as once a week on backwaters) to an IMS courier DropShip.

The DropShips would have to mount a waiting JumpShip and travel to a neighboring star system, where they would transmit their messages either to the world (for traffic bound there) or to one or more waiting ships (for messages with further destinations). A veritable galaxy of DropShips was required in each nation to move these messages across the stars, as well as a series of commercial JumpShips that formed command circuits throughout each nation (it was in part the cost of maintaining this massive fleet that kept WarShip fleets so relatively small). In most realms, the same DropShips carried both civilian and military correspondence, though each also could call upon a fleet of military and government vessels to carry high priority traffic and diplomatic packages.

Given that each message sent had to travel from system to system by JumpShip, it took ponderously long times for an average citizen's mail to travel between the stars. It wasn't unheard of for a message to take six months or more to move from one side of the Inner Sphere to the other. Even priority official correspondence from the First Lord to each of his Star Lords would take days (and messages to the fronts upward of a week or more).

With communication between a nation's capital and its outlying worlds taking so long, each national leader was forced to rely heavily upon the judgment of his subordinates to make the right decisions and to interpret his or her policies without having to continually ask for clarifications. Governors, generals and admirals alike wielded much greater power during this era simply because their leaders could not micromanage them. But at the same time, those same governors and generals needed to tread carefully, knowing that support might take weeks or months to reach them.

FORMING THE SLDF

The Star League Accords called for the establishment of a pan-League military force for defense and peacekeeping, and First Lord Cameron appointed his wife, Shandra Noruff-Cameron, to oversee the creation of the new force. Taking the model of the Twentieth Century North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a basis, she set about standardizing the logistics, organization and doctrine used by the member-states to allow the Star League Defense Force to be formed and operate. Her approach was multi-tiered, reforming the House militaries and establishing an independent SLDF simultaneously.

THE STAR LEAGUE DEFENSE PROTOCOLS

A 96-page annex to the Star League Accords, the Defense Protocols outlined the military future of the Star League. Many of its provisions were arcane and designed to deal with treaty obligations to and by the member-states, but it can be summarized in three key areas:

//TOPSECRET//

THE BLACK BOX

Alternately called "Black Box Technology" or a "FAX Machine", Project TRANSIENT was developed under a cloak of secrecy within the SLDF's Communications Command as an alternate to the Pony Express communications system. Originally proposed in 2572, it did not reach prototype status until 2580, when a handful of prototype devices—apparently along with specially trained communications specialists—were issued to General Nathan Isaacson's Rim Worlds invasion force and assigned, amid massive secrecy, to several SLDF divisions. These devices, each the size of a suitcase (though requiring external power), could send tiny messages—approximately two hundred kilobytes in size—as "ripples" on the very fabric of hyperspace, which would propagate outward at about 10 light-years per day to be received by every other such device within its approximate 100 LY range. Of course, priority messages could be sent farther and faster along pre-positioned SLDF command circuits, which likely relegated the TRANSIENT devices to passing routine traffic.

Project TRANSIENT never reached full production, despite the potential advantages of the system. Thin SLDF records from the era indicate Project TRANSIENT received a steady stream of low-level funding—likely enough for project staff to construct a few prototypes—each year from 2581 through 2596, when its funding was cut back even further until cancelled in 2614. The exact reasons for project cancellation are lost to history, though the best theories are that researchers believed that the devices would somehow interfere with the operation of K-F drives or the more promising communication system that would eventually become HPGs. Can it be a coincidence that TRANSIENT was terminated in the same year as the FWL-Star League partnership between Rhylene Hypertech of Oriente and Cassie DeBurke's team at the University of Terra that eventually produced the HPG system?

The surviving Project TRANSIENT devices were all ordered collected and disassembled in 2615, though clearly at least one device was unaccounted for—possibly that of the Seventeenth Royal Division, whose command post on Taran's World was attacked with a dirty bomb in 2595. The toxic remains of the compound and victims were bulldozed into a pit and encased in ferrocrete by Star League engineers. This device was discovered by Katrina Steiner, Arthur Luvon and Morgan Kell during their 3005-3006 Periphery exile, returned to the Inner Sphere, and ultimately jointly developed by the LCAF and AFFS into the K-Series Interstellar Communications Device (FAX Machine) that now serves the classified communications requirements of the AFFS and LAAF.

//TOPSECRET//

The Establishment of an Independent Star League Military

This element of the Protocols called for the establishment of an independent military—the SLDF, comprising the Regular Army and Star League Navy—and determined how it was to be constructed and maintained. The initial force would take the entire Hegemony Armed Forces as its core (which would become the Royal regiments), with contributions from each of the member-states. The ultimate intention was for the SLDF to form at least fifty percent of the martial might in the Inner Sphere, but initially the commanding general worked toward a two-power standard (i.e. the SLDF had as many troops as two Great Houses).

A Drawdown in House Forces

To ensure the supremacy of the SLDF, House forces would be limited, which mandated the downsizing of all the Great House militaries. Some of these reductions were facilitated by troop transfers to the SLDF, but each House was forced to dismiss a large number of troops, creating social and economic problems. Ironically, the Regular Army and member-state militaries were forced to re-hire many of these troops to maintain their defenses during the Reunification War, effectively kick-starting the mercenary industry that, though frowned upon by the Star League, remained a key part of the Inner Sphere military machine. In the later Star League, the number of allowed troops fluctuated considerably, most notoriously with Michael Cameron's Edict of 2650, the House Lord's edict of 2752 and the disastrous Executive Order 156—Richard Cameron's failed attempt to disband the Great House militaries.

Limits on the Use and Role of the SLDF

Fearful of the SLDF's numerical superiority, the Lords of the Great Houses insisted on some limits to SLDF operations. Ostensibly, the force was for mutual defense and peacekeeping, but was not allowed to intervene in matters deemed internal to a member-state, save when war crimes or similar atrocities were being perpetrated. A member-state could call for Star League intervention, but the SLDF could not act unilaterally. Where trouble erupted between two member-states, the SLDF could take an active role to separate the participants (such as Operation Smother, enacted to end the Davion-Kurita conflict of the early Twenty-eighth Century).

STANDARDIZATION

Establishing rank equivalency between the member-state militaries was a necessity for military discipline. Some of the houses were particularly profligate in their divisions and conscious of their status, which resulted in ten enlisted ranks and twelve officer positions, as detailed in the Rank Equivalency Table (see p. 28). Each member-state issued their troops handy reference cards.

Establishing common equipment and organization was a much longer process that wouldn't be fully completed until the Twenty-seventh Century, but the common fittings on Inner Sphere military equipment can be traced to this effort. Many of the military structures were organized (the lance/company/battalion/regiment structure in particular) at the same time. The reality was that the SLDF of the late Twenty-sixth Century was a mongrel, not the pedigreed beast that would fight in later conflicts.

Star League military academies were established to provide standardized, high-quality training for both the SLDF and member-state mili-

taries, but it would be a generation—the latter years of the Reunification War—before the effects of these would become apparent.

BUILDING THE SLDF

While the core of the SLDF's Regular Army was to be the Hegemony Armed Forces, in the form of the Royal regiments and divisions, the larger portion of the new force was to be drawn from the member-state militaries. This led to massive headaches for the commanding general, with disparate equipment, training and doctrine mixing to form a force that (as the United Triumph disaster showed) was dangerously shambolic. Efforts were made to bolster the performance of the new SLDF units by scattering Royal battalions and independent regiments among the new formations, but while they did stiffen the units' resolve, only time and effort would cure the situation, both by seasoning the merged troops and also by giving SLDF academy graduates time to rise to positions of authority.

Some troops, commonly those originating in the Draconis Combine, took offense at the Royals. They claimed this demonstrated the favoritism shown to the HAF by allowing many of its formations to remain, implying that the non-HAF troops needed to be babysat. In response, Noruff pointed out that the entire HAF was being absorbed by the SLDF and that many Hegemony units *had* been dismantled and integrated in the same manner as the member-state forces. In many regards the Royal units remained as much as exemplars of HAF traditions in much the same way as the Sword of Light represented the DCMS or the Davion Brigade of Guards the AFFS.

General Carlos Lee, who succeeded Noruff-Cameron after her heart attack in 2575, inherited a force that wasn't yet fit for its purpose. Despite his reservations he found himself committed to a rapidly intensifying hot war. As a consequence, a number of compromises had to be made, which meant the SLDF force deployed to the Periphery was doctrinally and structurally a far cry from Noruff's plans.

MILITARY REGIONS AND ARMY GROUPS

The Star League initially comprised six military regions, one per member-state. This rose to ten regions after the Reunification War. Each member-state military region was further divided into three districts, with each military region designated an army group named for its ruling family (so the force assigned to the Free Worlds would be Army Group Marik, while, after the Reunification War, the troops assigned to the Taurian Concordat would be Army Group Calderon). In reality, however, only a single SLDF corps was deployed in each military region at the time of the Reunification War, while the respective House's own forces were originally considered by Noruff-Cameron the remainder of the corresponding army group. These troops did not fall within the SLDF chain of command until and unless their national leader temporarily seconded them to the Star League, as occurred on a limited basis during the Reunification War when Ian Cameron called upon Houses Davion, Kurita, Marik and Steiner for additional troops.

The supreme SLDF commander in each military region was also that member-state's supreme military commander. After 2602, when the SLDF began to expand significantly and formations larger than a single corps were assigned to each region, the House leaders were replaced by career SLDF officers.

ARMIES

At the time of the Reunification War, the largest permanent SLDF formations were the corps. Doctrine held that any organization consisting of two or more corps would be designated an army, a criteria the Star League coalition forces on each of the four Periphery fronts certainly met. Noruff-Cameron's plan called for an independent army unit in each Territorial State and Military Region district—a total of twenty in all—commanded by a general or admiral and comprised of three or four corps. Standing SLDF armies were not organized until well after the end of the Reunification War.

CORPS

In the later Star League years, after the expansion of the SLDF, each corps became responsible for between 30 and 100 worlds. When the Reunification War erupted, only eight corps were fully formed, with two more in reserve. Others would be assembled on an *ad hoc* basis during the conflict. Each corps was intended to have three divisions, plus independent regiments and WarShips, but the eight line corps of 2575 were of a much less uniform nature and few were properly equipped with transport assets.

DIVISIONS AND BRIGADES

The standard operational unit of the SLDF, a division comprised three brigades of three regiments plus an air wing and both combat (e.g. artillery, engineering) and logistical (e.g. transport, signals and medical detachments) support units. In reality, the number of regiments in each brigade varied wildly during the Reunification War and even in the postwar era three regiments was the ideal rather than the rule. The plan called for four basic types of divisions, most of which would not come into existence until later in the conflict or postwar. Most SLDF formations of the early war were a *mélange* of combined arms regiments.

BattleMech: Two brigades (six regiments) of 'Mechs and one brigade (three regiments) of mechanized infantry. These were the principal offensive arm of the SLDF.

Mechanized Infantry: Reversing the structure of the 'Mech divisions, Mechanized Infantry formations comprised two brigades of mechanized infantry and one of BattleMechs. Doctrinally they were "offensive support" units.

Infantry: Two brigades of non-mechanized infantry and one brigade of light BattleMechs; infantry divisions were principally defensive formations but a number were adept at fighting in specialized terrain such as mountains, snow and urban areas.

Jump Infantry: Intended as shock troops, jump infantry divisions comprised two brigades of jump infantry and one brigade of BattleMechs. Their role was akin to paratroopers in earlier conflicts—to move quickly and seize objectives, which heavier forces could then secure.

REGIMENTS

Though their basic structure would be familiar to modern militaries, the SLDF's regiments were intended to be more specialized than modern equivalents. Many were designed to work within a divisional structure and lacked many of the support elements a Thirty-first Century regiment would take for granted. Others—the independent regiments, designated Dragoons (heavy), Light Horse (mobile), Hussars (multi-role) and CAAN (Combined Armor, Air and Naval—amphibious operations)—would not have looked out of place in Stone's Coalition.

Though some of these specialized units existed during the Reunification War, many regiments were jack-of-all-trades units built around combined-arms principles. By the end of the conflict, combined-arms was rarely practiced on the regimental level. Non-independent regiments (those included in brigade and divisional formations) were named as follows:

Heavy Assault: These regiments contained heavy BattleMechs and armor and were intended for offensive operations

Regulars: Numerically the most common SLDF regiments, these line units began the war as combined-arms forces (usually a battalion each of 'Mechs, armor and infantry) but soon specialized into dedicated 'Mech, armor and infantry formations.

Horse: Pathfinder forces, Horse units used mobile (usually light or medium) 'Mechs and vehicles and mechanized or jump infantry.

Light Horse: Principally infantry formations with only a reinforced company of 'Mechs per regiment, Light Horse units were support formations, intended to provide specialists such as combat engineers and special-forces troops to larger formations.

IMAGE AND REALITY

Many historians have struggled to grasp the military realities of the early Star League, saying the force-sizes quoted are too small to be effective (or, in the case of WarShips, too numerous). They neglect several important factors: the operational strength of the SLDF wasn't its total strength, and its organization wasn't uniform, clear-cut or static.

On paper, the SLDF of 2575 comprised 270 regiments and 500 WarShips, spread equally across ten corps. This did not represent the entirety of the troops available, nor was it entirely a 'Mech force. Many troops, from both the HAF and from the Great Houses, were not initially assigned to operational units but instead formed an amorphous operational reserve (distinct from the reservists of the two Reserve Corps). This reserve was the basis for newly-raised regiments and brigades that both bolstered the SLDF (such as the formation of VIII and XI Corps) and provided replacements.

Complicating perceptions of the League military is that officially many SLDF regiments were combined-arms units of only thirty to sixty percent BattleMech forces. The SLDF may thus have only fielded around 150 regiments of 'Mechs though independent regiments, operational reserves and field-reconfigurations complicate the accounting. Certainly there were pure 'Mech, armor and infantry forces but they didn't rise to prominence until later in the war (though some formations, particularly in the Rim Worlds campaign, always had a notable shortfall of conventional troops). As the Reunification War progressed, many units metamorphosed—most significantly the emergence of the striker regiments—and the force that emerged at the end of the war was a far cry from that which started the conflict. The SLDF of 2600 was organized, disciplined, battle-hardened and confident.

—*Thelos Auburn, Perceptions of War, Donegal Press, 3032*

RANK EQUIVALENCY TABLE

ENLISTED

	SLDF	AFFS	CCAF	DCMS	FWLM	LCAF	MAF	OAM	RRA	TDF
E1	Recruit	Recruit	Recruit	—	—	Recruit	Volunteer	Defender	—	Recruit
E2	Private	Private	—	Private	Private	Private	First Ranker	—	Private	Corporal
E3	Private, First Class	—	—	—	Private, First Class	Private, First Class	—	—	—	—
E4	—	Corporal	Lance Corporal	Lance Corporal	Corporal	Corporal	—	—	Corporal	—
E5	Corporal	—	—	Corporal	—	Senior Corporal	—	Protector	—	Section Leader
E6	Sergeant	Sergeant	Lance Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant	Lance Corporal	Guardian	Sergeant	Force Sergeant
E7	—	—	—	Master Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Star Corporal	—	Over-Sergeant	—
E8	—	—	Asst. Force Leader	Talon Sergeant	Master Sergeant	Sergeant Major	Command Sergeant	—	Master Sergeant	—
E9	—	—	—	—	—	Staff Sgt. Major	—	—	—	—
E10	Master Sergeant	Sergeant Major	Force Leader	Sergeant Major	Sergeant Major	Senior Sgt. Major	Banner Sergeant	Preceptor	Sergeant Major	Battalion Chief Sgt.

OFFICER

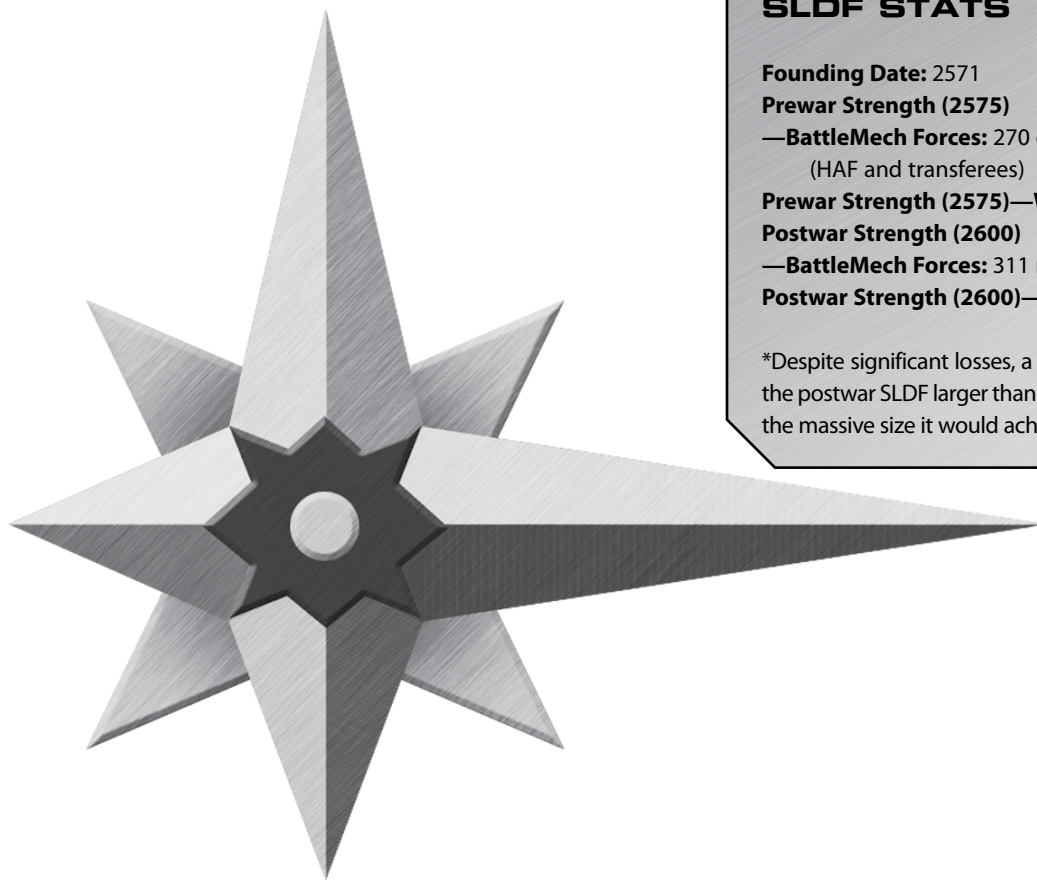
	SLDF	AFFS	CCAF	DCMS	FWLM	LCAF	MAF	OAM	RRA	TDF
O1	Ensign	Subaltern	Sub-Commander	—	Lieutenant Junior Grade	Leutnant	—	—	—	Coronet
O2	Lieutenant	Leftenant	Commander	Chu-I	Lieutenant	First Lieutenant	Ensign	Supervisor	Tetrarch (Lieutenant)	Subaltern
O3	Captain	Captain	Captain	Tai-I	Captain	Hauptmann	—	Section Leader	—	—
O4	Major	Major	Major	Sho-sa	Force Commander	Kommandant	Commander	Director	Lokhagos (Captain)	Brigadier
O5	—	—	—	—	—	Hauptmann Kommandant	—	—	Tagmatarchis (Major)	—
O6	—	Colonel	—	Chu-sa	Lieutenant Colonel	Leutnant Colonel	Major	—	—	—
O7	Colonel	Colonel	Colonel	Tai-sa	Colonel	Colonel	—	Chairman	Syntagmatarchis (Colonel)	Colonel
O8	—	Leftenant General	—	Sho-sho	—	Leutnant General	—	—	Taxiarchos (Brigadier General)	—
O9	Lieutenant General	Major	—	—	General	Hauptman General	Colonel	—	—	Comptroller
O10	Major General	General/Marshal	—	Tai-sho	—	Kommandant General	—	—	Polemarchos (Lieutenant General)	Marshal
O11	General	Field Marshal	Senior Colonel	Warlord	Marshal	General	—	Senior Chairman	Strategos (General)	—
O12	Commanding General	First Prince	Chancellor	Coordinator	Captain General	General of the Armies	—	President	—	Senior Marshal

A NOTE ON FORCE STATISTICS

In addition to the description of each military involved in the Reunification War, each has a statistics block detailing its size at key points during the campaign. Prewar Strength (2575) lists its operational strength at the time of the Pollux Proclamation. In the case of member-state militaries this is after the initial draw-downs

mandated by the Star League Accords and so does not reflect their capabilities during the Age of War. Postwar Strength (2600) lists the size of the armed forces at the end of the hostilities, reflecting combat losses, additional downsizing (to meet mandated draw-down numbers not achieved prewar) and, in the case of the SLDF, the effect of recruitment.

STAR LEAGUE DEFENSE FORCE (SLDF)



SLDF STATS

Founding Date: 2571

Prewar Strength (2575)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 270 combined-arms regiments
(HAF and transferees)

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 507

Postwar Strength (2600)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 311 regiments*

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 434

*Despite significant losses, a quarter-century of recruitment left the postwar SLDF larger than at its start though still a far cry from the massive size it would achieve in the Twenty-eighth Century.

I CORPS

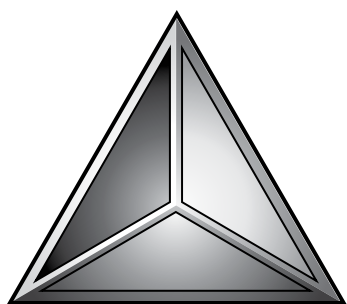
Often referred to as the Terran Corps, I Corps was solely responsible for the defense of humanity's homeworld. The First Royal Brigade, a heavy assault unit, formed the backbone of I Corps' strength, supported by two more Royal BattleMech and one Royal armor regiments. The remainder of the Second and Third Brigades' compliments were made up equally of the best and most loyal regiments pulled from the other Star League member-states. The nascent SLDF further ensured that I Corps had the best equipment and best training, comparing favorably with that of the Royal units. There was never any question that I Corps would lead the invasion of the Taurian Concordat.



II CORPS

Just as I Corps had responsibility for Terra, II Corps had responsibility for defending the remainder of the Terran Hegemony. And just like I Corps, II Corps consisted of one full Royal Brigade as well as two additional Royal BattleMech and one Royal armor regiments, with the remaining units pulled equally from the other member-states. Though not as well equipped as I Corps, II Corps nonetheless trained hard under its initial commander, Major General Amos Forlough, to reach elite status before deploying to the Outworlds front.





III CORPS

III Corps experienced many difficulties in its first years of service within the Draconis Combine military region, almost exclusively due to the protestations of Combine citizens. That a third of their armed forces had been stripped from them to form the SLDF, none

of which were even allowed to serve in their home nation, was proof positive to many Combine citizens that the Camerons meant to erase the Combine's national identity. The placement of Federated Suns and Lyran regiments added fuel to the fire, drawing First Lord Cameron and Coordinator Kurita into a political battle neither needed. Ultimately, the two quieted the uproar with the appointment of a former Combine officer as corps commander followed by the highly visible replacement of Davion and a Steiner regiments by Liao and a Marik regiments (with the costs of doing so borne by the Combine). The corps reached operational status and redeployed to the Taurian front to take part in the planned six-month campaign, after which it would move back to the Outworlds front; that plan, of course, proved far too optimistic, and III Corps remained on the Taurian front throughout the war.



IV CORPS

IV Corps' initial assignment was garrison of the Federated Suns military region, which gave it primary responsibility over the Taurian area of operations before the war and ensured its

involvement in the Taurian invasion. The corps' first years were fraught with difficulties and political turmoil—though not to the extent of that experienced by VI Corps—when former Capellan and Draconis Combine soldiers caused difficulties, especially on worlds once claimed by their home nations. These problems led to the replacing of two corps commanders before the war even began, certainly contributing to leadership and training issues during the first years of the war.



V CORPS

V Corps, with responsibility for the Capellan military region, initially poised itself for action against either the Taurian Concordat or the Magistracy of Canopus. A combination of continued training problems and relatively heavy anti-Star League renegade activity within their area of operations kept V Corps out of action on both of those

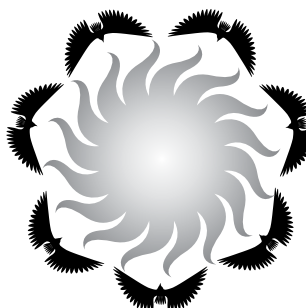
fronts. Instead, V Corps deployed to support II Corps in the invasion of the Outworlds Alliance. V Corps continued to suffer leadership and training problems throughout their action in the Outworlds, however, but ultimately took overall responsibility for the last years of the war there.



VI CORPS

Headquartered on Altair, VI Corps' primary responsibility was to defend Star League interests within the Lyran Commonwealth. Though the presence of Combine troops within the corps caused some initial controversy, SLDF officers ensured that nationalistic interests didn't wreak the same havoc as within III and IV Corps. That focus,

as well as an exhausting training regimen, ensured VI Corps outperformed every other SLDF corps in the first United Triumph exercises. VI Corps transferred to the Taurian front at the outset of the war, but later returned to the Lyran region for the invasion of the Rim Worlds Republic—in the process transforming its organization to better suit the realities of the Reunification War.



VII CORPS

Thanks to Marion Marik's politicking, VII Corps grew to the largest corps at the time of the Reunification War. Headquartered on Procyon and charged with the defense of the Free Worlds, it was the *de facto* Army Group Marik and became the core of the SLDF assault against the Magistracy of Canopus. Transport assets were a particular weakness of VII Corps

early in the conflict, slowing their deployment and limiting tactical flexibility. The scope of the campaign meant that at most two divisions operated together (save for the invasion of Canopus) and the formation was heavily reliant on its independent regiments. Because of Captain-General Marik's personal commitment, VII Corps was the only SLDF formation to hold to the Ares Conventions, resulting in the Magistracy campaign being the most civilized (in relative terms) of the Reunification War.



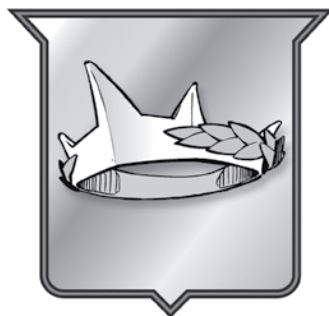
VIII (PROVISIONAL) CORPS

Assembled from a number of units being mustered in the Hegemony, VIII (Provisional) Corps was born of necessity in the Rim Worlds campaign. With the seven line corps already committed, a new formation was needed for the Republican operation and the hast-

ily assembled VIII Corps was it. Unlike the other formations, which had seen action against the Taurian Concordat, or even the small contingents of House troops assigned to Operation Mailed Fist, the members of VIII Corps were poorly organized and inexperienced. The campaign would prove to be a bloody crucible in which the unit was forged into a cohesive fighting force, albeit at considerable cost in lives and material.

STAR GUARD CORPS

The Star Guard Corps initially assumed responsibility for the protection of the First Lord and the Star League Court, including the lords of the Star League Council. The Star Guards initially battled with I Corps for the best and the brightest, and ultimately formed composite regiments from companies and battalions pulled from throughout the newly forming SLDF, provided with the best equipment the SLDF had available. The Star Guard trained hard and tolerated no disciplinary infractions, pledging ultimate loyalty to the First Lord and the Star League. The six brigades of the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Divisions each served as bodyguard units for the six Council Lords, while the Twenty-second Royal Division was tasked with the defense of Unity City. That all changed a decade into the war against the Concordat; faced with a seemingly endless war, First Lord Cameron authorized General Lord Damien Onaga to deploy the elite Star Guard Corps to the Taurian front. Only the Sixty-fourth Royal Brigade remained behind as the First Lord's private guard.



FIRST AND SECOND RESERVE CORPS

The two Reserve Corps were organized from among the soldiers of the new SLDF who opted to retire from active service but that still wanted to serve the Star League. Because the two corps were formed primarily from individuals rather than whole units, entirely new regiments were organized, with each of the two corps' three divisions headquartered in a different nation. Likewise, because these reservists would remain citizen-soldiers, they remained assigned within their own home nation, though command of regiments and higher remained with active SLDF officers. Typically, one or two mixed battalions were assigned to each major world within a particular member-state, though because of their reserve status, they were provided the oldest equipment within the SLDF.



On the other hand, nearly every combat battalion could claim a paper manpower strength of over 200%—more than twice the authorized strength of a normal battalion; while vehicle, tank, 'Mech and fighter allocations to these units remained at standard levels, the additional manpower ensured that full-strength units would be deployed when activated, and both eased the rotation of troops as well as the assignment of replacement troops. Additionally, support units normally assigned at the brigade or division level were instead deployed at the battalion and regiment level within the Reserve Corps. Each battalion possessed its own supply and services, maintenance, and transportation companies. Likewise, reserve regiments included intelligence, civil support and artillery companies, as well as whole military police and engineer battalions.

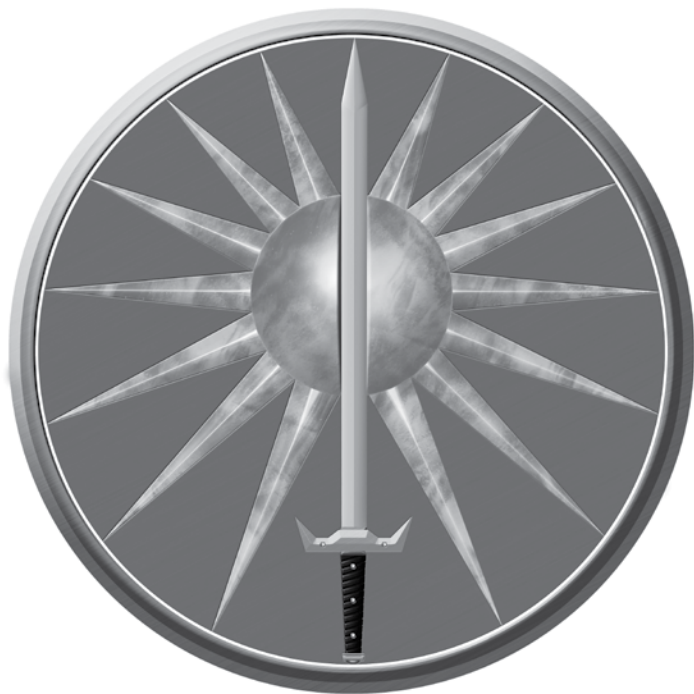
Within the First Reserve Corps, the Twenty-fifth Division was headquartered in the Lyran Commonwealth, the Twenty-sixth in the Draconis Combine, and the Twenty-seventh Royal Division in the Terran Hegemony. The Second Reserve Corps' Twenty-Eighth Division was the Free Worlds League reserve, the Twenty-ninth the Capellan reserve, and the Thirtieth was the Federated Suns reserve division. The two Reserve Corps activated and deployed their first troops into garrison assignments early in the Reunification War against Taurus, and continued to rotate reservists through two-year deployments throughout the rest of the war and well into the occupation of the Periphery nations.

XI CORPS

General Amalthia Kincaid organized XI Corps on a provisional basis when she took command of the Taurian front in 2582, building the first of a new kind of SLDF corps. Originally consisting of just two divisions, built from five striker regiments along with replacement soldiers and whole battalions plucked from select I and III Corps regiments, XI Corps served some fifteen years on the Taurian front. Instead of spreading the BattleMech, armor and infantry regiments evenly, Kincaid focused them into full brigades, giving XI Corps the ability to deliver a powerful punch; this ultimately grew to become SLDF standard. Kincaid's successor expanded XI Corps into a full three-division organization, albeit without a full Royal division or even brigade.



ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERATED SUNS (AFFS)



AFFS STATS

Founding Date: 2541

Prewar Strength (2575)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 88 regiments

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 78

Postwar Strength (2600)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 81 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 38

The AFFS as it existed at the outset of the Star League era was a military that had experienced a massive transformation in the wake of the Davion Civil War—a conflict concluded some three decades before the signing of the Star League Accords. The nation's military had suffered horrible losses during more than fifteen years of civil war, including the loss of many of its strongest and most popular leaders, while many more were purged in the years after. Gone were the five principalities and their virtual private armies. In their place was a united military organization that pledged its loyalty to one leader—the First Prince of the Federated Suns.

The cost of the devastating civil war was still being felt three decades after its conclusion, thanks especially to the Economic Crisis of 2566. The AFFS' ground forces had mostly recovered from the war, but the aged equipment that remained in service long after it should have been retired was still being slowly replaced, while some whole regiments—especially those that still retained lingering pangs of loyalty to their former masters—had been converted from 'Mech or armor units into conventional infantry regiments and never returned to their original designations. The Federated Suns' navy remained wholly understrength, having lost more than a third of its WarShips during the civil war; rebuilding of the navy was a task that simply had to be reprioritized until the nation could better afford its massive price tag.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

Alexander Davion, as First Prince and Marshal of the Federated Suns, was firmly in command of his nation and its military following the Davion Civil War. He dismantled the structure of five equal principalities and in its place organized the Federated Suns into three

marches, in the process combining the five disparate military organizations into a single united AFFS. The AFFS High Command directed the military, reporting to the First Prince, while the many disparate regiments and other units were assigned to one of the three marches (the position of Marshal of the Armies would not be created for almost five centuries, though the Prince's Champion aided the First Prince in running both the military and the government).

A dual chain of command separated the noble lord charged with civilian authority over a march from the region's military commander, an AFFS field marshal (though in later years, many of the march lords would hold both positions). The Federated Suns' three marches were further separated into several combat regions (CRs) and multiple polymorphous defense zones (PDZs) each. Major military operations were typically overseen by the appropriate march commander, though the First Prince certainly could—and in the case of the Reunification War did—directly task specific officers to take command of important operations

INTEGRATION WITH THE SLDF

When the time came for each of the Star League member-states to contribute forces to the formation of the new Star League Defense Force in 2571, Alexander Davion took the opportunity to prune the most troublesome, worst-trained and worst-equipped units from his military. The once-proud Terran Brigade—a large organization of regiments that had guarded the former Terran March and still harbored deep resentment against Davion for his eradication of the Terran March principality—was transferred whole, as were half of the Syrtis Fusiliers regiments (units which had sided against Davion in the civil war) along with a number of former

private regiments. In all, Davion transferred thirty-seven regiments of ground forces out of the AFFS and into the SLDF, though only twenty-three WarShips.

The First Lord came to Prince Davion just a few years later with a request for additional forces—an auxiliary corps to remain under the operational command of a Davion-appointed officer, but assigned under the overall command of the SLDF general charged with invading and conquering the Taurian Concordat. Davion assembled a force of thirty-five ground regiments pulled from the Avalon Hussars, the Syrtis Fusiliers and a number of independent commands. He also transferred the bulk of his nation's WarShip fleet to the Taurian frontier in expectation of heavy naval action; of course, his insight would prove as prescient as it was ultimately disastrous.

ADDITIONAL WAR PREPARATIONS

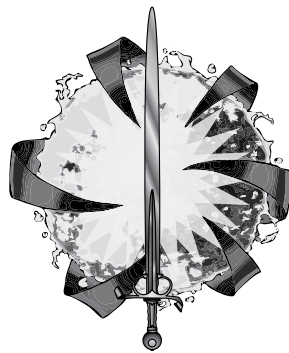
First Prince Alexander Davion focused the sights of his AFFS on the Taurian Concordat, but just the same ensured that his military was just as ready to take advantage of potential openings along the Outworlds front. While the Federated Suns Auxiliary Corps organized and trained for action within the Concordat, Davion readied his Capellan and Draconis March forces to move either as garrison forces or as *ad hoc* invasion forces onto either Taurian or Outworlds planets.

Of course, Davion would also organize and deploy the Pitcairn Legion to fight against the Star League. These three regiments of volunteer MechWarriors, primarily recruited from the Davion Brigade of Guards, would both fight hard for the Outworlds as well as train that nation's first true BattleMech units.

NOTABLE UNITS

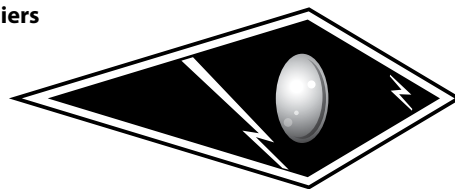
Pitcairn Legion

Colonel Elias Pitcairn's volunteers, from the moment of their appearance on Sevon in 2581, confused, aggravated and outperformed the SLDF and DCMS at every meeting. They also delivered the SLDF its worst and most ignoble defeats of the Reunification War. After the SLDF's abject failure on Haynesville, General Amos Forlough came to view the Legion as his own personal demons, a fact Pitcairn and his MechWarriors used well throughout the war. Typically outnumbered and outmatched, the Legion acquitted itself well, though they also came close to complete loss on Lushann and Tellman IV. The Legion was disbanded in 2585, with many of the veterans returning to the Davion Brigade of Guards. The Legion's colors remained on permanent display in the Fox's Den thereafter.



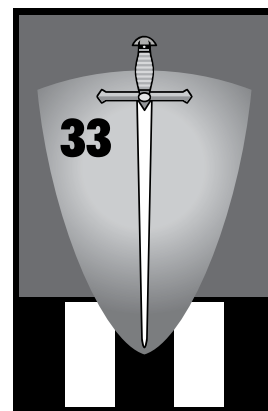
Seventh Syrtis Fusiliers

The Seventh was the first Syrtis Fusiliers regiment to back Alexander Davion during the Davion Civil War, where they played a major role for Davion in the Draconis March. The Seventh lost more than half of its MechWarriors and most of its support troops on Pierce to a series of terrorist bombs. Little more than a reinforced battalion for the next several years, the Seventh survived relatively light action on Verdegreis and Dumassas before rotating into garrison in the Pleiades. It served there for more than two decades, its MechWarriors surviving hundreds of bombings and other terrorist plots while also hunting down and capturing the most Taurian partisans of any Davion or Star League unit.



Thirty-third Avalon Hussars

The Thirty-third became known as the Spelunkers after developing a reputation for discovering and clearing out scores of hidden bunkers on Maveigh and Montour. The regiment's light 'Mech drivers, in particular, became adept at fitting their machines into tight spaces no one thought possible to clear out their targets, though in the process losing forty-five MechWarriors. The regiment's most adept MechWarriors spent much of the rest of the war as trainers and observers attached to various Davion and SLDF units on the Taurian front, teaching the same tactics.



CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION ARMED FORCES (CCAF)

The Capellan Confederation emerged from the Age of War a troubled and weakened nation, with a military that had endured more than its share of trials and tribulations. The Capellan Confederation Armed Forces were still struggling with reforms instituted by Jasmine Liao a century earlier, which left it with a weak and often ineffectual chain of command. They were also rebuilding from the disastrous and psychotic reign of Kalvin Liao, who had forced his military into the losing proposition of attempting to wrest Andurien from the Free Worlds League.

The Capellans also possessed the weakest and least technologically advanced military of any of the Star League member-states. What it did possess, however, was a dedicated soldiery; Major Kalvar Loric's creed had sparked the predominance of the MechWarrior within the CCAF, and was further transforming the rest of the military into a professional organization with mutual trust between it and its political leaders. Though the CCAF did not participate in the invasion of the Periphery, facing only the renegade Freebooter's War, it benefited tremendously from the technological and doctrinal advances brought by Reunification War. It emerged during the Star League era as a modern military organization hampered only by its structural inadequacies.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

Chancellor Jasmine Liao's reorganization of the CCAF in 2455 stripped every general of rank, leaving no officer over the rank of colonel. The Capellan military was left with just a handful of senior colonels and a long list ranking the seniority of every other colonel. This led to more than a century of battling among the Capellan colonels for their own pieces of the pie, watched carefully by the Maskirovka and their Chancellor to ensure of no disloyalty.

The Chancellor sits in command of the CCAF, with the Capellan Command Council, consisting of the six senior colonels—one for each Capellan commonality—and select government representatives, overseeing the military's day-to-day operations. The CCAF is organized into six administrative departments or offices (including

the Capellan Navy), while its combat strength is focused within the line regiments, the Home Guard regiments and the militia. The senior colonels each command the military forces assigned to their commonality, and also take charge of major military operations as necessary.

INTEGRATION WITH THE SLDF

The Capellan Confederation's soldiers were very eager after the announcement that each of the Star League member-states would contribute forces to the formation of the SLDF. For the common soldier, it was the prospect of serving a higher cause or taking command of the best military technology that money could buy that was the most attractive. For Capellan officers, it was the chance to advance to higher command without the threat of the Maskirovka looming over them. Chancellor Ursula Liao transferred forty-five regiments of troops, primarily line regiments, to the SLDF, including sixteen BattleMech regiments. Dozens more were drawn down, mostly Home Guard units, though many were transferred to militia status or were redesignated as internal security troops. The Chancellor further transferred almost two-thirds of her nation's WarShip fleet to the Star League, seizing the opportunity to rid her military of its oldest and least capable equipment. The size and scope of these transfers excused the CCAF from making a direct contribution to the war, but overall troops of Capellan heritage were as well represented as those of other member-states. More scurrilous reports suggested that additional CCAF troops were not employed so as to avoid Ian Cameron being in debt to a chancellor whose commitment to the war was lackluster at best.

NOTABLE UNITS

Red Lancers

Originally the Second Hexare Lancers, the regiment became the Red Lancers after destroying the renegade military junta that overthrew Jasmine Liao's brother and opposed her rise to power. As the Chancellor's personal bodyguard regiment, its MechWarriors regularly reacted to deep incursions into the Confederation by Davion and Marik forces during the latter days of the Age of War. During the Reunification War, they made several shows of force along the Federated Suns and Free Worlds League borders—including a two-year relocation to Andurien—to emphasize their Chancellor's will in interstellar matters.

CCAF STATS

Founding Date: 2366

Prewar Strength (2575)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 61 regiments

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 45

Postwar Strength (2600)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 65 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 45



DRACONIS COMBINE MUSTERED SOLDIERY (DCMS)



DCMS STATS

Founding Date: 2319
Prewar Strength (2575)
 —BattleMech Forces: 94 regiments
Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 49
Postwar Strength (2600)
 —BattleMech Forces: 85 regiments
Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 48

The Draconis Combine emerged from the Age of War a strong power, albeit one with a lagging economy weakened by decades of political isolation combined with war. The Age of War had also left deep scars on the nation and its military. The tyrannical rule of the Von Rohrs Dynasty throughout much of the Twenty-fifth Century had likewise left the nation broken and fearful, and even their overthrow in 2510 did little to ease the peoples' minds. It had reunited the nation and put Martin McAllister—a Kurita by blood if not name—on the throne, though a “true Kurita” did not come to power until 2556 when Hehiro Kurita took over as Coordinator.

As a result, the Combine—and therefore its military—remained in search of an identity when the Star League came of age during the Reunification War. The national embracing of *bushido* and traditional Japanese culture was still decades away, but while the people of the Combine accepted their role within the Star League, they were adamant that their nation and their culture not be absorbed—and in the process, eliminated—by this new alliance. The DCMS especially looked to make its mark.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Coordinator, as emperor, commands the entirety of the Draconis Combine. He (or she) *is* the Combine, just as the Combine is the Coordinator. The DCMS, or more accurately in this era, the Ministry of War (commonly known as the Pillar of Steel) was led by the Minister of War, who was appointed by the Coordinator and oversaw thirteen bureaus (this position would evolve into that of *Gunji-no-Kanrei* in the Thirty-first Century). Like the rest of

the Combine government, the Ministry of War's various bureaus encompassed confusing and often overlapping responsibilities that regularly left subordinates and commanders alike frustrated. Beneath the Minister of War served thirteen ministers, including the leaders of the Bureau of Substitution, the Procurement Department, the Draconis Combine Mustered Soldiery (the army) and the Draconis Combine Admiralty (the navy).

All ground forces were assigned to the DCMS, and all of these forces were distributed among the Draconis Combine's military districts, each of which is commanded by a warlord. These five warlords report directly to the Coordinator, bypassing the Ministers of War and the DCMS (who, in turn either exerted or peddled their influence over the warlords through their control of the bureaucracy and logistics). Each of the five military districts fielded its own “regulars” regiments, while a number of independent organizations—such as the Sword of Light—provided additional forces to the Coordinator and his warlords. The BattleMech regiment became, during the Age of War, the Combine's primary combat and maneuver force; the commander of the BattleMech regiment likewise grew to become the *de facto* senior commander among armor, infantry and even aerospace commanders.

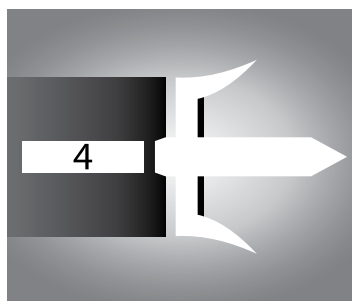
INTEGRATION WITH THE SLDF

The prospect of permanently assigning units to the SLDF was met by consternation and open hostility throughout the Combine's military. The thought of swearing loyalty to someone other than the Coordinator heresy. Coordinator Hehiro Kurita

asked at first for volunteers and then turned to his warlords to select units to transfer to the Star League. The bulk of the transferred units were pulled from the district regulars, though the Arkab Legions and Proserpina Hussars each lost a regiment. The Combine lost a total of thirty-nine regiments, as well as fifty-seven WarShips, to the forming SLDF.

Kurita later temporarily provided an additional six BattleMech, four armor and eleven infantry regiments to the SLDF. The Galedon Regulars provided the bulk of the forces that made up this Draconis Combine Auxiliary Corps, though each of the other districts ended up providing at least two regiments. While this request on the part of First Lord Cameron was initially met with hostility, when it became clear that these additional forces would retain their own identity and remain under the command of a Combine officer, support for the DCMS corps came from every corner of the Combine and from every class. Kurita's people wanted nothing more than to prove to all their military predominance.

NOTABLE UNITS



Fourth Benjamin Regulars

The Fourth Benjamin Regulars came to the fight late, battling transportation delays and equipment malfunctions that prevented it from reaching the Outworlds front until mid-2582. Their first—and, ultimately, only—target of the war was Budingin, where they met

the Second Pitcairn Regiment. The Fourth battled the Davion MechWarriors as well as severe weather and continuing maintenance problems the rest of the year and well into the next. The Fourth's MechWarriors never relinquished their spirit, however, ruthlessly breaking the world's resistance and forcing the Second Pitcairn to withdraw entirely.



Seventeenth Galedon Regulars

The Seventeenth was a provincial regiment that had long served the Combine. It had transitioned from an armored regiment to a BattleMech regiment in late 2528. In 2572, the regiment deployed to the Outworlds

Alliance as a part of Ian Cameron's Directive 21 peacekeeping force. The Seventeenth's MechWarriors dutifully carried out their orders with typical Kuritan brutal efficiency, leading to the Santiago Massacre and creating yet another series of sparks that led to the Reunification War. The Seventeenth remained on the Outworlds front throughout the war, only adding to its well-earned blood-thirsty and brutal reputation.



Second Sword of Light

Unofficially nicknamed the "Blood Snakes" (their official nickname was the Steel Dragon) for their bloody actions against the Second Amaris Dragoons on Timbuktu, the Second Sword was roundly despised by the RWA and the SLDF alike. Their arrogance and brutality sullied their reputation, and only the general horror of the conflict

(and the suspension of the Ares Conventions) saved them from criminal proceedings. However, their inhumane methods were effective at ending resistance (though it could be argued it sent hordes of Rim Worlders into the RRA camp).



First Arkab Legion

Part of the semi-autonomous Azami within the Combine, the fanatical troops of the Arkab Legion were notable for petitioning the Coordinator for inclusion in the force sent against the Rim Worlds Republic. Specializing in fast attacks, they were often the spearhead of DCMS assaults in the

campaign. Though ferocious in combat, they earned a grudging respect from their Republican opponents for the kindness they showed defeated foes (in stark contrast to the Kurita House troops) and as a consequence they were the only DCMS formation not under a "kill on sight" order by both the RWA and RRA.

THE FREE WORLDS LEAGUE MILITARY (FWLM)



The FWLM of the mid Twenty-sixth Century was a far cry from the unified and effective force that existed in the mid Thirty-first Century. That wasn't to say the FWLM was weak—all the state militaries of the Age of War were competent, battle-hardened forces, but federalism and political self-interest was deeply ingrained in their structure (though not to the extent of the Succession Wars, where many Captain-Generals would find their hands tied by the Home Defense Act). Additionally, though the Captain-General wasn't as hamstrung as in later years, neither did they have the executive authority conferred by Resolution 288, allowing Parliament to exert significant influence, something that played a role in the prosecution of the Reunification War, particularly in the Canopian theater.

COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE FWLM

Unlike many nations, where the head of state was the titular but not operational head of the military, in the Free Worlds League the Captain-General was the principal commander of the armed forces. Indeed, the post had originally been a temporary one, Parliament's warlord in time of crisis, but Albert had brokered it into the position of ultimate political power: House Marik being the recognized Free Worlds League representatives to the Star League council. Marion Marik, who succeeded her father in 2573, was therefore head of the League government, the League's representative to the Star League, and the commander of the FWLM. Political and military considerations placed her at the head of the SLDF's VII Corps and in operational command of the assault against the Magistracy of Canopus. Her son and heir, Ian, served as her

FWLM STATS

Founding Date: 2271
Prewar Strength (2575)
 —**BattleMech Forces:** 115 regiments
Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 75
Postwar Strength (2600)
 —**BattleMech Forces:** 90 regiments
Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 50

assistant and deputy until his recall by Parliament in 2586, as did her siblings Reginald and Shannon prior to their deaths in action on the Taurian fronts.

Beneath the Captain-General was the Dormuth Council based on Marik, a precursor to the LCCC or "Seven Sons of Solon" that oversaw the FWLM of the Succession Wars. This council included the senior officers of the FWLM including regional commanders such as the dukes of Regulus and Oriente and the marshall of Tamarind. While the Captain-General formulated policy, it was the Council who put it into effect and oversaw the day-to-day operations of the Free Worlds League military. With the Captain-General taking command of VII Corps during the Reunification War the Dormuth Council operated with considerable autonomy, answering only to Parliament (on fiscal matters) and the Captain-General. The Council's head in 2575 was Byron Allison, Duke of Oriente, though Nicolai Kozurek, the Marshall of Tamarind took over the chair in 2588 and retained command until the return of Narinder Selaj, the Duke of Regulus, in 2597.

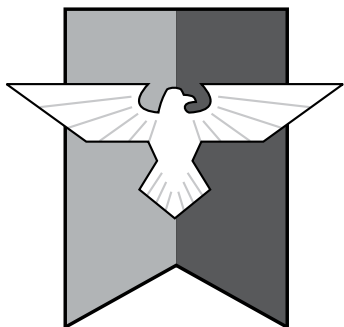
INTEGRATION WITH THE SLDF

The federal nature of the Free Worlds League and its armed forces was both a boon and a curse to the SLDF. On the one hand, they were used to working in conjunction with foreign forces and so were attitudinally better suited to operating as part of the multinational SLDF than some other militaries. The flip side was a much

less standardized level of training, equipment and organization (something that would, in fact, plague the FWLM until Thomas Marik's revamp of the Free Worlds League military in the 3030s), which led some officers to deride the Free Worlds League troopers as "willing but weak."

A total of twenty-five line regiments and fifty WarShips were provided for direct integration in the SLDF, fourteen from federal units and eleven from provincial forces. Additionally, the FWLM provided two operational corps for use in the Canopian (First Auxiliary Corps) and Rim Worlds Campaigns (Second Auxiliary Corps), though both were division-sized formations—twelve regiments (four brigades) for the First Corps and six regiments (two brigades) for the Second Corps. Ian Marik commanded the First Marik Auxiliary Corps while Narinder Selaj commanded the Second Marik Auxiliary Corps.

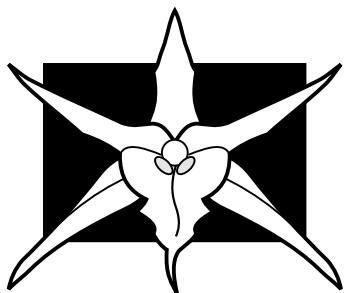
NOTABLE UNITS



First Marik Militia

Their bravery in the assault on Tetski, where they served as bait for the MAF forces in advance of the 316th Division's landings, earned the First a unit citation which they carry proudly on their regimental standard. Though not recognized by a specific decoration, the First's participation in the final battle of

the Canopian Campaign, the assault on Kossandra's Memory, generated almost as much pride among the unit's troops; a painting of the Captain-General accepting Adam Buquoy's surrender with 'Mechs of the First standing overwatch hangs in the regimental mess on Atrous.



First Fusiliers of Oriente

Commanded by the heir to the Duchy of Oriente, Butler Allison, the First are one of only two Free Worlds units to have served on multiple fronts. In Canopus they served on Ruschegg and Eleusis before being assigned to the

Second Corps to provide much-needed combat experience. They led the assault on Star's End and took part in seven others, including separating the warring LCAF factions during the Day of Rage on Barcelona. Their total of nine worlds across the two campaigns was the highest of any FWLM unit in the war.



Third Regular Hussars

Being denied a place in the assault on Canopus caused considerable tension in the Third Hussars, who felt they had been slighted by the Mariks (despite the unit's geographical distance from the Canopian capital). Tensions simmered in the unit through the next year and erupted during the Candiear operation with Colonel Shah and Westy McDowell locked in a bitter war of words regarding their respective performances. To assuage their

feelings, the Captain-General assigned the Third to the Kossandra's Memory operation, where they played a vital role in containing Buquoy's forces.



Second Defenders of Andurien

A unit without a home, their homeworld having been ceded to the Capellan Confederation to secure House Liao's participation in the Star League, the Second Defenders saw the Rim Worlds campaign as an opportunity to prove the strength and vitality of their reduced duchy. Together with the other members of their pseudo-brigade (the Second Regular Hussars and the Second Fusiliers of Oriente) the Defenders

participated in six campaigns, including the bloody and protracted siege of Terra Prime on Apollo.

THE LYRAN COMMONWEALTH ARMED FORCES (LCAF)



LCAF STATS

Founding Date: 2341

Prewar Strength (2575)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 96 regiments

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 67

Postwar Strength (2600)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 85 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 60

A financial powerhouse, the Lyran Commonwealth was able to provide its troops with top-notch equipment but, as with its Thirty-first Century incarnation, suffered from poor leadership. One of the attractions of membership in the Star League was access to SLDF academies, several of which would be sited on Commonwealth worlds according to treaty provisions (Sanglamos on Skye and the Nagelring on Tharkad), with access open to LCAF as well as SLDF troops. Conversely, the average Lyran soldier and NCO was a cut above many of his neighbors, highly skilled and used to improvising in battle (as much to counter their leaders' ineptitude as enemy actions). As a consequence, a disproportionately large number of Lyran NCOs gained positions in the SLDF.

Archon Viola Steiner-Dinesen argued against the mandated draw-down of her military. She was outvoted on the issue, but in recognition of the large area of the Commonwealth and its long borders, the LCAF was allowed to retain sixty WarShips.

COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE LCAF

While Archon Viola Steiner-Dinesen was the titular head of the Lyran Commonwealth Armed Forces, General of the Armies Michael Gilchrist served as operational commander of the LCAF at the time of the Pollux Proclamation but was succeeded by Katrin Mueller in 2789. The General of the Armies oversaw deployments and procurement in consultation with the Archon. Like her prede-

cessors, Viola had undertaken military training as was required by the Articles of Acceptance, but unlike some of her predecessors had kept up her martial training and, when the Star League descended into war with the Periphery States, she opted to lead from the front, taking personal charge of the Lyran Auxiliary Corps. On one hand this provided the troops with a great morale boost—Viola was not asking her soldiers to take any risk she wasn't willing to take herself—but it would have tragic consequences, both for the government and the Archon personally.

Because of the Commonwealth's long borders (and the threat demonstrated by the RWA early in the war) most of the LCAF was not deployed to the front but remained in defensive positions. These troops fell under the command the margraves, generals assigned to command operational theaters, and were allowed significant independence of action; during the Age of War, a complex series of standing orders and restrictions governed the margraves' actions (most of whom were, in any case, political or social appointees), leaving regimental colonels as operational commanders. Here too, however, many were appointees and their competence questionable, leaving the LCAF in a perilously weak state. Only when the graduates of SLDF academies began to rise to high rank in the early Twenty-seventh Century (and particularly once the HPG came into service) did the LCAF begin to operate effectively.

INTEGRATION WITH THE SLDF

Only one purely-Lyran formation served with the SLDF—the Lyran expeditionary force commanded by the Archon—but the LCAF contributed significant numbers of 'Mechs and WarShips to the SLDF. The Lyran officer corps was not popular with Commanding General Shandra Noruff-Cameron, lacking both military skills and the presence to operate effectively. During the United Triumph exercises, the Lyran-commanded SLDF units performed even less well than the SLDF as a whole. Noruff-Cameron had little choice but to tolerate the lackluster social officers, while the Archon hoped that service in the SLDF would whip the dilettantes into shape. Conversely, Lyran NCOs and enlisted troops were prized by the nascent formations and some even found themselves deployed in Royal units.

In 2577, with war already raging in some quarters, Estates General found itself in a quandary; petitions had been lodged with numerous representatives on behalf of a cabal of mid-ranking officers concerning the deployment of Lyran nationals in "locations prejudicial to their safety." A brief floor debate highlighted the situation—social officers taking offense at being asked to serve in a war zone—but the Archon coolly pointed out that if the officers didn't want to fight, they shouldn't have joined the military. Speaker Henry Gram dismissed the motion.

NOTABLE UNITS



Fourth Royal Guards

The First through Third Royal Guards represented Lyran provinces while the Fourth stood as proxy for the Commonwealth itself, making it a natural choice for the Lyran Expeditionary Force. A heavy formation, the Pride of the Commonwealth special-

ized in assault operations and became adept at breaching fortifications and forming a bridgehead for their companion units. The Guards were the only LCAF formation to remain with the Lyran Expeditionary Force after the Day of Rage, suffering massive damage in the assault on Apollo.



Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers

The Duke of Skye's representatives were a jack-of-all-trades regiment, best known for their skirmishing ability. A Wild West aficionado, Colonel James "Pistol Jim" Rechard often referred to his troops as his gunslingers (coincidentally the same term used by the SLDF for its duelist program in later years). Ironically, Colonel

Rechard came to empathize with the "Indian" (Republican) situation, earning him the disparaging nickname Hawkeye from Archon Viola. Despite this, Rangers performed exceptionally during the campaign until their recall after Barcelona.



Tamar Tigers

Part of the household troops of the Duke of Tamar, the Tigers were one of the best formations in the LCAF. Allowed significant independence, they bucked the trends of poor leadership and performance and were perhaps the best Lyran unit at highly mobile operations. Duke Kelswa kept his regi-

ment free of social appointees and was able to recruit (and dismiss) officers to maintain the unit's edge. When the Lyran Expeditionary Force was proposed the duke volunteered the Tigers as Tamar's representatives and they performed admirably until the tragedy of Barcelona, after which Colonel Petrov withdrew the fratricidally bloodied formation to the Commonwealth.

THE MAGISTRACY ARMED FORCES (MAF)



The modern MAF could be considered a fossil; until the Trinity Alliance the MAF's rank and organizational structure was unchanged from the Magistracy's founding. Calls to reform the Territorial States' militaries in the Star League's image were rebuffed by Governor Humphreys (and the move foundered in the Star League council when Captain-General Brion Marik, Chancellor Normann Aris and Archon Kevin Steiner-Dinesen voted against the mandate, citing cultural significance).

Prior to the Reunification War, the MAF was more a paramilitary security force than a true army, heavily dependent on home guard militia units with line regiments providing troubleshooting capabilities. The war hardened the Magistracy's attitudes and led to a crash militarization. Significant numbers of mercenary troops complemented the bolstered MAF and, unusually, were treated as equals by the Canopian forces. Despite a daring defensive strategy, the war would prove costly for the MAF, with their strength more than halved and units like the Canopian Grenadiers wiped out.

COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE MAF

Intended for peacekeeping and security rather than offensive operations, the MAF was the most streamlined military of the Periphery states despite its relative size. The highest rank (other than the Magestrix) was colonel, though the Canopian version had broader responsibilities (more in line with an SLDF lieutenant general) than in the Inner Sphere powers. Though her ancestors had been capable military strategists Magestrix Crystalla Centrella was not, but unlike some Periphery leaders she acknowledged her weakness and appointed a proxy as supreme commander of the MAF.

With few MAF officers having the requisite experience, that post fell to a mercenary (albeit Canopian by birth), Adam Buquoy. It was his strategy that confounded Marion Marik and, after the fall of Canopus, allowed the remaining MAF to keep the SLDF occupied for another four years.

MAF STATS

Founding Date: 2531

Prewar Strength (2575)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 17 Regiments

(11 regulars, 6 mercenary), 12 Home Guard Regiments

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 11

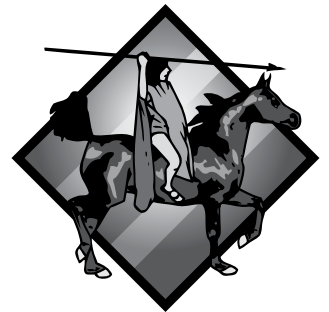
Postwar Strength (2600)—BattleMech Forces: 9 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 2

NOTABLE UNITS

The Chasseurs à Cheval

The Canopian Light Horse, as they were more commonly known, was the original element of the MAF, founded in the early years of the Magistracy. Prior to the Reunification War the four regiments fought a shadow war against the FWLM, then formed the core of Buquoy's mobile defense strategy against VII Corps and its associates, sustaining ferocious losses, including the annihilation of the Third Light Horse on Tetski.



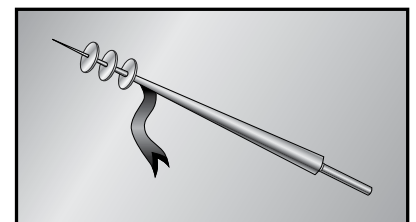
Buquoy's Bandits

The point unit in the assault on Meadowvale, Colonel Buquoy's personal command wrought havoc on the SLDF depot and forces, fighting a valiant rear-guard action to allow the other MAF units to achieve their objectives. The skill and bravery of the contracted force did much for the reputation of mercenaries at a time when other less reputable units, born of the prewar demobilizations, were doing their best to tarnish the reputation of such forces.

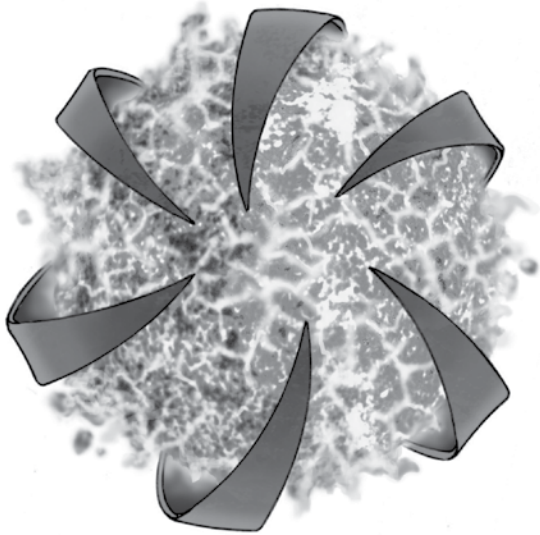


Kossandra's Volunteers

Originally an *ad hoc* force of militia units, the Volunteers were officially inducted into the MAF and recognized as regulars. Though lacking the training and equipment of line units, they fought tenaciously and many were lauded as heroes. The formation was officially disbanded following the Reunification War but persisted as a semi-secret society, eventually being reborn as Cassandra's Volunteers following the Declaration of Independence during the Amaris Crisis.



OUTWORLDS ALLIANCE MILITIA (OAM)



The Outworlds Alliance Militia was anything but an organized, national military at the onset of the Reunification War. Save for occasional pirate activity, there were no true interstellar threats to the Alliance's security; even the perpetually hawkish Draconis Combine had not set its sights upon the Alliance's lightly populated agrarian worlds. Accordingly, defense was an activity best left to the local planetary governments to organize on their own.

That all changed in 2572 when Alliance President Grigori Avellar ordered the formation of the Militia. Though initially equipped with little more than hastily armed civilian vehicles and WorkMechs, the Outworlds Alliance Militia recruited experienced Inner Sphere military veterans and soon began manufacturing its first lines of combat vehicles. When those efforts alone proved unable to supply the needs of the OAM, the Alliance turned to outside concerns—primarily the Federated Suns—to provide first the equipment and then the training that its Militia would need to have any hope of standing up against the might of the Star League.

Conventional infantry and armor formed the backbone of the nascent Alliance Militia, especially the four armored divisions, organized along Star League lines and consisting of four armored regiments and five mechanized infantry regiments each. The Outworlders were only able to secure a relative handful of BattleMechs and aerospace fighters before the invasion began; civilian vehicles, aircraft and spacecraft of all kinds were converted into combat platforms that served the Militia well throughout the war. This do-it-yourself mentality pervaded the Reunification War-era OAM, leading to a number of unique technological and tactical innovations, but hindered it just the same when faced with the Star League's technological juggernaut.

The OAM saw numerous minor transformations during and after the Star League era, ultimately culminating in its reorganization into the Alliance Military Corps as the First Succession War swept through both the Inner Sphere and Periphery.

OAM STATS

Founding Date: 2572

Prewar Strength (2575)—BattleMech Forces: 1 Regiment

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 0

Postwar Strength (2600)—BattleMech Forces: 5 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 0

COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Alliance Militia was organized specifically to downplay typical martial traditions, emphasizing the pacifistic nature of the Outworlds Alliance. The president retained overall command of the Militia, while the senior chairman was his or her most senior military advisor and served as the president's conduit to the remainder of the Militia (though during the Reunification War, Senior Chairman Nordd served less as an advisor and more as military commander, a feat no succeeding OAM senior chairman managed to achieve).

The OAM was built around the concept of citizen-based planetary defense. Each world recruited, trained and equipped its own planetary militia, commanded by the planet's civilian governor. The OAM would similarly recruit, train and equip national troops, which would be assigned on an as-needed basis to shore up planetary defenses or prosecute special missions. These troops would automatically be subordinated to the local governor unless the president specifically granted additional authority to an OAM officer (a common practice during the Reunification War, though one that led to some issues).

NOTABLE UNITS



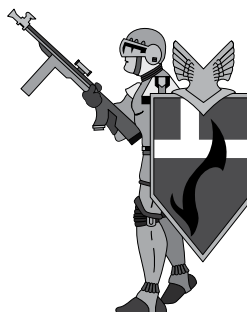
Santiago Carabiniers

Built from the spoils of the Alliance's greatest victory on Haynesville, the Carabiniers and the

Pitkin Lancers were the Outworlds' first true BattleMech regiments (the First Alliance BattleMech Regiment (Light) was little more than a mish-mash provisional organization). The Carabiniers, piloting some of the Star League's most advanced BattleMechs, fought their first battles on the worlds of Lushann and Tellman IV. On the former, they executed a combat drop that allowed the Pitcairn Legion to leave the world, while on the latter they had their Day of Vengeance that saw two elite SLDF 'Mech regiments eliminated.

Alliance Borderers

Formed alongside the Alliance Grenadiers in late 2582, the Borderers received their baptism of fire on Cerberus, facing the SLDF's Fourth and Fifth Divisions. They fought a guerrilla campaign against the Star League divisions for well over a year, preventing the complete loss of the important world.



THE RIM WORLDS ARMY (RWA) AND RIFT REPUBLICAN ARMY (RRA)

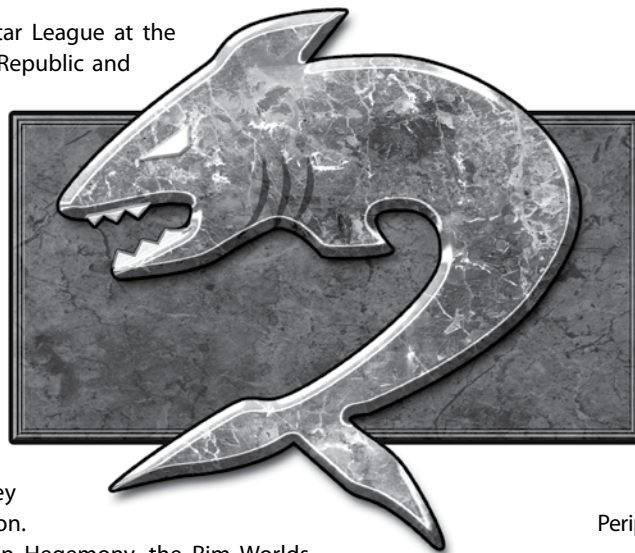
Notionally aligned with the Star League at the start of the Reunification War, the Republic and its military shattered under the mismanagement and excess of Gregory Amaris' rule. Effectively leaderless, Amaris was isolated from the Loyalist RWA while the dissident Rift Republican Army who had seized control of Apollo tried to lead by committee. The result was a scattered force (or forces if the RWA and RRA are regarded as distinct entities) with little or no leadership. The SLDF thought they'd have an easy time re-conquering the Republic. They were quickly disabused of that notion.

Despite their ties to the Terran Hegemony, the Rim Worlds forces had relatively few BattleMechs for such a large nation. They fielded less than six regiments of 'Mechs, and these were scattered throughout the Republic in company- and battalion-sized formations. Vehicles and infantry were the backbone of the RWA, complemented in the Reunification War by massed partisan groups, whose members might have numbered in the millions. Rather than a swift and decisive campaign, the SLDF found itself in the quagmire of guerilla warfare.

The Rim Worlds only fielded nine WarShips in the conflict but had seventeen vessels at the time of the Manchester Directive. Three were undergoing refits when hostilities broke out and spent the war in various states of disrepair. Five more vessels were scuttled in the internecine fighting between the RWA and the RRA, two destroyed entirely and three others rendered useless.

COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE RWA

Like Rim Worlds' society, the rank structure of the RWA had its origins in classical Greece and Hellenistic rank structures remained in place for officers at the time of the Reunification War. Many troops struggled with the Greek tongue, however, and English versions were more commonly used in day-to-day operations. When the Rim Worlds collapsed into disarray, the rank structure became a demarcation: Pro-Amaris troops opted for Star League English-



style ranks, while the rebels of the RRA retained the Greek versions. After the war, the Greek system was abandoned and the Star League system adopted.

There was no formal command structure for either the RRA or the RWA for most of the Rim Worlds campaign, with defense instead falling to local commanders and citizen-militias. While this limited the Republic's ability to coordinate action against the massed SLDF forces, it ultimately worked to the Republic's favor; without a head to cut off and cripple their opponents, the SLDF had to take and pacify every world which, as the largest and most populated Periphery state, was a major undertaking.

NOTABLE UNITS

Fourth Amaris Dragons (RWA)

Bloodied in the outbreak of violence at the Diplass MechWorks in 2575, the Fourth Dragons found themselves caught between two large forces, neither of whom fully trusted them. Licking their wounds, the Fourth positioned themselves as a neutral party in the dispute, hoping to broker a resolution but in truth earning the enmity of both sides. When a hard-line faction within the RRA staged a coup and toppled the provisional government (something that happened numerous times during the Reunification War) the Dragons sided with Amaris' loyalists, becoming a valued part Gregory's entourage in the two-decade campaign to defend the Amaris' estate against repeated rebel attacks. After the war, the Fourth was decorated by the First Consul and became an unofficial member of the Amaris Household Guard. The unit would later gain infamy in the Amaris Coup on Terra, using nuclear weapons against the Black Watch.



Seventh Amaris Legion (RRA)

Commanded by Katherine Dormax, the Seventh Legion was the first to refuse Amaris' orders and later to support the RRA, effectively turning the political crisis into a civil war. The regiment sat out most of the war on Apollo, becoming one of the more moderate rebel units and charged with containing Amaris' forces. When the SLDF assaulted Apollo the Legion played a key role in blunting the assault, but suffered immensely in the siege of Terra Prime and was disbanded at war's end.



RWA (RRA) STATS

Founding Date: 2250

Prewar Strength (2575)

—**BattleMech Forces:** 25 Combined Arms Regiments

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 17 (9 operational)

Postwar Strength (2600)—BattleMech Forces: 25 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 4

TAURIAN DEFENSE FORCE (TDF)



The TDF of the late Twenty-sixth Century was a large, powerful and advanced military organized solely to defend the Taurian Concordat against stronger, more aggressive enemy nations—most especially House Davion's Federated Suns. To that end the TDF established itself into a multi-tiered organization, with the outermost tiers fully supported by a depth of additional defensive layers.

The Taurian Navy simultaneously formed both the outermost defensive tier as well as the glue that held the remaining layers together. Ever-concerned about outside aggression, the Taurians invested heavily in naval design and training throughout the Age of War, ultimately developing not only the largest WarShip fleet in the Periphery, but also the largest fleet of any nation other than the Terran Hegemony. Supporting this massive interstellar fleet were thousands of JumpShips and DropShips of all kinds, as well as aerospace fighter squadrons integral to the fleet formations.

The next tier consisted of permanent planetary garrisons, manned with TDF regulars, stationed on nearly every colonized world. Typically these garrisons manned fixed fortifications near key locations, but also fielded relatively large conventional armor formations as well as infantry units. Directly backing these TDF regulars up were Taurian Volunteer formations. Consisting at the beginning of the war of equal numbers of former TDF veterans and militia volunteers, these regiments were typically equipped with whatever weapons and equipment that were manufactured on their particular world. Within just a few years of the Star League invasion, though, the ranks of the Taurian Volunteers swelled—albeit with an accompanying drop in the quality of training and equipment. A third and final local tier known as the Concordat Constabulary provided an additional layer of support on each Taurian world; these law enforcement and other emergency services-trained personnel not only maintained order in the face of some of the worst atrocities ever committed, but filled critical gaps within the regulars and volunteer ranks.

The six Taurian corps formed the final organized defensive tier. These were the mobile elements that could be deployed anywhere

TDF STATS

Founding Date: 2335

Prewar Strength (2575)—BattleMech Forces: 33 Regiments

Prewar Strength (2575)—WarShips: 127

Postwar Strength (2600)—BattleMech Forces: 13 regiments

Postwar Strength (2600)—WarShips: 9

in the Concordat (or beyond), and possessed the majority of the TDF's ground-based striking power. Nearly all of the Concordat's BattleMechs were assigned to the six corps, as were the majority of non-naval aerospace fighter squadrons.

While clearly possessing the strongest and most advanced of any Periphery military, and in fact rivaling several of the Great Houses in military strength, the Concordat nonetheless trailed the Star League militaries by a significant margin in technology. This would prove a key weakness throughout the Reunification War and beyond.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

The office of Protector of the Taurian Concordat encompassed the duties and responsibilities of senior marshal, the ranking TDF officer, though as a practical matter the Protector would appoint one of his or her marshals as TDF Chief of Staff. This officer directed the day-to-day operations of the Taurian Defense Force, and likewise sat in oversight of the TDF strategic planning committee—the body that formulated the majority of the Taurian military strategy. Three deputy marshals directed different facets of the Taurian military; one commanded the Concordat Navy, while a second commanded the Concordat Army (to which the six corps reported), and the third sat in oversight of the various planetary defense commanders.

NOTABLE UNITS



The Taurian Guard

Charged with the defense of the Hyades Cluster, the three regiments of the Taurian Guard held the line against the Star League advance for four years, inflicting losses measured in the tens of thousands. The survivors merged together to form the single regiment that has served honorably since.



Second Pleiades Hussars

The Second Hussars were stationed on Merope when the SLDF struck the Pleiades Cluster. They battered and bloodied the Eleventh Royal Division, twice overrunning their landing zone and inflicting devastating losses on the Star League before being driven back. The Second was ultimately destroyed on Merope, accounting for the elimination of the Eighteenth Epsilon Armored and Third Caph BattleMech regiments in the process.

STAR LEAGUE

IAN CAMERON

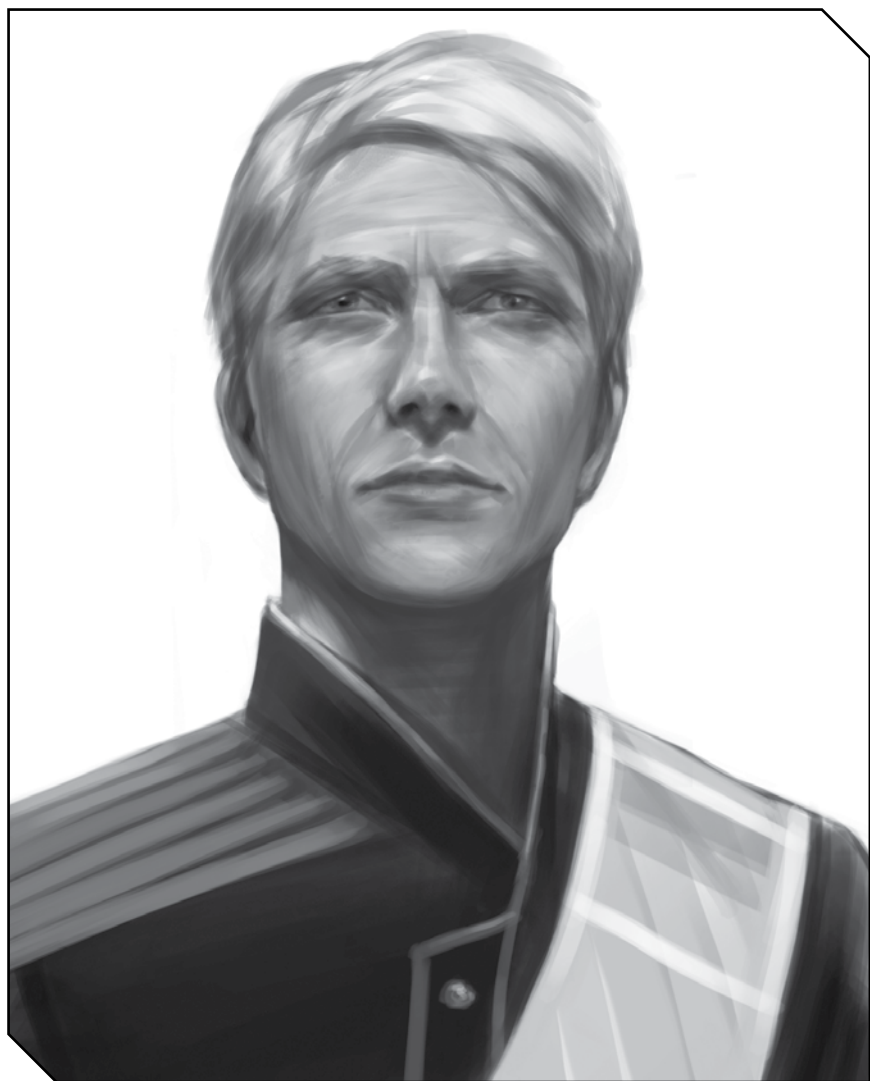
Rank/Position: First Lord of the Star League, Director-General of the Terran Hegemony

Lived: 2 August 2514 – 24 August 2602

As the second son of Lady Deborah, Ian Cameron was not destined for high office and by turns envied and pitied his elder brother, Joseph. He would have much greater freedom (which allowed him to pursue a career in the HAF) but would remain the focus of intrigues by those who sought to gain his brother's favor. Ian also found himself involved in his mother's intrigues, betrothed to the daughter of the Duke of New Earth as part of a political alliance. Eventually his relationship with Shandra Noruff would become one of the enduring romances of the Inner Sphere, but their initial relationship was troubled and would always be tempestuous.

After the tragedy of his son's death, Ian threw himself into his military career, rising to the rank of general and becoming a key figure in the HAF. He was also called upon to carry out official duties on behalf of his brother, becoming a frequent attendee at meetings in Geneva and welcoming dignitaries at the residence he shared with Shandra in Mexico City.

Joseph's murder propelled Ian to the forefront of Hegemony politics and, rather than risk the unstable situation worsening, he declared himself Director-General. Though a violation of protocol, his decisive action was widely seen as justified, though it did trigger the short-lived September Revolt insurrection within the HAF. Under his leadership, the Hegemony grew stronger and began to look



outward, Ian's dream of a unified humanity slowly becoming a reality. His friendship with Albert Marik was a cornerstone of this effort. Their partnership allowed the other lords to be convinced of the wisdom of the panhuman alliance. Albert and Ian egged each other on but also reined in the other's wilder ideas. Had Albert continued to work with the First Lord there might never have been a Pollux Proclamation nor a Reunification War, but his death in 2573 brought their partnership to an end at a dangerous time for the Star League.

Ian had appointed his wife, HAF commander Shandra Noruff-Cameron, as commanding general of the SLDF and let her handle the military aspects of the Star League while he handled the social and political elements. It was later said that his overwhelming desire to unify humanity led him to run roughshod over the rights and desires of the people. His direct orders committed the Star League and Periphery realms to more than twenty years of bloody conflict and his personal order to suspend the Ares Conventions in 2579 has been vilified in numerous histories. The destruction and loss of life that ensued forever tarnished the eventual achievement of his ideal, something that weighed on his conscience. When he died in 2602 the Periphery realms were occupied territories, but all of humanity was unified under a single government. Though it would be many years coming, he could see a future in which his son Nicholas led a unified and peaceful humanity into a golden era of social and economic prosperity.

SHANDRA NORUFF-CAMERON

Rank/Title: Baroness of Neuble Downs, SLDF Commanding General

Lived: 19 October 2516 – 8 May 2600

Born and raised on New Earth, Shandra's family's lineage traced back to the early days of colonization. The middle child of three, she had considerable freedom and after a distinguished education, she chose to undertake a career in the Hegemony military. Fiercely independent, Shandra was shocked to learn that her father and Lady Deborah Cameron had arranged for her and the Director-General's second son, Ian, to be betrothed in a political marriage to strengthen the ties between Terra and New Earth. Neither Lady Noruff nor the young Lord Cameron were pleased with their parent's actions. Ian declared he was too young to marry (he was nineteen; Shandra only seventeen) and both young people broke off contact with their parents, throwing themselves into their respective HAF training. Tragedy struck, however. Lord Noruff died in a transport accident before he and Shandra spoke again.

Given their social circles and respective careers it was difficult for Noruff and Cameron to avoid each other, but their initial meetings were tense and brief. Lady Deborah and dowager-Duchess Noruff persisted, however, forcing the youngsters to stay in touch by letter, a correspondence that amazingly survived the fall of the Star League and demonstrated the complexities of the Noruff-Cameron relationship. First published by ComStar Press in 3018, *Letters from a Prince* contains annotated copies of the correspondence and has been a bestseller in the romance category across the Inner Sphere. It shows the slow-burn relationship between the pair, from their icy first letters through impassioned debates to their later declarations. Both were intelligent and determined, their correspondence by turns tempestuous and tender. The slow growth in their affection was oblivious to the writers but obvious to outside observers. They were married in Edinburgh on 12 April 2535, the celebrations attended by thousands of well-wishers and an honor guard provided by both their HAF regiments. A year later Lady Shandra gave birth to a son, Timothy, but he only lived a few weeks. It would not be until twenty years later, after Ian had been elevated to Director-General following the assassination of his brother, that Nicholas Cameron would be born.

The relationship between Shandra and Ian was as passionate and tempestuous as their courtship. They argued and frequently spent weeks or months apart but always reconciled. Their HAF careers remained the centerpiece of their lives and by the late 2540s both served in the senior echelons of the Hegemony military. In the wake of the September Revolt and Ian's rise to the director-generalship of the Hegemony, Shandra found herself elevated to command of the HAF. Charges of nepotism could have been leveled at Cameron for appointing his wife, but she was well respected by the HAF and population as a whole. When Ian's negotiations finally brought about the formation of the Star League, her appointment as commanding general of the SLDF was almost a foregone conclusion.

Shandra threw herself into the establishment of the new military, liaising with member-state commanders and her HAF col-

leagues to draw up the doctrines and TOEs that would shape the Regular Army. As the Star League edged toward conflict with the Periphery states, she also took charge of drawing up the plans for the looming conflict. Working long hours for months on end, Ian feared that his passionate wife was working herself into an early grave. In November 2575, Noruff-Cameron suffered a heart attack and, though fit enough to resume work after a few months, the First Lord persuaded her to hand over command of the SLDF and the Reunification War to her deputy, General Carlos Dangmar Lee.

Widely regarded as the mother of the SLDF, Noruff-Cameron continued to play a supporting role in the Star League military throughout the rest of her life, most notably a thorny but respectful relationship with General Lee during the Reunification War. She died of natural causes in 2600, though some historians have suggested foul play was involved. However, no evidence exists to support such claims.

AMOS FORLOUGH

Rank/Title: SLDF General

Lived: 19 April 2531 – 30 August 2639

Amos Forlough grew up the third child of five in a lower-middle class family on the Hegemony world of Rigil Kentarus. He won a scholarship to the Rigil Kent Military Academy after serving a year in a preparatory school, where despite perpetually low grades he graduated a MechWarrior with a commission in the HAF. His career-spanning reputation as a perfectionist started at the RKMA where



he continually reported classmates for disciplinary and uniform infractions, earning him enmity from his peers and even many of his superiors, but despite those poor reviews his tactical acumen won him promotion and highly competitive postings.

When the HAF ceased to exist in 2572, becoming instead the genesis of the new SLDF, Forlough's name was known well in military circles across the Inner Sphere: he was a tough, mean son-of-a-bitch, but he led some of the best trained and most disciplined soldiers in the Sphere. Though a little too rough and plain-spoken for service on Terra with I Corps, or in royal circles with the Star Guard Corps, he was the ideal choice to whip II Corps into shape. His corps reached full operational status before any others (despite not yet meeting his own personal standards) and trained hard, with the majority of his regiments missing out on the United Triumph exercises because of their own training regimen. Though Forlough was disappointed that General Lee had not chosen him to command the Taurian invasion, he was also wise enough to know that, with so much scrutiny on the Taurian front, his words and actions would have likely caused a number of interstellar political incidents that would have quickly robbed him of the opportunity.

The Outworlds operation, on the other hand, offered him the freedom to fight a war on his own terms. Saddled with what he considered a weakly-led, undisciplined and ill-prepared V Corps as well as an opportunistic Kurita auxiliary, he relied heavily upon "his" II Corps, which rarely let him down. His name was reviled throughout the Periphery as the "Baby-Killer" and the "Butcher" because of his brutal tactics that often targeted civilian populations, while many of his own soldiers hated him for his similarly brutal methods of dealing with insubordination. Nevertheless, those were the tactics that led the Star League to victory against the Taurian Concordat and likewise led to the peace agreement with the Outworlds Alliance; though Forlough was no longer in command of either of those fronts when the war ended, there was no question that Amos Forlough was responsible for the successful conclusion of the war on two of the Star League's four fronts.

NATHAN ISAACSON

Rank/Title: SLDF General

Lived: 14 June 2526 – 19 October 2631

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Nathan Isaacson did not have a promising start to his career. The son of farm machinery salesman, he was not academically inclined nor did he excel at sports. He seemed destined for a life of petty crime before an arresting officer on his native New Earth gave the sixteen-year-old Isaacson a choice: prison or enlistment in the HAF. To his surprise, Nathan prospered under the discipline and training of the Hegemony military, proving to be an adept marksman and tactician. He was also a shrewd judge of character and a natural leader. By 2547 he had risen to the rank of sergeant when gallantry and leadership during a border crisis earned him a commission and command of his own company. His easy rapport with the troops and effective leadership earned him the respect and loyalty of those under his command. By 2560 had risen to the rank of colonel

and a decade later, as the Star League was about to form, joined the general staff of the HAF.

Isaacson wasn't among the first batch of officers selected to head SLDF combat commands but instead found himself at the head of a training division, charged with training and integrating the disparate member-state forces. When the need for a military officer to head up the Rim Worlds campaign arose he was elevated to command of the provisional XIII Corps and charged with assembling troops for use in the operation. Whether Lee originally intended Isaacson to command Operation Mailed Fist or to turn the assembled troops over to Viola Steiner-Dinesen isn't clear, but Isaacson's determination and efforts to build a viable multi-national force prompted the commanding general to promote the HAF officer to full general and command of the campaign. Despite his military skill and organizational abilities, the low-born Hegemony officer was ill-suited to commanding high-ranking nobility in the shape of Archon Steiner-Dinesen and Duke Selaj, whose war of words (and Isaacson's need to mediate between independent commanders he couldn't discipline) was a distraction from the prosecution of the war.

Though ultimately successful, the bloody cost of the campaign left its mark on General Isaacson. He retired in 2607, spending much of the rest of his life in seclusion. He rarely spoke of his experiences in the war but his diaries, detailing his life during and after the Rim Worlds campaign, were published posthumously in 2635 and remained compulsory reading for those in the SLDF's Officer Training Program until the Amaris Coup.

AMALTHIA KINCAID

Rank/Title: SLDF General

Lived: 4 May 2540 – 3 June 2583

The product of two military families—the Kincaids from the Federated Suns on her father's side and the Briggs family from the Free Worlds League on her mother's—Amalthia Kincaid's parents were both aerospace pilots that met by chance during simultaneous raids upon the Capellan world of Gan Singh in 2531. Each had been shot down by Capellan fighters, but were recovered by the other's SAR teams. They met briefly in orbit when the Davion and Marik commanders arranged for an exchange, and continued to correspond for years until they left their respective services and settled on the Hegemony world of Murchison, where they married.

Amalthia dreamed from an early age of being a fighter pilot like her parents, and learned to fly a variety of aerospace craft during her teens before entering the War Academy of Mars. She was disqualified from flight status, though, because of a medical issue, prompting her to transfer to MechWarrior training, where her keen perception and analytical mind distinguished her as an outstanding tactician. She found herself in staff assignments just as often as field assignments during her first several years of service. She contracted Pingree Fever when she was twenty-five. Though she survived, the often-fatal disease left her emaciated and without the constitution she needed to remain on the front lines. Her brilliant tactical mind nonetheless kept her in a series of staff positions. She

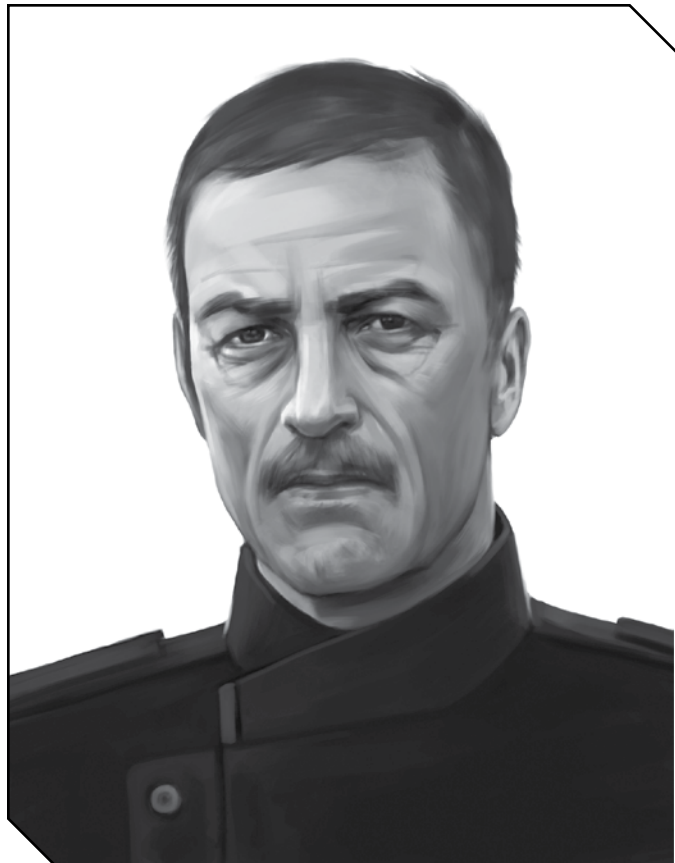
was a colonel when the SLDF formed, and served in the Strategic Simulations Command under General Carlos Lee. She took over the Strategic Simulations Command two years after Lee became commanding general, serving as its head as the youngest full general in the SLDF until Lee needed her to take charge of the Taurian front—to which she brought new energy and a host of new ideas, including the development of the striker regiment. She was killed in a Taurian commando strike, having served in command for less than eighteen months.

CARLOS DANGMAR LEE

Rank/Title: SLDF Commanding General

Lived: 13 January 2521 – 7 November 2602

Carlos Lee was born on Lyons but emigrated to Zebebelgenubi with his parents shortly after birth, where he gained dual Lyran-Hegemony citizenship and lived until he was sixteen. He hopped a freighter that took him back to the Terran Hegemony, where he could enlist in the Hegemony Armed Forces. He renounced his Lyran citizenship and served two years in a variety of menial positions until he was finally accepted to the Saint Cyr Military Academy, where he excelled. He graduated a MechWarrior with an HAF commission and saw some limited action against Combine raiders, but faced his greatest challenge as a young officer in 2549 when his regiment became embroiled in the September Revolt. His unit, the Seventh Cavalry, was the first Cameron-loyal HAF regiment on-scene in Geneva, but instead of engaging the mutinous Fifty-



first Dragoon Regiment, his battalion commander ordered Captain Lee and his fellow MechWarriors to reinforce the rebel Dragoons while the major staged his own coup within the regiment. In the confusing hours that followed, Lee and a core group of loyal officers ended the major's revolt, but not before the regimental commander and another battalion commander were killed, and almost half of the regiment either defected to the Fifty-first Dragoons' cause or were destroyed by them.

His actions won him commendation and an early promotion, but more importantly brought him into contact with Director-General Ian Cameron and his wife, now-General Shandra Noruff-Cameron. Throughout the next twenty years he often crossed paths with the two Camerons, including a four-year term in command of Cameron's private guard and later service as Commandant of the Royal Sandhurst Military Academy. When the Camerons formed the SLDF, he was their first choice to lead the Strategic Simulations Command, and soon also became Noruff-Cameron's deputy commanding general. Thanks to years in and around the Camerons and the royal court, the intelligent and capable Lee developed a keen political sense, which served him well both as Noruff-Cameron's deputy and during his own two-decade term as SLDF commanding general. Those political skills allowed the general to build a multi-national force and keep it supplied with men and equipment despite countless disputes between the Council Lords and thousands of other minor crises across the Star League that threatened to rip the SLDF. Though Noruff-Cameron often derided him in private for compromising his principles or making the wrong decisions for the sake of political expediency, she and the First Lord just as often praised his leadership.

Twenty years of unrelenting warfighting took their toll on the man, however, who retired shortly after the end of the Reunification War. He never quite recovered from the strain, especially after serving as honorary pallbearer for both Camerons, and died quietly in his Unity City home.

DAMIEN ONAGA

Rank/Title: SLDF General, Count of St. Ebbens

Lived: 29 February 2544 – 30 October 2653

Lord Damien Onaga was a part of the second generation of SLDF senior commanders—those who neither hailed from the Terran Hegemony nor served within the HAF. He was born on the Lyran world of Furillo to a noble family of limited means, graduating from the Albion Military Academy on New Avalon as an exchange student—an opportunity his father burned most of his political capital to achieve—before returning to serve in the Lyran military. He, along with his 'Mech regiment, were transferred to the SLDF where he distinguished himself once freed from the Lyran officer corps where officers relied more upon social standing and personal wealth than skill to win promotion.

Onaga was assigned to IV Corps at the outset of the Reunification War, where he saw guerrilla war firsthand on Armington and soon thereafter experienced the vicious ferocity that was the campaign for the Pleiades Cluster. He earned his first wound badge and com-

mendation for valor in the Pleiades as regimental commander, and after recuperating from his wounds, served in the Strategic Simulations Command on Terra before finding himself in the Star Guard Corps. In short order, he advanced to brigade and division command within the Star Guard as a combination of selective “pruning” of ineffectual officers and the need for experienced generals elsewhere opened up new opportunities for the young general. Meanwhile, he brought both the air of aristocracy as well as the determination of a combat veteran to the Star Guard, which he began to transform from a showpiece unit into a true combat command. He assumed command of the entire Star Guard in 2588 when General Carlos Lee recognized the need to deploy the Star Guard into combat; two years later, after completely reforming the Star Guard into an elite combat corps, Onaga received the nod to take command of the entire Taurian front.

He, like General Kincaid, brought a different and distinctly principled energy to the Taurian campaign. He eliminated the brutal tactics and policies characterized by General Forlough’s command, instead focusing his troops on but two objectives: the rapid conclusion of the war with the fewest necessary casualties on both sides. Onaga’s respect for his men, combined with his status as a Taurian front veteran, quickly bought him the loyalty of his army, though his most impressive accomplishment was certainly the successful breach of the Hyades Cluster.

CHARLES MAINSTEIN WEXWORTH

Rank/Title: SLDF General

Lived: 22 May 2522 – 27 December 2605

Charles Wexworth, like most of the senior commanders within the SLDF at the outset of the Reunification War, was a product of the HAF. He entered the HAF after graduating from the West Point Military Academy, and in his first twelve years he served as an armor platoon, company and battalion commander before he moved on to assignments at HAF headquarters on Terra. There he both gained an appreciation for politics and proved a capable planner, two skills that aided him immeasurably as he continued to rise in the HAF. After two more field assignments, he found himself back on Terra during the formation of the SLDF, leveraging himself into command of I Corps. Relying heavily upon his deputy and staff to train the corps, he focused his energies upon building battle plans for the inevitable campaign within the Periphery. He worked hand in hand with General Lee to design the Taurian invasion, ensuring that he would be chosen to command the greatest and most powerful army yet assembled—a command he received despite Shandra Noruff-Cameron’s private misgivings.

Wexworth designed a campaign that would surround and cut off the Hyades Cluster while minimizing collateral damage to the Taurian industry and population. He expected to make lightning strikes that would quickly knock out the Taurian planetary garrisons, pacifying worlds in the matter of days or weeks and occupying them with reserve or coalition units. He also hoped to leverage his conquering of the Taurian Concordat into a second career in politics. But when the Taurians instead gave him a guerrilla war he

was wholly unprepared for, he attempted—and ultimately failed—to adjust his tactics to deal with this new kind of war. After four plodding years, General Lee could no longer support him with the Camerons. General Wexworth retired on Terra after four decades of combined service, not to a new life of public service as the hero of the Reunification War, but nonetheless to a comfortable pension and a ten-year stint as director of the Star League Veterans Foundation.

CAPELLAN CONFEDERATION

URSULA LIAO

Rank/Title: Chancellor of the Capellan Confederation

Lived: 3 March 2551 – 25 June 2599

Ursula Liao was the only child of Chancellor Terrence Liao and Victoria Matthews, born into a loveless marriage that effectively ended after her mother, who only sought to wield the weak-willed Liao’s power, was exiled by Liao’s closest circle of advisors. While she apparently corresponded infrequently with her daughter as well as her family over the next two decades before disappearing completely, there is evidence that agents within the Liao government likely falsified that correspondence. As her father negotiated the Confederation’s inclusion in the Star League, Ursula steeped herself in the history and lore of her progenitors. Her father did what he felt he could to prepare her for eventual leadership of the Confederation, eschewing public life to dote upon her. He died



at the relatively young age of fifty-one, leaving a twenty-year-old Ursula to lead the Confederation into the Star League era.

It would be Ursula who finally signed the Star League Accords, but unlike many of her forbears, Ursula played the dove rather than hawk. She argued against war with the Periphery, but time and again brokered her vote within the Star League Council to earn concessions for her Confederation. She willingly ceded troops and equipment for the forming SLDF, but resisted pressure to provide additional House forces to fight on the Taurian or Magistracy fronts. Instead, she took every advantage of membership in the Star League to expand her economy and advance her nation's level of education and technology. Her only true challenge was the Freebooter's War, the perpetrators of which she punished in true Liao form. Like her father before her, Ursula died at an early age before she could complete her work. Having never married, due no doubt to her parents' broken relationship, she died with no heir, leaving the question of successor to the Capellan Prefecture.

DRACONIS COMBINE

HEHIRO KURITA

Rank/Title: Coordinator of the Draconis Combine

Lived: 13 February 2516 – 11 July 2591

Son of the extraordinary and inimitable Siriwan McAllister and the timid Warren Kurita, Hehiro Kurita represented the end to the controversial Von Rohrs era and the final return of the Kurita family to

the leadership of the Draconis Combine. Tragedies, rumors and questions surrounded the man and his family throughout his youth and well into adulthood; his mother had come to power as the eleventh Coordinator at the age of 18 after the mysterious death of her father, and while she stepped down in favor of her new husband a year later, Warren died also under mysterious conditions within two years, leaving Siriwan to again become the Coordinator until Hehiro could succeed her. That finally happened in 2556, almost forty years later.

Despite the intrigue surrounding him and constant questions about his abilities—and his mother's ambitions—Hehiro Kurita was a capable and intelligent, if somewhat optimistic, man, well-schooled in the arts of politics and court intrigue. Unlike his abrupt mother, he was a quiet leader who encouraged his subordinates rather than demanding blind obedience. He had also served two decades within the Combine military, rising to the rank of warlord of his mother's native Rasalhague District before assuming office as Coordinator. No one could say he did not possess the ability to lead his nation.

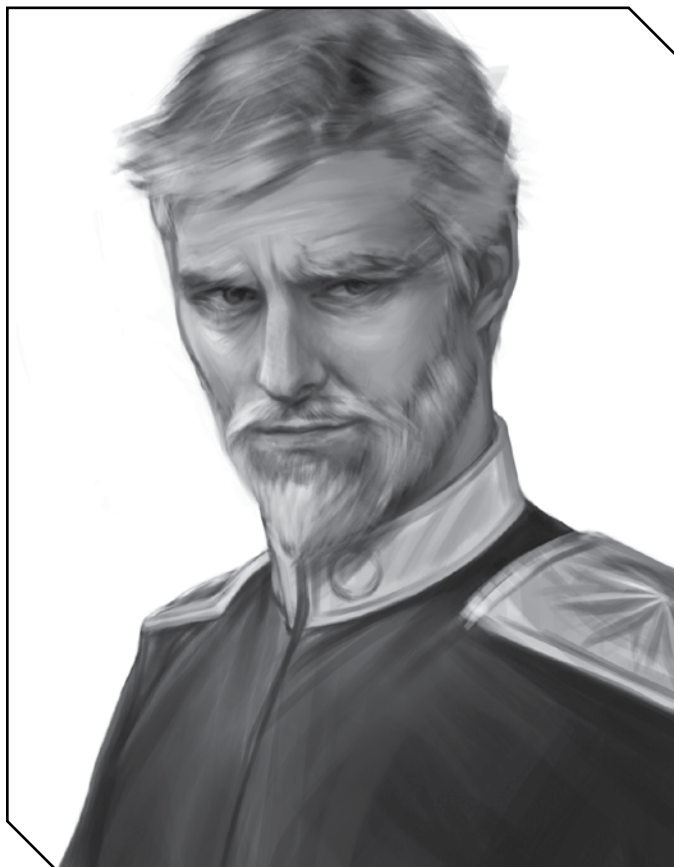
One of his first challenges as Coordinator was negotiating with Ian Cameron over the formation of the Star League. Kurita's nation had just emerged from a virtual civil war, which threatened the very identity of the Combine, and though he recognized the economic and political value of joining this interstellar alliance, Kurita and his people would not allow their culture and their identity to be erased. Kurita held out for eleven years, winning concession after concession while preparing his Combine for its place within the Star League. He was the final Inner Sphere leader to accede to Cameron's negotiations.

Kurita still experienced opposition to the Star League within his military and government, most of which evaporated with the buildup to the Reunification War. He sated his nation's bloodlust by sending troops to fight on two fronts, all while ensuring his people heard about the exploits of their own sons and daughters serving in the SLDF. Meanwhile, he actively punished nobles for using their power to increase their own standing at the cost of the state, while at the same time pushing them to take advantage of the economic opportunities afforded by Star League membership. And while he would cast his vote within the Star League Council with regard only for what was most logical, whether or not that meant siding with the ancient Davion or Steiner enemies, he fought bitterly for Combine interests. Because of those qualities, history has since declared him the best and most influential Combine leader since Shiro Kurita.

His life was also filled with tragedy and disappointment. He married at nineteen, but his wife died in childbirth. Like his mother before him, he focused on preparing his son, Martin, for leadership, waiting another ten year before marrying again. His second marriage produced three additional children: Leonard, Raymond and Sanethia. Martin was killed in action along the Combine's spinward reaches while responding to a pirate attack in 2558, which certainly colored Hehiro's perception of the Periphery. Hehiro himself died by accident, tripping down a flight of stairs in his palace and breaking his neck. That left the self-indulgent Leonard to become the disastrous fifteenth Coordinator of the Draconis Combine.



FEDERATED SUNS



ALEXANDER DAVION

Rank/Title: First Prince of the Federated Suns

Lived: 18 February 2507 – 24 January 2600

Born almost literally into chaos and intrigue, Alexander Davion was the only child of Edward Davion, who in turn was First Prince William Davion's only son. Alexander's father died in action against the Capellan Confederation, while his mother was lost when her DropShip was destroyed off Avigait. His grandfather, First Prince William, died shortly afterward of the Spotted Fever Plague, naming the five-year-old Alexander his heir. The Federated Suns' High Council named five regents, including Prince William's daughters Laura and Cassandra, as well as Cassandra's husband David Varnay and Terran March Prince General Nikolai Rostov, to oversee the Federated Suns until Alexander's majority.

The regents proved to be less interested in wisely governing in Alexander's name than maneuvering to further their own interests; the Davion Civil War erupted thirteen years later in 2525. While Laura Davion battled Cassandra and David Varnay for control of the nation, Alexander escaped the Varnays—who had held him as a virtual hostage since his youth—with his young wife and son and fought a desperate and costly fifteen year campaign against his aunts as well as Rostov's son. In the end, Alexander Davion was triumphant and enacted sweeping reforms of the

Federated Suns' government and military that left him the ultimate power in his nation.

The Davion Civil War proved Alexander Davion a mediocre military tactician, but a consummate political strategist as well as a charismatic and decisive leader. Those qualities served him well in military and political conflicts with the Capellan Confederation and the Free Worlds League over their involvement in the Davion Civil War, and later in negotiations with Ian Cameron. Within the Star League Council, Davion recognized the inevitability of war and pushed hard for a Taurian invasion that would both see the punishment of a perpetual thorn in his side as well as the expansion of his own nation's borders. His hawkish nature likewise saw his seemingly-uncharacteristic support of the Outworlds Alliance—support that likewise expanded his borders while also striking political blows that demonstrated the Federated Suns would not simply roll over to Cameron or any of the other Council Lords.

Alexander Davion lived a full life, albeit one replete with intrigue and adversity. He had two sons and a daughter—Vincent, Roger and Melinda—with his first wife Cynthia before she was killed by Dmitri Rostov during the Civil War; he remarried in 2544 and had four additional children with Veronique DuVall: Henry, Louis, Veronica and Lawrence. But in the end, he was just a man. The strain of fighting two long wars, as well as the loss of his two eldest sons in a 2596 JumpShip accident finally took their toll. Alexander faded from the public light as a degenerative neural disorder brought on dementia, and his grandson Ian—who he had named his heir following the death of his eldest son Vincent—ruled in his name. An assassin's bullet took Ian's life in 2599, however. In a brief period of lucidity before his own death, the First Prince named Ian's son Zane as his heir; Alexander Davion died in 2600, the longest serving leader of the Federated Suns.

LAWRENCE DAVION

Rank/Title: President of the High Council, President of Federated-Davion Transgalactic

Lived: 7 January 2547 – 18 September 2635

The youngest of Alexander Davion's seven children, Lawrence Davion was never groomed for leadership of his nation but nonetheless was well-prepared to succeed in life. While Vincent Davion, as eldest son, was destined to succeed their father, Alexander provided each of his children the same love and the same opportunities—no doubt in an effort to prevent the same internecine fighting that had led to the Davion Civil War. Lawrence, like his elder siblings, served an initial five-year tour in the AFFS, choosing to retire a captain before entering public service. After Henry Davion, his oldest full sibling, stepped down as New Avalon's representative to the High Council to enter the Foreign Ministry, Lawrence took his seat and two years later was elected president of the High Council at twenty-nine.

The High Council was little more than a rubber-stamp body for the Prince's policies, but it wielded significant influence over Federated Suns' commerce, especially as its representatives were the scions of the nation's most prominent political and business

families. As president, Lawrence was the ideal envoy to negotiate the Federated Suns' support of the Outworlds Alliance—both providing the strength of the Davion name as well as deniability for his father within the Star League Council. Lawrence Davion used his position to build a long series of friendships and contacts among his peers in the Council that served him well throughout his life—from constructing a series of shell corporations that cloaked the Federated Suns' military support of the Alliance to later building a powerful interstellar conglomerate. He stepped down as president and New Avalon representative at the end of 2585, paving the way for Vincent Davion's son Ian to prepare for the throne. Meanwhile, Lawrence officially took charge of several of the family's business interests, and by the end of the Reunification War had built the third-largest shipping company in the Suns, having won contracts to supply Star League aid to both the Taurian and Outworlds front.

In the years after the Reunification War, he relocated to the Capellan world of Lee, where he and his children used their political and business influence to turn the world into an economic powerhouse—which funneled significant Capellan capital directly into the Federated Suns. He also convinced an aged Ian Cameron to place a pro-Davion SLDF unit on Lee to “defend that important world against outside aggression.” Though Lawrence's descendants left Lee during the First Succession War, First Prince Peter Davion returned them after Lee's capture in the Third Succession War.

ELIAS PITCAIRN

Rank/Title: AFFS Colonel (Ret.), Pitcairn Legion commander

Lived: 19 June 2541 – 27 January 2616

Though hailing from a family of limited means, Elias Pitcairn was an intelligent and charismatic man who, even at a young age, developed himself a network of contacts that brought him sponsorship to the Albion Military Academy. There he further forged the friendships and alliances that would guide and aid him through his entire adult life. He never shied away from difficult assignments, which brought him favorably to the attention of his superiors. Those qualities won him a posting in the Davion Brigade of Guards, where he was an obvious rising star. He commanded the Second Davion Guards BattleMech regiment when his Prince asked for volunteers to aid the Outworlds Alliance; he was the first senior officer to step forward, earning him command of the volunteers. In fact, his command of the legion prompted nearly his entire regiment to volunteer, as well hundreds more active Davion Guards MechWarriors and many more retirees.

With many more volunteers than he needed, Pitcairn chose only those who either had not yet married or whose family no longer relied upon them for support. Each volunteer tendered his or her honorable retirement from the AFFS. Provided with the best 'Mechs that the Federated Suns had available, they launched into history and legend, desperately fighting against the SLDF and the Draconis Combine for the survival of the Outworlds Alliance. In that, Pitcairn and his Legion succeeded beyond expectations, demonstrating time and again that, even in the face of overwhelming odds, the application of a highly mobile and skilled BattleMech

force at a critical point could be decisive. It was lessons such as these that Pitcairn delivered to the SLDF in the Outworlds that led to a complete transformation in how the Star League's military would be organized.

Unfortunately, Pitcairn was a bit too successful in his assignment. SLDF General Amos Forlough declared him an enemy of the state and placed a huge price upon his head. Bounty hunters and rogue agents made a few attempts upon his life while in-theater, but many attempted to reach him through his family still on New Avalon; Prince Davion and his Brigade of Guards ensured the families of the Pitcairn Legion members remained safe. After the Treaty of Cerberus, which ended the war in the Outworlds, Pitcairn returned to New Avalon a hero, but his Prince had one final task for him; Pitcairn and his Mechwarriors once again donned the uniform of their nation to aid in the long campaign against the Taurian Concordat. They were Davion's message to General Forlough, who was clearly prejudiced against the AFFS units battling in the Concordat; Forlough's reaction was easily predicted, and was the final straw that ended his career and, ironically, brought Pitcairn's old friend from the Albion Military Academy, Damien Onaga, to high command on the front, and who almost immediately repealed the charges against Pitcairn.

Pitcairn finally retired to New Avalon a national hero. Forever the patriot, he spent his next two decades travelling around the Federated Suns—always surrounded by Davion Brigade bodyguards—encouraging his nation's citizens to serve their county. And after the SLDF took over the Albion Military Academy, he built and was the founding superintendent of the New Avalon Military Academy.

FREE WORLDS LEAGUE

ALBERT MARIK

Rank/Position: Captain-General, co-founder of the Star League

Lived: 17 June 2478 – 14 November 2573

“Albert the Great” was widely acknowledged as one of the foremost leaders of the Free Worlds, serving as Captain-General seven times between 2511 and 2573 (the last period of which started an unbroken chain of Captain-Generals that only ended with the deposing of Thomas Marik in 3069 and the collapse of the Free Worlds League). A skilled commander, he played a key role in the Andurien Wars though his presence on the battlefield, in specially adapted *Griffin*, principally served to inspire the troops.

Despite his martial and political skill, Albert sought a longer-term solution and after the Terran Hegemony's mediation in the Third Andurien War established a strong friendship with Ian Cameron. The two leaders discovered their common goal of humanity at peace and so Albert became the co-author (albeit rarely acknowledged) of the Star League itself. He played a key diplomatic role in the forging of the disparate treaties (and taking additional action, such as undermining the Davion economy, where he deemed necessary to encourage diplomatic initiatives), gaining a reputation for soft words and steely determination. Some

histories have painted him as Cameron's right hand, a fixer of problems, but it is clear that the endeavor was a partnership. While the duo were not always in agreement (Albert vehemently opposed what would later become the Reunification War) they tempered each other's positions while spurring themselves to new heights.

Though diminutive—he stood only 140 centimeters tall—his intellect, personality and oratorical skills prompted many of his peers—enemies as well as friends—to label him a giant. He died in office at ninety-five, leading the opposition to war with the Periphery states. His state funeral on Atreus was attended by all the House Lords.

MARION MARIK

Rank/Position: Captain-General, Commander of SLDF VII Corps

Lived: 24 January 2502 – 10 June 2598

With a father who was a political and diplomatic force of nature, a larger than life personality, Albert's children could have been overawed. Instead the trio were driven to excel, gaining a reputation for swashbuckling and daring. It was no surprise that extreme sports dominated their teen years and that military careers beckoned. Marion, the oldest by twenty-three years (though only a hair calmer than her wild younger siblings) was destined to follow in her father's footsteps. She served as a force commander in the Second Andurien War and, having reached the rank of general, oversaw the prosecution of the Third Andurien War (prior to Albert's negotiated settlement). As her father's



diplomatic role in the creation of the Star League grew, Marion worked as his deputy, a tall, lithe shadow behind the short, stout Albert, taking on more and more of his duties with regard to the Free Worlds. Upon his death, the transition of power was seamless; Albert's condition that only a Marik could serve as the Free Worlds' representative to the Star League ensured her election to the Captain-Generalcy when the post would otherwise have been allowed to lapse in times of peace.

Though in her seventies when she took office, her long military career (which would eventually span over seventy years) allowed Marion to retain the fitness and drive of someone half her age. In the early years of the Star League she travelled tirelessly between Atreus and Terra, overseeing both Star League affairs and matters at home. She was not an advocate of the Pollux Proclamation, but when the First Lord ordered the SLDF to prepare for war against the Periphery states she stood by her duties.

Willing to act decisively (and at times ruthlessly), Marion nonetheless had a strong sense of morality and though committed to prosecuting the war against the Magistracy as head of the SLDF VII Corps, she would do so in a humane manner. When Ian Cameron announced the suspension of the Ares Conventions in 2578, Marik made it clear to her sub-commanders that anyone who failed to honor the articles of war would have to face her. Some VII Corps and auxiliary troops did bend the rules during the conflict, but for the most part the Canopian campaign was far more civilized than the other three fronts and this civility, together with Melissa Humphreys' post-war reconstruction program, eased the Magistracy's integration into the Star League.

The Reunification War was not without its cost for the Mariks; her brother Reginald was killed in a daring recon raid against New Vandenberg in 2584 while her sister Shannon died on Port Fallon in 2593. Marion dedicated the last ten years of her reign to domestic and Star League affairs, strengthening the League's position in the postwar era. Her long plan for Ian to succeed her turned to dust in 2591 when he suffered a massive stroke, eventually passing away in 2593. With two of Ian's children pre-deceasing him, his middle child Brion succeeded his grandmother in 2598 when she died peacefully in her sleep at ninety-six.

IAN MARIK

Rank/Position: Duke of Marik,

Commander of the First Marik Auxiliary Corps

Lived: 2 May 2524 – 16 August 2593

History hasn't been kind to Ian Marik, overshadowed as he was by his illustrious mother and grandfather, though his military and diplomatic service on behalf of the Free Worlds was exemplary. As his mother's sole issue, his education and upbringing focused on his eventual succession to the Captain-Generalcy and he undertook a wide range of military, diplomatic and political assignments. His entire adult life was spent in the FWLM, where he rose to general and served on the Dormuth Council, though he spent large periods on detachment supporting his grandfather, and later mother, in Free Worlds and Star League affairs.

Ian's wife, Ségolène, died in 2553, leaving him to raise three young children. David, the eldest, was clearly his favorite, but he also doted on his daughter Therese, though he refused to recognize her child by William Liao and her marriage to him in 2573. His middle child, Brion, proved something of an embarrassment, proving to be academically inclined rather than seeking a political or military career. Though not widely discussed in the Free Worlds media, the intelligent and witty widower had a succession of affairs that resulted in at least four illegitimate children whom Ian acknowledged and provided for but who would not bear the Marik name.

The Reunification War and the needs of prosecuting the Magistracy campaign were both an opportunity and a curse for Ian. According to protocol he stood in his mother's stead while she commanded VII Corps, but the First Lord's call for additional House troops to participate in the assaults required a high-ranking FWLM officer to take command. Ian was the natural choice for this, leaving Byron Allison (and later the Marshall of Tamarind, Nicolai Kozurek) to head up the Dormuth Council and Foreign Minister Melissa Humphreys to oversee relations with the Star League.

Parliament, sensing an opportunity to operate under greater freedoms than they had in recent years, approved the postings, but following Reginald Marik's death on New Vandenberg in 2584 panicked at the thought of all the immediate heirs to the Captain-Generalcy being in harm's way and ordered Ian's recall to Atreus shortly after the occupation of Canopus. This proved a futile gesture; Ian suffered a heart attack in January 2591 and a massive stroke a year later. He spent eighteen months in a coma, dying without ever recovering consciousness. Both son David and daughter Therese had died in accidents, leaving the bookish Brion as Marion's heir.

RHEAN MARIK

Rank/Position: Duchess of Marik, Lieutenant in the FWL (later Eighteenth Captain-General)

Lived: 9 April 2568 – 16 March 2616*

Albert's great-great granddaughter, born shortly before the founding of the Star League, Rhean was the youngest of five generations of Mariks to attend the signing of the Star League Accords on Terra. Destined not to rule, she chose the life of a career military officer, attending Princefield under the alias Frieda Moran where she proved to be an excellent student. When she was thirteen, the death of David Marik elevated his brother, Rhean's father Brion, to the succession, and Rhean's education broadened to include politics, law and languages. Graduating with honors in 2586, she was too young to see action in the main theaters of the Periphery campaigns but she was a participant in the Freebooters War and played a key role in its dénouement. She served as diplomatic attaché to the Military Governor of Canopus, Melissa Humphreys, where she built strong ties to Magistracy-Designate Rinalla Centrella. In 2604, during the multiple crises that marked Leonard Kurita's accession and the assassination of her younger brother Albrecht, Rhean was elevated to supreme command of the FWLM as Warden of the

Perimeter Defenses—her father, whose military experience was limited, wanted to maintain a tight grip on his military. Rhean also deputized for her father in Star League councils, particularly in diplomatic matters. Her relationship (some would say romance) with Zane Davion helped smooth relations between the Free Worlds League and Federated Suns and her "death" in 2616 unleashed the Davion Prince's economic and legal fury on the Free Worlds, accelerating the League's financial crisis.

*According to official records. There remains some dispute surrounding the date and circumstances of Rhean's death and some records show her death in late 2634.

MELISSA HUMPHREYS

Rank/Position: Duchess of Andurien Province, Military Governor of Canopus

Lived: 19 December 2528 – 18 February 2624

Unlike the Humphreys of the modern era, the Duchy of Andurien in the early Star League was a staunch ally of the Marik family, despite the loss of their ancestral home to House Liao in the preamble to the Star League's formation. Melissa Humphreys was the only child of Duke Richard and was raised from a young age to be his heir. Educated in military, political and economic fields she proved to be an adept pupil and after a brief military enlistment carved out an impressive career in first the regional assembly and later the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Rising to become Minister, she played a key role in negotiating the League's position in the Star League Accords, demonstrating her willingness to stand up to Director-General Ian Cameron and Captain-General Albert Marik alike. A witness to the Accords' signing (where she received one of Albert Marik's pens as a memento), she remained at the heart of Free Worlds-Star League relations through the 2570s, serving as the Captain-General's proxy when she and Ian Mark were unavailable.

In 2582 Melissa was charged with drawing up plans for the reconstruction of Canopus, though it would be two years before Canopus itself fell and four more before the entire Magistracy was pacified. With Ian Marik recalled by the Free Worlds Parliament, a military governor was required for the occupied state. Her diplomatic and administrative experience made her the natural choice for the posting. Upon completion of the Magistracy campaign in 2588, Humphreys took command of the realm as Military Governor, working with the Star League, member-state and Magistracy authorities to rebuild the Canopian infrastructure and economy, as well as undertaking some political reforms such as universal suffrage and forming the Central Committee to provide a check on the Magistracy's power. Her early rule was marked by widespread unrest, but this gradually abated as the benign nature of her rule (and the tacit approval of the Centrella family) became clear. Aided by a succession of attachés, Humphreys enacted a "Good Neighbors" policy that, together with Marion Marik's restraint in the military operation, allowed Canopus to prosper. She encouraged many Free Worlds businesses to take an interest in Canopian businesses (which had cheap labor and modern facilities thanks

to the Star League rebuilding effort) and the economic success that followed resulted in the Magistracy being deemed ready for self-governance in 2604. After handing the reins of power to Rinalla Centrella, Duchess Humphreys entered semi-retirement, serving as special ambassador for the Captain-General. When seriously-ill Rhean Marik ascended to the Captain-Generalcy in 2614 Humphreys (whom she had worked with on Canopus) was persuaded to come out of retirement as her aide—"the dying Captain-General and her octogenarian aide" became one of Marik's bone-close jokes during her brief reign.

NARINDER SELAJ

Rank/Position: Prince of Regulus,
Commander of the Second Marik Auxiliary Corps

Lived: 21 October 2536 – 11 May 2621

Raised according to the twin pillars of his Hindu faith and the Selaj family's "divine right" to rule Regulus, Narinder Selaj was a study in contrasts. Outwardly a calm, thoughtful and polite individual, this façade concealed a razor-sharp intellect and a cool detachment and ruthlessness that bordered on the sociopathic. Selaj took pride in never losing his temper (unlike his peers the Dukes of Oriente, notably Byron Allison and later his son Lambert), though those who mistook his calmness for weakness soon discovered the steel at his core to their cost. His determined leadership of the First Regular Hussars earned him rapid promotion through the FWLM and by his thirtieth birthday he held the rank of general, commanding the entire Hussar brigade.

Though youthful compared to the other candidates, his skill and political authority as their heir to the Regular state made him an ideal candidate for leadership of the Second Marik Auxiliary Corps assigned to the Rim Worlds front, where he'd need to be able to hold his own against the Lyran Archon and the SLDF generals involved with the operation. Though only six regiments, the League troops played a key role in the campaign (most notably the assault on Apollo) and were among the most civilized of the SLDF combatants, the Captain-General having made it clear she expected Selaj's contingent to follow her lead in adhering to the Ares Conventions.

His years of experience earned him a place in the Marik high command, second only to the Captain-General and the head of the high command (a post he assumed in 2597). The installation of Rhean Marik as his superior in 2604 offended his sensibilities but he retained much of his authority, particularly as Marik was frequently away on Star League business, but together with his allies the Allison's undertook numerous actions against the "upstart." Court rumor had Selaj and Lambert Allison precipitating a coup against the Captain-General in 2616, but the official story was that Rhean died of natural causes. It is clear that the Prince of Regulus exerted formidable power over the League during the brief first tenure of Tomas Marik as Captain-General, but this waned during the leadership of Tomas' uncle, David Marik. Selaj died in 2621, four months into Tomas' second tenure. The Prince was discovered in his office raving of seeing ghosts and died of heart failure shortly thereafter.

LYRAN COMMONWEALTH



VIOLA STEINER-DISENEN

Rank/Position: Archon, Commander of the Lyran Auxiliary Corps

Lived: 21 September 2539 – 28 April 2596

Though Tracia Steiner negotiated the Lyran Commonwealth's entry into the Star League, it is her daughter Viola who signed the Star League Accords and became the first Archon of the Star League era, albeit one whose role would be infamous. The young Viola committed herself to a career with the LCAF and held herself aloof from court intrigue. An acknowledged beauty, she had no end of admirers but refused to acknowledge any of them, leading her mother to famously declare that Viola was "married to the military." That myth came crashing down in 2559 when Viola met Robert Dinesen, the Duke of Coventry, and fell head over heels. The couple married after only three months, Viola shocking the court by taking her husband's surname, and their son Kevin was born in 2560. It has been suggested that the love in their relationship was one-sided and that Duke Dinesen's true goal in the marriage was political power. Their relationship was certainly tempestuous, both in public and private, but despite rumors of a separation and divorce no such breakup occurred and a second child, Sarah, was born shortly after Viola's rise to the Archonship.

Viola committed herself to the Star League wholly and worked diligently to build a relationship between her realm and the alliance. The debates over the Pollux Proclamation are of particular note. Initially, Viola opposed Ian Cameron's proposal to send an ultimatum to the Periphery governments, but as negotiations progressed her stance shifted. By the end she was a staunch advocate, believing it would focus attention away from the domestic issues caused by the Star League's formation, in particular fiscal issues and the ongoing troubles with de-mobilized soldiers. It has been suggested that Duke Dinesen played a role in this, manipulating matters for his own ends, but though Viola would eventually be absent from Tharkad for many years, leading troops in the Rim Worlds Republic, Duke Dinesen did not benefit. Instead, Viola appointed her son Kevin as regent, with the Dukes of Skye and Tamar as his advisors. Even near the end of her life, Viola defended Duke Robert, ensuring he was spared an LIC investigation.

Staunchly committed to the LCAF, it was little surprise that Archon Viola chose to take part in the SLDF operation against the Rim Worlds Republic (though the LCAF high command had already committed itself to the operation), citing her unwillingness to let her troops face risks she herself wouldn't. This would have tragic consequences for the Commonwealth: her absence led to political instability in the Commonwealth, and though her intervention on Tharkad saved her son and the Commonwealth, her 'Day of Rage' on Barcelona had alienated Skye and Tamar. When she died in action on Apollo, Kevin inherited a troubled realm and a family divided against itself.

KEVIN STEINER-DINESEN/STEINER

Rank/Position: Archon-Designate/Archon-Regent/Archon

Lived: 7 April 2560 – 9 April 2647

A callow youth of twenty when his mother left for the Rim Worlds front, elevating him to the Lyran regency, Kevin was ill-prepared to lead a Great House and struggled to rein-in the Estates General and other interest groups. Social and political unrest grew, particularly after Star League financial demands. Despite the advice of Aldo Lestrade and Selvin Kelswa, the Archon-Regent re-imposed taxes he'd cut to calm matters, triggering a dangerous response from the Estates General's Steering Committee. Led by Henry Gram, a cabal kidnapped Kevin and held him prisoner for almost a year. With rumor implicating the Dukes of Skye and Tamar, the Archon took out her frustration on their forces in the SLDF during the Day of Rage, damaging both the war effort and Lyran politics. Kevin's last-minute rescue by his mother prevented utter disaster, but the young man who emerged from the ordeal was a far cry from the youth who had first been named regent.

Though nervy and prone to bouts of paranoia, the new Kevin was a much more decisive and determined leader. During the remaining years of his regency and the official reign that followed his mother's death the Commonwealth prospered, making his one of the more enlightened and successful reigns. Always somewhat distant from his father, Robert Dinesen's tragic demise less than a year after Viola's death left Kevin a free agent. In light of the troubles that later ensued between the Steiner and Dinesen fami-

lies there were rumors that Kevin had a hand in his father's demise, though that was at odds with his neutrality in the dispute until the 2612 LIC investigation. Kevin died in 2647 and was succeeded by his sister, Sarah. He'd never been short of companions, but never married or produced issue. When asked by the media about his bachelor status he enigmatically replied "I've had two great loves in my life. One was married, and the other wouldn't have me." Indeed, throughout his life (and particularly in the last decade before his death) there were reports of a tall dark-haired woman visiting him regularly. The identity of this woman nor her relationship to the Archon has never been ascertained.

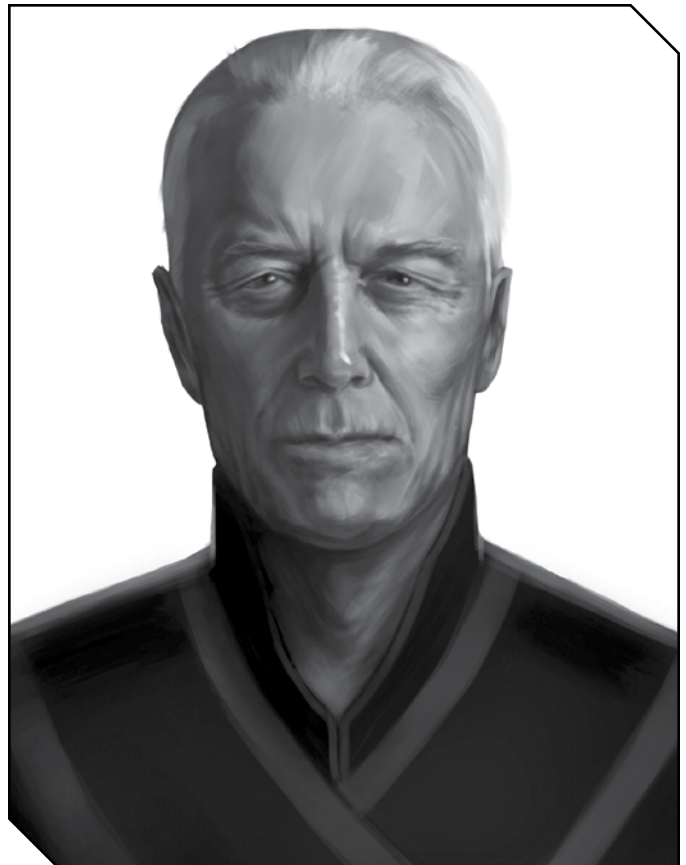
HENRY GRAM

Rank/Position: Graf von Eschenberg,

Speaker of the Estates General Steering Committee

Lived: 6 July 2506 – 15 January 2592

After a thirty-year career in industry prior to standing for the Estates General, Henry Gram was independently wealthy and initially stood on a platform of low taxes and prosperity. Determined and charismatic, Gram's oratorical and political skills carved him out a power base in the Estates General, becoming the head of the Free Trade Democrat group in the 2560s. When Speaker Martyn Schuyler resigned in 2575 following the Main Street Rebellion, Gram was elevated to speaker. Though politically aligned with Duke Lestrade's "rich worlds coalition" Gram came to view the tax reforms that followed the rebellion as a consequence of collusion



between the Archon and the Duke and when Viola departed with the Rim Worlds Assault force, the Speaker began a plan to not only redress the financial balance but also to ensure maximum profits for Lyran businesses by removing the government from the equation. His goal was nothing more than the disbanding of the Commonwealth, and if Skye and Tamar could be damaged in the process, so much the better.

For years, Gram and his allies manipulated the situation in the Commonwealth, fostering instability and tensions. The kidnapping of Kevin Steiner-Dinesen was to be the crowning glory of their efforts, decapitating the Lyran leadership and giving them free hand in the Estates General to push through their agenda. While the move did great harm to the relations between House Steiner and the dukes of Tamar and Skye (both through rumors he'd spread and the Archon's own actions), Gram and his allies in the Steering Committee reckoned without the determination of Steiner Loyalists among the representatives, who held up proceedings long enough for Archon Viola to return home at the head of an armed detachment. Realizing his plan had been foiled, Gram moved to remove the evidence—to eliminate the imprisoned Kevin—but LIC agents prevented him from doing so. Though the Steering Committee was implicated in the affair and the Estates General disbanded for two decades, the full extent of the conspiracy was never unmasked. The secret of any co-conspirators died with Henry Gram when the Archon executed him summarily, crushing him beneath the foot of her *Warhammer*. It has been suggested, however, that Gram's execution (and her intervention in the LIC inquiry) were both part of Viola's efforts to protect her husband, Robert Dinesen, from being named as a conspirator.

SELVIN KELSWA II

Rank/Position: Grand Duke of Tamar and Carse

Lived: 12 September 2519 – 19 May 2607

Chalk to the Duke of Skye's cheese, Selvin Kelswa was renowned for his dour and serious manner. Unlike the happy-go-lucky Lestrade, Selvin Kelswa rarely smiled and could be monosyllabic, yet his intellect was easily on a par with his fellow grand duke. Dispassionate to the point of being clinical, Kelswa's decisions rarely had an emotional component and he often acted for the "greater good" irrespective of the specific consequences. That did not earn him many allies in the Estates General or even on his homeworld, but he garnered the grudging respect of peers and vassals alike. Consulting "Old Ice Heart" became a right of passage for many in the Lyran government, who knew they could trust the cold neutrality of Kelswa's analysis. Certainly the Archon regarded him highly enough to appoint Kelswa as advisor to her son during his regency.

Few saw the Duke of Tamar make an emotional outburst, but the Day of Rage drew one. Archon Viola was described as "that murderous bitch" before Kelswa's emotionless façade went back into place. Selvin had nine children, the eldest of whom, Michaela, served as his aide. Michaela's fiery temper was the exact opposite of her father's, though if anything her intellect and analysis was sharper than that of the Duke.

ALDO LESTRADE

Rank/Position: Grand Duke of Skye

Lived: 2 December 2533 – 15 February 2619

Young and handsome, the Duke of Skye's playboy lifestyle was at odds with his political accomplishments. A fixture at motor sport events and elegant soirees, he gave the impression of someone who lived life to the fullest, and played up alleged involvement with Italian organized crime. To the uninitiated he was a dilettante and a wastrel—particularly given the tabloid media's fascination with the succession of pretty young things that appeared on his arm—but for all his hedonism Lestrade had a keen intellect and sharp wit. Those who crossed him soon discovered how sharp, but those who were his friends discovered the true extent of his loyalty and generosity.

The Main Street Rebellion did much to change views of the Duke; as head of the "rich worlds coalition" he was diametrically opposed to the rebels, even with the Archon nominally on their side. At her urging, he debated the Archon in the Estates General but was soundly trounced. He bore the Archon no ill will (and was not part of the Gram conspiracy) and was honored by being named one of Kevin Steiner-Dinesen's advisors. The Day of Rage undermined this trust and, despite the efforts of Viola and her children, a chasm grew between Skye and Tharkad. Lestrade died in 2642 at the venerable age of 109, an unbroken line of his descendants continuing to rule until 3022 when Margaret Aten, adopted daughter of the childless Duke Grethar Lestrade, took charge of the duchy. Aten's ascendancy would be challenged by the Lestrade family, most notably the patriarch named Aldo for his illustrious Twenty-sixth Century ancestor.

MAGISTRACY OF CANOPUS

CRYSTALLA CENTRELLA

Rank/Position: Magistratrix

Lived: 22 April 2536 – 13 June 2611

"What can he offer us that we cannot already buy?" Crystalla's reply to the Pollux Proclamation has become a diplomatic legend, demonstrating the insight and charm of the Canopian Magistratrix. Though her realm was less than fifty years old when the Reunification War began, it had already amassed great wealth. The Magistratrix appreciated, however, that her realm's wealth and buying power was part of what attracted the Inner Sphere powers.

A far cry from the battle-hardened warrior who had founded the Magistracy, Kossandra Centrella, the svelte and elegant Crystalla was a deceptive leader. Honey-skinned and fine-boned with lustrous black hair, she was the image of a catwalk model (or the star of one of the Magistracy's less salubrious multimedia exports) but those who judged her by her looks found themselves quickly used up and disposed of by. Crystalla acknowledged she possessed neither the intellect of some of the House Lords, nor the martial skill of others, but she did know and understand people and could use that to deadly advantage. She was also adept at spotting people who could fulfill those roles, Adam Buquoy being a case in



RINALLA CENTRELLA

Rank/Position: Magistrix-Designate

Lived: 23 May 2563 – 7 January 2613

Barely into her teens when war erupted, the Reunification War became the backdrop of Rinalla's childhood and education. As pretty as her mother, the doll-like Rinalla frequently hid her sharp intelligence behind a coquettish attitude. Too short to serve as a MechWarrior, she trained as a medical orderly and ambulance mechanic. During the invasion of Canopus she served in a makeshift medical station established on the palace grounds, seeing firsthand the horrors of war. During the occupation she indulged in her favorite pastime—hedonism—and came to regard the officers of the occupation force as playthings for her amusement. Her friendship with Rhexan Marik brought a more serious side of the Magistrix-Designate to the fore, the academic and socially repressed Free Worlder being the perfect foil for the happy-go-lucky Canopian. Rinalla showed steely resolve and a determination to better her people, and when her mother decided not to return to the post of Magistrix Rinalla was the natural and popular choice. Her rule, short as it was, was dynamic and greatly beneficial to the Magistracy. She died in 2613 after a short struggle against cancer.

ADAM BUQUOY

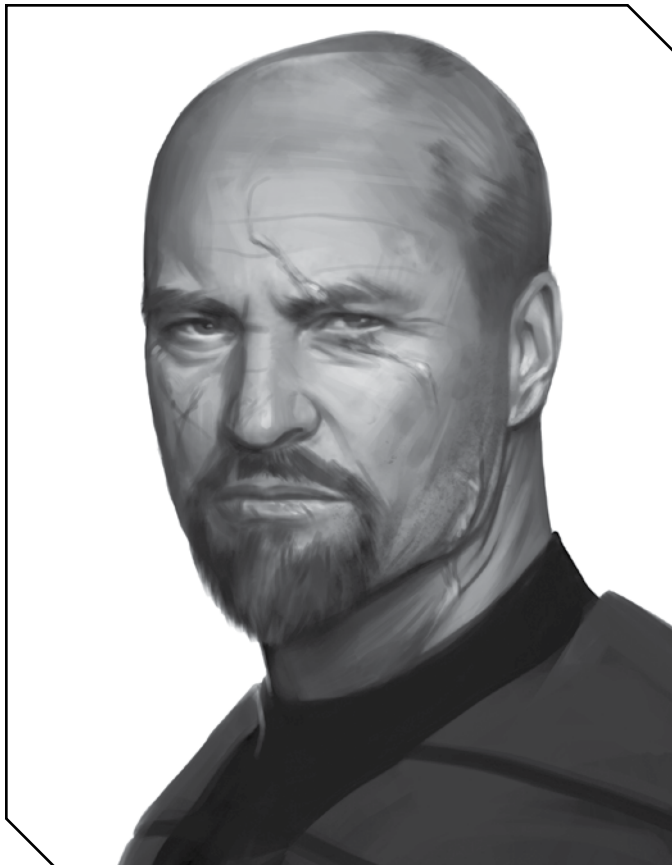
Rank/Position: Colonel

Lived: 11 August 2531 - 20 February 2604

A second-generation Canopian, Adam Buquoy was raised in some of the less salubrious parts of Delphi. His family was Capellan

point. Through trained as a MechWarrior and adept at small-unit tactics, Crystalla knew she had little hope of devising an effective military strategy for the defense of the Magistracy, but she believed Colonel Buquoy could. It proved to be an inspired decision, and while he prosecuted the war she did everything in her power to supply the MAF's material needs.

Defeat was always likely, though Crystalla refused to say it was inevitable, but ever the pragmatist, she set out to make the most of the situation. Ian Marik fell to her charms, but Crystalla's hopes of wrapping him around her little finger died when he was recalled, leaving Crystalla to deal with two women as formidable as herself: Marion Marik and later Melissa Humphreys. She was stripped of power during the Star League occupation but allowed to keep her title, styling herself Magistrix-Dowager. Though she never got on with Marion Marik, the Magistrix grew to respect and even like Dame Humphreys, never quite acknowledging the benefits Canopus received from Humphreys' reconstruction plan. When the decision was made to restore civil rule in the Magistracy, Humphreys initially approached Crystalla. The former leader declared that at her time was past and it was time for the next generation to take charge. Crystalla took great pleasure in watching her daughter grow into her new role (and her granddaughter mature into a young woman), dying peacefully in 2611.



refugees who had struggled to establish themselves in the new nation. He leapt at the chance to serve in the MAF, seeing it as a way out of the poverty of his youth, serving six years before going freelance and establishing his own command. Serving in several Inner Sphere brush wars gave him extensive experience, but the peacekeeping efforts of the Terran Hegemony effectively killed the mercenary trade, any hope for a resurrection of which in the Star League was dashed by the deluge of demobilized Spheroid troops. Buquoy returned to Canopus at a propitious moment; the Magistratrix knew war was likely and had embarked on a crash build-up of the MAF. She needed experienced officers to bolster her armed forces. Buquoy happily took the Magistratrix's coin and soon demonstrated his skill for strategy and command.

Buquoy became an invaluable sounding board for the Magistratrix, first developing and then executing the grand strategy to defend Canopus. His insight into the SLDF's tactics allowed the MAF to avoid some of the traps set for them by Marion Marik and to set no few of their own. A staunch believer in civilized warfare, he was relieved when Marik made it clear through back-channel communications that she intended to adhere to the Ares Conventions. He was also a realist, and knew that the best he could do was trade space for time, so he set about using a highly mobile defense to exploit the volume of space the Magistracy occupied. After the disaster at Thurrock, he knew the endeavor was doomed and, though advising on the defense of Canopus itself, made plans for a guerilla campaign to slow the devouring of the Magistracy. Finally captured on Kossandra's Memory in 2588, Buquoy was briefly interned but soon released. He retired to Krimari where he was assassinated by a Canopian extremist in February 2604.

OUTWORLDS ALLIANCE

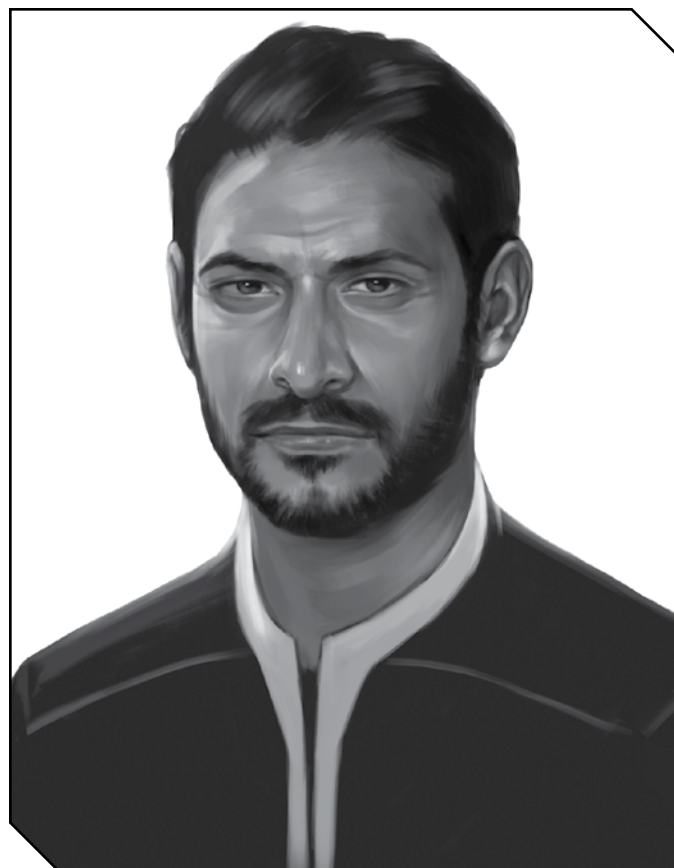
GRIGORI AVELLAR

Rank/Title: President of the Outworlds Alliance

Lived: 12 December 2532 – 2 August 2587

The firstborn child of President Catherine Avellar, Grigori was afforded every opportunity to succeed as a youth, but like many in his position he rebelled against the responsibilities that weighed upon his family. Though Grigori learned at an early age to manipulate people to get what he wanted, he wasted his energies during his teens and twenties satisfying his own whims and relying upon his mother to clean up his messes. In the process, he garnered a bodyguard detail—led by former Combine soldier Welkens Nordd—that he only partially succeeded in co-opting into covering up his excessive lifestyle.

That all suddenly changed after his youngest sister was diagnosed with a disease that her doctors thought would leave her dead within eleven months. Grigori rarely left her side throughout her illness, and was with her at the end. After he buried his sister, he turned his life around and dedicated himself to serving his nation. He married Alexandra Rota, the daughter of Parliament Representative Herrold Rota, just a year later, in an extravagant ceremony broadcast throughout the Alliance. The "wild child" had apparently settled down, and after Alexandra gave birth to son Barton ten months



later in 2563, Grigori's public image became that of dedicated public servant and devoted husband and father. Alexandra bore him three additional children—Katherine, Angelo and Nikolaus—though behind the scenes he never completely gave up his vices.

Grigori served in a number of government positions during his twenties and thirties, and was Trade Minister when the Star League was formed. In that position, recognizing dark nature of interstellar relations, he pushed for the expansion of the Alliance's defensive abilities and negotiated with numerous foreign corporations to purchase the Outworlds' first BattleMechs. He also urged his mother to bar the Star League from stationing troops within their borders after Ian Cameron issued Directive 21, and led the public outcry in the wake of the Santiago Massacre. His mother resigned as Alliance president shortly thereafter, publicly expressing regret and guilt at allowing the Star League to massacre her citizens. Privately, evidence points toward Grigori forcing her resignation through pressure from the Executive Parliament and her own government.

Grigori Avellar was confirmed president of the Outworlds Alliance on 18 January 2573. Unlike his idealistic mother, Grigori knew that disaster loomed for his nation and that only desperate measures could possibly halt it. In just a few short years, he built support for his policies across his nation, formed the Alliance's first true military force and negotiated an alliance that would leave his nation in the best post-war position of any of the Periphery realms. He died less than two years after the conclusion

of the war with the Star League; publicly, the strain of the war and the postwar difficulties had drained him of his vitality, and while that is likely at least partially true, privately he was found dead of a heart attack in a private bedchamber with two mistresses and a host of recreational substances. His son, Barton, would take over as the next president, leading the Alliance into the golden years of Star League membership.

WELKENS NORDD

Rank/Title: Outworlds Alliance Militia Chairman

Lived: 22 October 2529 – 9 April 2610

Hailing from Predlitz, Welkens Nordd enlisted in the DCMS during the reign of Siriwan McAllister-Kurita. He served a tour in the Proserpina Hussars, where he felt firsthand the avid discrimination against he and other Rasalhague natives rampant within the Combine military. Wholly disillusioned by how the supposed Rasalhague-native Coordinator could put up with this, Nordd left the Combine altogether, finding a new home in the Outworlds Alliance. Though the Alliance had no military at the time, there were nonetheless some opportunities for former military men within the Outworlds, serving as bodyguards and private security. Nordd soon made a name for himself as a skilled bodyguard, which brought him more and more opportunities that he was happy to share with other former-Combine soldiers like himself. Soon enough, Elena de Riel, President Avellar's security chief, recruited him to serve on Grigori Avellar's security detail, specifically tasking the man to keep Avellar "out of trouble."

Nordd initially detested his assignment, and during the first year he pushed numerous times to be reassigned, but to no avail. He and his charge butted heads almost constantly; where Avellar wanted Nordd to clean up after him, Nordd took pleasure in blocking Avellar's every opportunity to "have fun." Eventually, the two developed a mutual respect that, after the death of Avellar's sister, grew into a true friendship. It was through Nordd's extensive contacts within the Combine that Avellar purchased the Alliance's first BattleMechs, while Nordd himself recruited their first MechWarriors. Nordd later recruited many ex-soldiers from both the Draconis Combine and the Federated Suns—primarily focusing on former non-commissioned officers—to form the core leadership of the nascent Outworlds Alliance Militia, which he took charge of as Chairman.

With Grigori Avellar's absolute trust, Nordd led the Alliance Militia throughout the Reunification War. Though never trained as a military strategist, he was a strong-willed and decisive leader who was able to recruit skilled subordinates and who trusted their abilities, but also held them responsible for their failures. He regularly butted heads with Colonel Elias Pitcairn and even his own president and members of the Executive Parliament; while his friends and subordinates accepted that as simply a part of his personality, Parliament called time and again for his resignation or termination on grounds of insubordination. Nordd stood strong against them until after the death of his old friend; a year after Barton Avellar succeeded his father as President, Nordd retired, spending the rest of his life out of the limelight.

RIM WORLDS REPUBLIC

GREGORY AMARIS

Rank/Position: First Consul, Lord of Apollo

Lived: 11 October 2529 – 11 August 2599

Born to the comforts of the Amaris Estate on Apollo, Gregory was raised in a pampered environment that colored his outlook on the world. Gregory had been named First Consul at fifteen in 2544, after his father drowned. His mother served as regent until his eighteenth birthday. Though derided by outsiders (and no small number of his own people) First Consul Amaris was far from the idiot later portrayals suggest. He lacked empathy, always thinking of his own needs and desires rather than those of others, but he demonstrated a shrewd grasp of politics as well as ambition and determination. To him success—and his role in it—was the driving force behind the Republic.

His realm prospered, and Amaris proved to be adept at manipulating the economy and relations with neighboring realms. Being a "neutral party" in various disputes had been immensely profitable (even when that neutrality was feigned) but Gregory wanted more. He wanted to establish the Republic as a force comparable to the Inner States and sought the investment and manpower this would require. His ego would shape—and nearly doom—a quarter-century of the Republic's history.

His greatest error was mistaking his ambitions for his peoples'. He wanted to be part of the Star League because of the political



and economic advantages it offered him. Most of his people had no such desires, and when he attempted to force the issue, inviting in Star League advisors and declaring his support for the Pollux Proclamation, popular opinion quickly slipped away from him. Amaris' fumbled efforts pushed the always-somewhat-fractious Republic into civil war, but even then Amaris failed to appreciate the situation. Isolated on Apollo, he knew little of the fighting in the Republic and cared less. Instead, he railed against those who had abandoned him to his isolation on Apollo for two decades.

When SLDF forces did finally liberate his estate, he showed scant gratitude but almost immediately began playing political and economic games to further his own position in the Star League. While Gregory's efforts would benefit the Republic as a whole, his arrogance and ego did not sit well with some. On 11 August 2599, Admiral Hakim Wbika assassinated the First Consul, establishing Gregory's son Richard as a figurehead while he and a military junta controlled the Republic from behind the scenes.

CATHERINE DORMAX

Rank/Position: Colonel

Lived: 30 May 2540 – 2596*

A career military officer from a middle-class family, Catherine Dormax was a far cry from the stereotype of a revolutionary. A competent but not exemplary tactician, she'd progressed through the ranks by dogged determination, willing to put in time and effort to make up for her shortcomings. She'd always allowed her sense

of morality to guide her actions, and her mix of fairness and forthrightness had earned her the loyalty of the Seventh Legionnaires. Her troops knew where they stood with her and that she would stand by them. Her moral stance would also bring Catherine Dormax infamy.

In 2575 the Seventh were sent to restore order at the Diplass 'Mech plant after rioting had broken out. The troublemakers had already smashed a detachment from the Fourth Amaris Dragoons and rather than the police action she expected, Dormax found herself with direct orders from First Consul Amaris to execute everyone in the plant. She refused, and instead put her troops at the disposal of the Rift Republican Army Provisional Government. Dormax's act of defiance sent shockwaves through the Rim Worlds Army, and several other units refused Amaris' orders, effectively turning the situation into civil war.

Though horrified by Amaris' orders, Colonel Dormax was equally dismayed at the anarchy her decision wrought. She became embroiled in RRA politics, a moderate among the hotheads and idealists, but singularly failed to mitigate the more extreme elements of the Provisional Government. She narrowly escaped death in the succession of coups and counter-coups among the rebel leadership, eventually meeting her end in the SLDF assault on Apollo. Her body was never recovered, and for several decades after the Reunification War a tale circulated that the ghost of Dormax would return to save the Republic from itself.

*The exact date of Dormax's death is unknown

HAKIM WBIKA

Rank/Position: Admiral

Lived: 9 November 2522 – 17 August 2604

The strategist behind the SLDF's massive losses at Newtown Square (and later the coup against Gregory Amaris), Hakim Wbika had humble origins on Luanda. The youngest child of a shuttle pilot, he joined the Republican military fresh out of high school and proved to be a skilled pilot and aerospace tactician. A botched carrier landing cost him his right leg and, though fitted with an advanced prosthetic, Wbika was barred from flight duties. Instead, he transferred to the naval command, becoming captain of the attack DropShip *Durant's Pride*. By 2565 he commanded one of the Republic's WarShips and in 2572 became head of the fleet.

He remained at large during the early part of the Reunification War, orchestrating a series of hit and run attacks before the assault on the SLDF fleet at Newtown Square. That battle earned Wbika respect and hate in equal measure; he'd demonstrated the determination and bite of the Republican troops, but had killed a lot of SLDF troops doing so. Captured after the destruction of his WarShip, he was interned on Tharkad, where he came to see how outsiders viewed the Republic. Upon his release and repatriation, he returned to active duty (the Republic not, officially at least, being an occupied power) and was horrified to see that Gregory Amaris remained arrogant and self-centered, a threat to the future



of the Rim Worlds. Gathering like-minded officers, he staged a coup in 2599 and executed the First Consul. The junta ruled through Gregory's son Richard until they too were deposed by Richard's counter-coup in 2604.

TAURIAN CONCORDAT

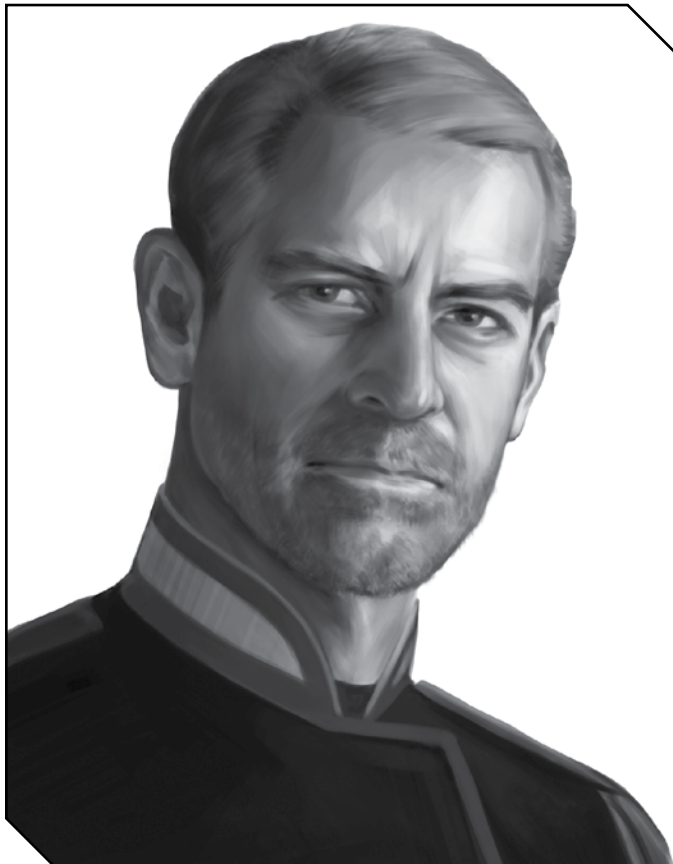
MITCHELL CALDERON

Rank/Title: Protector of the Taurian Concordat

Lived: 19 March 2526 – 27 October 2587

Mitchell Calderon was the second of two children borne by Caterina Calderon, herself the firstborn of Protector Amalthia Calderon. Like most Calderon children, he grew up in a household dominated by paranoia and hatred of the Inner Sphere powers, most especially House Davion. Those feelings were only intensified when his aunt Ariana, who had been wed as a political expediency to Chancellor Calvin Liao, was executed along with all of Liao's other wives by the crazed Capellan leader. Mitchell, like his elder brother before him, accepted a position in the Taurian government as soon as he came of age. But where his brother showed neither promise nor ability, choosing instead to pursue a career as a botanist, Mitchell saw his service both as a birthright and a mandate.

His mother became Protector after the death of his grandmother in 2557, and guided the Concordat through the final years



of the Age of War and into the initial years of the Star League era. Meanwhile, Mitchell steadily advanced through the Ministry of the Interior, which he took over in 2564. He watched as the entire Inner Sphere seemingly united against his Taurian Concordat, ordering his Ministry to prepare contingency plans for the emergency defense of Concordat worlds while also encouraging his mother to expand the Concordat's defenses. When she did not, he quietly expanded his ministry's mandate by giving the Concordat Constabulary—the national police force—authority over civil defense and broad latitude in intelligence gathering and counterintelligence.

Caterina was Protector during the Malagrotta Crisis, refusing Star League intercession and ultimately offering only a perfunctory apology and token compensation for this breach of the Osmol Accord. She would be dead less than a year later, after a rapid series of strokes. Mitchell was sworn in as Protector five days before his forty-eighth birthday, and immediately began expanding his nation's military. Days after receiving the Star League's Pollux Proclamation, he declared a national emergency, extending him a number of additional wartime powers, and further ordered that all Taurian citizens complete a minimum of four years of national service—be it within the TDF or another government arm—upon reaching majority (and/or completing their schooling; this mandate remains in place even today).

Mitchell continued to strengthen his nation against the coming storm, but blind paranoia of the Federated Suns prompted him to order Case AMBER—a victory, to be sure, but an act that did little to deter or otherwise delay the Star League's invasion of his nation. He was also a micromanager who did not trust his subordinates to do their jobs; he demanded to be involved in every major wartime decision, which delayed many orders and certainly prevented the TDF from rapidly reacting to Star League advances. In fact, only in naval matters did he regularly allow his marshals any freedom—undoubtedly because he neither understood strategy nor viewed his navy as a decisive force (though as Protector, he would often blindly give the military, including the navy, whatever funding or political support they asked for).

He, like his mother, died in office. Mitchell had married in 2544, and with his wife had five children, each of whom he ensured attended a prestigious Taurian university and whom he secured positions for within his government upon graduation. His eldest child, Marantha, succeeded him as Protector, who served nine years before committing suicide after surrendering the Concordat.

GISELA CARDENAS

Rank/Title: TDF Marshal

Lived: 12 September 2542 – 7 August 2595

Hailing from the family of one of the Calderon's closest political allies, Gisela Cardenas was afforded every opportunity as a child and into adulthood. She was the fourth of seven children, but detested the thought of arranged marriage or life as a doting mother. Instead, she used her father's political connections to win

an appointment to the Taurian Military Academy, where she graduated as a fighter pilot. She gained some distinction as a skilled pilot, but seeking higher rank than her skills alone were garnering, she once again used her family's connections to gain her promotion into the fleet. She commanded a five-ship escort formation during the Battle of Tentativa under Marshal David Santos, which earned her in short order command of a WarShip squadron and, by 2581, the entire Taurian Third Fleet, which had responsibility for Robsart. She found herself overwhelmed and unprepared when SLDF Admiral Janissa Franklin led her fleet into the system, and despite calling in every reinforcement she could, she let her fleet get outmaneuvered and split apart within the system.

Despite her loss at Robsart, Protector Mitchell Calderon remained convinced of her abilities. He placed her in operational command of the Taurian fleets, where she pursued a generally successful strategy of harrying the SLDF fleet in preparation for Case BLACK, though just narrowly avoided disaster at Cohagen thanks to a viral outbreak in the SLDF fleet. After Marshal Santos' defeat at Montour, she remained in command of a broken navy defending the Hyades; she perished as she led the final assault on the SLDF after it breached the final Hyades Cluster defensive ring.

DAVID SANTOS

Rank/Title: TDF Marshal

Lived: 29 April 2539 – 16 October 2587

David Santos hailed from a long line of Taurian naval officers, able to trace his family's service to Captain Elias Santos, who commanded the *TAS Cortez* during the 22nd Century when it charted more than two dozen worlds for the Terran Alliance. He graduated from the New Vandenburg Naval Academy, but due to a long series of infractions that resulted from his mischievous nature, he was assigned as navigator aboard a cargo JumpShip. He found a mentor in his captain, however, who encouraged him to test his abilities. His uncanny ability to plot the most difficult jumps brought him first to the attention of his fleet commander, who used the young navigator to bring an invasion force into a supposedly-impossible pirate point in the Hyades Cluster during an exercise. Within weeks—after a perfunctory admonishment for breaking TDF astrogation regulations—he was assigned as the navigator on the Concordat Navy's flagship.

Within fifteen years he had served as the Concordat's chief astrogator and was in command of the Taurian Fifth Fleet, with responsibility for the more than half of the Concordat's border with the Federated Suns. One of his first actions as commander was to ready his fleet for a number of different scenarios that would place them in direct conflict with the Federated Suns or the Star League. One of those plans found its way to the TDF headquarters and became the impetus for Case AMBER, which Santos returned to plan and eventually command. With a third of the Taurian navy under his direct command, he delivered the Federated Suns the worst naval defeat in its history. He fought bravely for the Taurian Concordat,

and continued to roam the Concordat with his fleet, seeing very little additional decisive action but harassing the SLDF enough that its transport ships refused to move without a powerful naval escort.

Mitchell Calderon recalled him to Taurus in 2580 to take command of the Taurian navy, where Santos felt caged. He developed and deployed the fireship squadrons under orders from Calderon—Santos thought them a waste of manpower and valuable ships—and upon hearing of the expanding battle for Robsart, prevented even more Taurian ships from entering that grinder. Calderon removed him from duty after Robsart, believing Santos' orders had cost the Taurians victory there. Despite his civilian status, Santos continued to advise the Taurian Navy, spending most of the next five years designing upgrades to the Hyades Cluster defenses. Calderon recalled him to service when the SLDF began to tighten the noose around the Hyades.

In 2587, he designed a naval operation that he and his Protector hoped would relieve the pressure on the Hyades. Taking command of the last handful of Taurian WarShips, wholly outnumbered and outclassed, Santos fought desperately against the SLDF at Montour, by all accounts choosing to go down with his ship. He was honored a hero of the Concordat, and his sons and their children continued their family's heritage well past the death of the Star League.



THE TAURIAN CAMPAIGN

GENESIS OF A NATIONAL HATRED

During the wild years of interstellar expansion in the wake of the Outer Reaches Rebellion and the Demarcation Declaration, the Taurian Concordat grew into a true interstellar power, unmolested and even undetected as the growing powers within the Inner Sphere fought for predominance over each other. It wasn't until 2369, more than three decades after the Concordat officially formed, that its closest neighbor even became aware of its existence. Yet it was within that brief and ultimately indecisive encounter that the Taurian Concordat discovered its greatest and most feared rival: the Federated Suns.

Ironically, the incident that sparked the historic first meeting of the Federated Suns and the Taurian Concordat was instigated not by either of these powers, but by Chancellor Franco Liao as he "cleaned house" after forming the Capellan Confederation. Liao demanded absolute obedience, and when a number of local lords throughout the nation—especially within

War is the remedy our enemies have chosen, and I say let us give them all they want.
—General William Tecumseh Sherman

Loss of hope, rather than loss of life, is the factor that really decides wars...
—Sir Basil H. Liddel-Hart

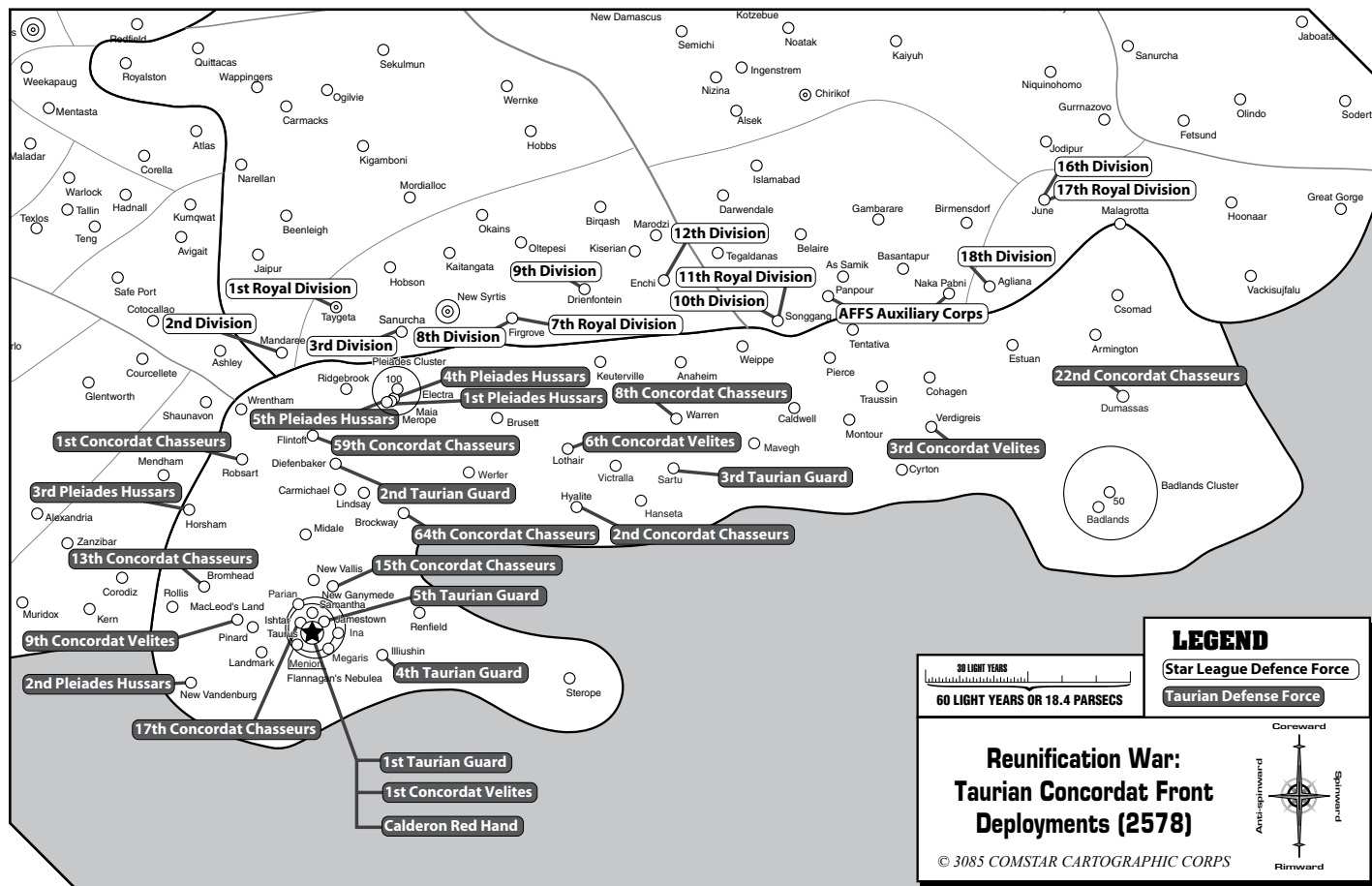
No innocent man ever rebelled against lawful authority, and we, the Star League, are the Law.
—Coordinator Hehiro Kurita

In the annals of military history, the campaign to conquer the Taurian Concordat—Operation BULL RUN—occupies a unique place. It was the very first major military campaign in the modern BattleMech era and the first prosecuted by the Star League. It was the longest single military campaign—from invasion of a nation's territory until its capitulation—fought by any nation in modern history. And it was also arguably the bloodiest single campaign.

By the time of the Pollux Proclamation in 2575 it was clear that war was coming and that the Taurian Concordat, as the strongest of the Periphery nations, would be the Star League's prime target. But where optimists believed that the campaign against the Concordat would be concluded within six months, and even the most pessimistic saw the invasion taking only a few years, none predicted nineteen years of unremitting warfare.

Certainly no one could predict that, on some Taurian worlds, one in five Concordat citizens would be dead by the war's end, or that the nation would almost literally be blasted back to the Stone Age.

Continued on p. 66



SLDF TASK FORCE TAURUS

Commander: General Charles Mainstein Wexworth

Constituent Units: SLDF I, III, IV and VI Corps; Federated Suns Auxiliary Corps; SLDF First, Second, Third and Fourth Battle Fleets

Initial Force Strength:

BattleMech Regiments: 46

Armor Regiments: 47

Infantry Regiments: 50

Aerospace Regiments: 16 (not including naval aerospace assets)

WarShips: 173

SLDF I CORPS

Administrative HQ: Terra

Commander: Major General Ilaria Zennaro

Force Strength: 9 BattleMech regiments, 9 armor regiments, 9 infantry regiments, 3 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: First Royal Division, Second Division, Third Division

SLDF III CORPS

Administrative HQ: Altair

Commander: Major General Elisska Wright

Force Strength: 9 BattleMech regiments, 9 armor regiments, 9 infantry regiments, 3 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Seventh Royal Division, Eighth Division, Ninth Division

SLDF IV CORPS

Administrative HQ: Fomalhaut

Commander: Major General Amar Lagat

Force Strength: 9 BattleMech regiments, 9 armor regiments, 9 infantry regiments, 3 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Tenth Division, Eleventh Royal Division, Twelfth Division

Note: IV Corps would later be largely redeployed to the Rim Worlds front, in the process undergoing an organizational transformation

SLDF VI CORPS

Administrative HQ: Asta

Commander: Major General Harmond Vriss

Force Strength: 9 BattleMech regiments, 9 armor regiments, 9 infantry regiments, 3 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Sixteenth Division, Seventeenth Royal Division, Eighteenth Division

Note: VI Corps would later be redeployed to the Rim Worlds front, in the process undergoing an organizational transformation

FEDERATED SUNS AUXILIARY CORPS

Administrative HQ: New Syrtis

Commander: Major General Troy Neville

Force Strength: 10 BattleMech regiments, 11 armor regiments, 14 infantry regiments, 4 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Avalon Hussars provisional division (including the First, Seventh, Eleventh, Twentieth and Thirty-Third Avalon Hussars BattleMech regiments), Syrtis Fusiliers provisional division (including the Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Syrtis Fusiliers BattleMech regiments)



TAURIAN DEFENSE FORCE

Commander: Marshal Lucinda Grimm (TDF Chief of Staff)

Constituent Units: Calderon Guard, Concordat Chasseurs, Pleiades Hussars, Taurian Guards, Taurian Volunteer Guard (militia), Taurian Navy

Initial Force Strength:

BattleMech Regiments: 33

Aerospace Regiments: 7 (not including naval aerospace assets)

WarShips: 127



the Tikonov region—refused to disband their private militaries, he dispatched his military to disarm or eliminate these threats to his power.

Tikonov's Galactic Rangers, in the employ of Lord Niko Tormassov, initially stood up to Liao's henchmen, but fled the world rather than be destroyed. Tormassov's retainers found their way to the Taurian world Pinard, where Tormassov began to negotiate for asylum. Liao's army found them before that could happen, and the Galactic Rangers fled once again, this time in stolen Taurian vessels. Liao's troops tracked them to the Davion system Sanurcha, where a Davion naval flotilla destroyed the "invading" Liao ships, though the Galactic Rangers once again made their escape, disappearing into the Periphery border zone.

The local Davion commander ordered a reprisal strike against a presumed Liao staging area on Robsart; in turn, a Concordat naval squadron sent the Davions packing, destroying two ships and capturing a third. Thus began years of back-and-forth raids that left Davion well-aware of the Concordat's presence and capabilities. Though Davion found himself immediately occupied with Liao and his maneuvers along their shared border, Protector Richard Calderon began to build in earnest a true military for the Concordat, realizing that its people would sooner or later need to defend themselves against Davion's naked aggression.

In the two centuries it took the Davion princes to marshal the support they needed to invade the Taurian Concordat, scores more incidents came to light, each further focusing the Taurian peoples' wariness of the Davions.

—Professor Murrk Calderon-Szui, *Reunification: The Darkest Hours of Interstellar Peace*, Taurus University Press, 3030

THE MIGHTY BULL

The Hyades Cluster was colonized in 2253 by dissidents fleeing the Outer Reaches Rebellion. Eighty-two years later the Taurian Concordat officially formed, initially claiming almost twenty colonized worlds and over a billion citizens. Founded by citizens fleeing the oppressions of the Terran Alliance, and bolstered by millions more that fled the war, chaos and strong-arm tactics that so typified the formation of the six Great Houses, the Concordat was xenophobic and incredibly protective of its borders. By the late Twenty-fourth Century, despite remaining "hidden" in the expanses beyond both the Capellan Confederation and the Federated Suns, the Concordat formed a strong military to keep those borders secure.

A chance 2369 encounter cemented those emotions within the Concordat and further inspired its centuries-long feud with the Federated Suns. Three decades later, the Age of War brought the Concordat into direct action against both Davion and Liao forces. The Concordat gained the BattleMech by the mid-Twenty-fifth Century and soon established its status as the strongest Periphery nation, possessing a large and advanced industrial base.

By the dawn of the Star League, the Taurian Concordat was on par technologically and militarily with the six nations united by Ian Cameron, and boasted a higher literacy rate. The one and only statistic the Taurian Concordat could not compete in was sheer numbers—Taurus claimed less than sixty incorporated colonized worlds, a mere fraction of the thousands united under Terra and the Camerons.

PRELUDE TO PERDITION

Leaders in the Periphery knew the formation of the Star League in 2571 would sooner or later—likely sooner—lead to disaster for their nations. The Star League would not stop until it had united all of Humanity under its aegis. The League at first attempted to coax the Concordat into alliance with diplomatic and economic offers, such as the Galactic Summit on Terra in early 2572 (to which no Periphery nation, save the Rim Worlds, sent delegates), the Critical Services Modernization Initiative in summer 2572 (a thinly-disguised attempt at industrial espionage coupled with the establishment of a pro-Star League propaganda machine within the Periphery), or even the establishing of favored-nation trade status with the Concordat at the outset of 2573 (which Taurians believed would end up shipping more Star League products into their nation than they would be exporting). The Periphery nations, led by the Taurian Concordat, rejected each of these measures.

In response, First Lord Ian Cameron flexed his Star League's military muscle in an effort to convince the Periphery to give in, but those moves only fostered more solidarity

on the part of the Periphery nations. After Cameron issued Directive 21 in 2572, Taurian industry began retooling for military production, while its military redeployed to respond to any border incursions in the wake of the 2573 Malagrotta Incident.

STAR LEAGUE PLANS

The Star League issued the Pollux Proclamation in January 2575, and the four major Periphery nations gave their terse rejection just two months later, knowing that the Star League would respond in only one way. Within hours of hearing the Periphery nations' response, the Star League Council voted for war, determining that their armies would target the Taurian Concordat first.

An actual declaration of war and invasion would still be some years away, however. The plan to conquer the Concordat would require four full SLDF corps—forty percent of the SLDF's combat strength—as well as a fifth brigade of Federated Suns House troops. Additionally, the SLDF would have to transfer its primary battle fleets to the Taurian border. It would take well over a year to make these movements, but that, too was a part of the plan. Moderates within the Star League Council, especially Captain-General Marion Marik, didn't see war with the Periphery as the answer; it was their hope that the huge show of force along the border might encourage the Concordat to reconsider diplomacy.

Between March 2575 and December 2576, four SLDF corps moved to the border: I Corps (occupying worlds from Mandaree to Sanurcha), III Corps (positioned on Firgrove and Drienfontaine), IV Corps (taking up station on Enchi and Senggang) and VI Corps (with responsibility from Agliana to June). At the same time, First Prince Alexander Davion formed the Federated Suns Auxiliary Corps, which took up position between Panpour and Naka Pabni. Major General Charles Wexworth assumed command of the Taurian front on 4 May 2575.

THE BULL'S HORNS

In the five years between the formation of the Star League and its declaration of war on the Taurian Concordat, Protector Calderon doubled the size of his military and built strong militia forces on nearly every inhabited planet, placing additional BattleMech and aerospace fighter contingents on the Concordat's most industrialized worlds. By 2575, the Concordat possessed more than thirty frontline BattleMech regiments, and nearly three times that many frontline armor regiments, deployed in key systems throughout the nation. As impressive as these measures were, Calderon and his advisors knew they would represent mere speedbumps against the Star League juggernaut.

Naval power was the one parity that Calderon and his military leaders knew they possessed, and they leveraged the Concordat's true strengths—its large, dedicated population and massive industrial base—to expand upon that. From 2573 until the end of the war, the Concordat quadrupled its output of WarShips and military DropShips, and further produced thousands of aerospace fighters. Four battle fleets formed the core of the Taurian navy, patrolling the border systems and waiting for the inevitable.

CASE AMBER

As war preparations continued, both the Federated Suns' and the Taurian Concordat's navies heavily patrolled their border systems, ready to react decisively to any incursion. This state of heightened readiness had existed since the Malagrotta Incident, and despite not a single actual confirmed incursion, scores of DropShips and JumpShips were seized on both sides of the border.

Tensions continued to mount as more and more Star League troops took up positions along the border, prompting the Concordat's military leaders to propose a daring strike at their old enemy, House Davion. They hoped to stall the impending invasion and convince the Star League that the price of invasion would be too great. Protector Mitchell Calderon, desperate to leverage any advantage, agreed. The Taurian plan, codenamed Case AMBER, began in early 2577.

Well aware that the Federated Suns was closely watching its fleet movements, the Taurian navy withdrew the majority of its WarShips from the border. Meanwhile, Taurian intelligence services set up an operation within the Caldwell system designed to look like the Concordat had assembled a massive invasion fleet there. Instead, the Taurians assembled their fleet in an unnamed system near Tentativa, hoping Davion would take the bait.

In September of 2577 he did. Davion's intelligence agencies picked up the weakened Taurian naval presence, and even correctly surmised the operation within the Pierce system was a ruse. Unfortunately for Davion, his analysts and advisors believed this elaborate operation was designed to obfuscate the Concordat's weakness in the region. The Prince ordered them to immediately exploit this apparent weakness, initiating the Reunification War with what they all hoped would be a blinding victory against the Concordat.

AFFS Admiral Sarah Vincent took charge of Task Force Four on 7 August, assuming command of over half of House Davion's WarShip fleet for this important operation. She led Task Force Four into the Tentativa system on 28 September 2577, immediately overwhelming the meager defenses stationed in-system. Ten days

MALAGROTTA

The Malagrotta Incident was, arguably, the first battle of the Reunification War. Fought in the Malagrotta system, in orbit around the moon Fontana, it was also the first decisive battle of the war—one that gave the AFFS High Command an overconfidence in the abilities of their navy.

The incident began when a Taurian flotilla jumped into the system with navigational problems and proceeded to Fontana to make repairs, hoping to receive assistance from the Taurian mining colony there. Federated Suns miners on the same moon dispatched a distress call, and an AFFS WarShip squadron jumped into system two days later. They made their approach to Fontana unseen from a LaGrange jump point, attacking the Taurian ships before they could launch their DropShips or fighters. AFFS marines captured two major ships (along with four DropShips), while the AFFS squadron destroyed two Taurian WarShips. By the end of the three-hour battle, only one Taurian WarShip had escaped, and the AFFS hadn't lost a single WarShip (and only one DropShip).

Taurian Order of Battle

Winchester-class TCS Pinard (escaped)
Wagon Wheel-class TCS Anaheim and *TCS Cyrton* (both destroyed)
Pinto-class TCS New Karachi (captured)
Merchant-class TCS Ulysses Run (captured)
 6 *Manatee-class DropShips* (1 escaped, 1 destroyed, 4 captured)
 4 *Jumbo-class DropShips* (2 escaped, 3 destroyed)

Federated Suns Order of Battle

Davion-class FSS Charles Davion and *FSS James Davion*
Robinson-class FSS Woodbine
New Syrtis-class FSS Jaipur
Vigilant-class FSS Batavia, FSS Novaya Zemlya, FSS Point Barrow
 and *FSS Smolensk*
Merchant-class FSS Alkazar and *FSS St. Lô*
 3 *Leopard CV-class DropShips* (1 destroyed)
 4 *Manatee-class DropShips*
 3 *DroST IIa-class DropShips*

later, Admiral Vincent took her task force to the Pierce system, again encountering little resistance, and finding no signs of the Taurian WarShip squadron apparently still operating in the region. While Vincent and her staff debated whether they should continue on to uncover the Taurian deception within the Caldwell system, a courier brought news of a major Taurian naval assault within the Federated Suns.

As soon as he'd received confirmation of Davion's attack on Tentativa, Taurian Marshal David Santos led his own fleet to Panpour, a known Davion military staging area. There, he led just half of his combined fleet against Davion's Task Force 2.7, a twelve-WarShip squadron composed mostly of troop transports and light escorts. Marshal Santos' overwhelming force destroyed nine Davion WarShips and eighteen DropShips, and captured three WarShips, three JumpShips and eight DropShips loaded with war supplies. In return, Santos lost just one WarShip and a handful of DropShips. They remained in the Panpour system only long enough to recharge their drives and jump back out.

Admiral Vincent didn't learn that, however, until Task Force Four returned to the Tentativa system. Vincent followed standard doctrine, splitting her task force between Tentativa's two primary jump points and moving to secure the remainder of the system when enemy forces were detected. After studying Davion fleet tactics for two decades, Santos knew precisely how Vincent would respond. He also had ships well hidden within the system (as well as in five other nearby systems) watching for the Davion fleet; they gave Santos the Davion fleet's exact positions.

Vincent's fleet detected what they believed was a Taurian WarShip squadron orbiting the system's fifth planet—in reality a single Taurian monitoring ship putting out enough decoy signals to seem like five WarShips. Vincent herself led a strong force from the zenith point to investigate and eliminate the potential threat (while her deputy did virtually the same at the nadir point). Twenty-four hours later, Santos jumped three squadrons of WarShips to the zenith point. Of the ten escorts and six supply Jumpships they ambushed, the Taurians destroyed six WarShips and captured the remainder. Admiral Vincent immediately turned around to attack the Taurians.

Some twenty hours later, after a hard return burn, Vincent's squadrons attacked but soon found themselves surrounded as the remainder of Santos' fleet jumped in. Outnumbered more than two-to-one, Vincent nonetheless attempted to battle her way through the Concordat fleet. An hour later, all but four of the Davion WarShips were crippled, destroyed or captured while the rest were on the run, in an attempt to link up with the other half of Task Force Four. Admiral Vincent's flagship, the FSS *Lucien Davion*, was destroyed with all hands.

Vice Admiral Brimin Davis-Peckholt turned back to reunite the remainder of Task Force Four at the nadir jump point, but by the time that they arrived Santos' fleet had already quick-charged and jumped to the nadir, savaging the ships Davis-Peckholt had left behind. Vice Admiral Davis-Peckholt attacked, knowing the odds he and his crews faced; they acquitted themselves well, losing only five capital ships and taking two enemies with them before reaching minimum safe

jump distance and departing the Tentativa system. Three of the four ships that fled the zenith point likewise escaped the system.

Marshal Santos had delivered House Davion a humiliating defeat. Twenty-eight Davion WarShips were destroyed or scuttled, with eleven more captured or otherwise recovered by the Taurian navy. Dozens more combat DropShips and hundreds of fighters were destroyed, and the Taurians managed to capture the bulk of Task Force Four's tenders. Between Panpour and Tentativa, some three-quarters of the Federated Suns' fleet had been destroyed or crippled—including many of the troop transports and supply ships that would be needed to support the invasion of the Taurian Concordat—at a cost of a mere three Taurian WarShips destroyed.

PEACE THROUGH THE ARMS OF WAR

The defeat of the Davion navy at Tentativa had significant repercussions throughout the Inner Sphere and the Periphery. Alexander Davion's military had never suffered quite such a resounding defeat, especially in such a public way. Moreover, the loss of so many ships and supplies all but neutralized the threat posed by the Davion Corps stationed on their border—precisely the result Protector Calderon and his advisors had hoped.

Across the Inner Sphere two reactions emerged: anger, at the Taurian Concordat and the rest of the Periphery for making this "unprovoked attack," and ridicule, directed at the Federated Suns' military for suffering such a humiliating defeat in what hindsight showed was so clearly a trap. Though Tentativa was a disaster for one of his staunchest supporters, First Lord Ian Cameron enjoyed a massive boost in support for war against the Periphery, a level his propagandists could never have generated on their own. On the other hand, Alexander Davion's nation faced problems in the Star League Council from the leaders of both the Capellan Confederation and Draconis Combine, who took political advantage of Davion's weakness. The AFFS and their Prince spent nearly the entire war trying to acquit their most public failure.

To the Periphery, Tentativa was proof that the Star League was not invincible. A strong nationalistic fever swept the Concordat; military recruitment stations were packed, while industrial output in support of the war effort seemed to double. This furor would serve the Concordat throughout the war.

Most critical, however, was the response to the Tentativa debacle within the Star League Council and the SLDF. The Taurian Concordat was a major military power that needed to be dealt with immediately and decisively. Its rapid defeat would signal to the rest of the Periphery that they could have no hope against the might of the Star League.

The Star League Council declared war on the Taurian Concordat on 30 April 2578. The invasion would begin fifteen days later.

FIRST PANGS OF REUNIFICATION

The rapid defeat of the Taurian Concordat was the SLDF's prime goal, but even though First Lord Cameron had suspended the terms of the Ares Conventions, General Wexworth was not yet ready to wage total and unrelenting war on the Concordat. Or to destroy its strong industry.

BATTLE FOR TENTATIVA

The Battle for Tentativa actually encompasses five major engagements fought between the Federated Suns' and Taurian Concordat's navies in late September and early October 2577 in three different star systems.

Admiral Sarah Vincent, commanding AFFS Task Force 4, divided her command into four sub-commands; Task Forces 4.1 and 4.3 were carrier task forces with a preponderance of aerospace fighter support, while Task Forces 4.2 and 4.4 were heavy strike formation. Together, Task Force 4 represented nearly sixty percent of House Davion's naval might.

Task Force 2.7 was the remainder of Task Force 2, originally assembled to patrol the spinward reaches of the Taurian border; it consisted primarily of troop carriers and escorts that would eventually be tasked with the invasion of the Concordat (the rest of TF2's ships had been reassigned to Admiral Vincent's Task Force 4). Task Forces 1 and 3 likewise remained on paper, headquartered on New Syrtis and June, respectively; only a handful of patrol ships remained assigned to each.

On the Taurian side, Marshal David Santos took command of the Taurian Concordat's Case AMBER, which placed him in command of a third of the Concordat's WarShip fleet. The planetary defense flotillas consisted primarily of space stations outfitted with heavy weaponry, supported by up-gunned DropShips (later in the war, a handful of key Taurian worlds would also eventually be defended by permanently assigned WarShips).

Federated Suns Order of Battle

Task Force 4.1

- 1 *Aegis*-class cruiser
- 2 *New Syrtis*-class carriers
- 2 *Baron*-class destroyers
- 1 *Davion II*-class destroyer
- 1 *Davion I*-class destroyer
- 3 *Vigilant*-class corvettes
- 2 *Vincent Mk. 39*-class corvettes
- 3 *Merchant*-class JumpShips
- 2 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 4 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 2 *Jumbo*-class DropShips
- 6 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Task Force 4.2

- 2 *Congress*-class frigates
- 1 *Aegis*-class cruiser
- 1 *Baron*-class destroyer
- 3 *Davion II*-class destroyers
- 2 *Davion I*-class destroyers
- 1 *Vigilant*-class corvette
- 2 *Vincent Mk. 39*-class corvettes
- 3 *Merchant*-class JumpShips
- 10 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 4 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 3 *Jumbo*-class DropShips
- 5 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Task Force 4.3

- 1 *Aegis*-class cruiser
- 2 *New Syrtis*-class carriers
- 1 *Baron*-class destroyer
- 1 *Davion II*-class destroyer
- 2 *Davion I*-class destroyers
- 3 *Vigilant*-class corvettes
- 2 *Vincent Mk. 39*-class corvettes
- 3 *Merchant*-class JumpShips
- 2 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 4 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 3 *Jumbo*-class DropShips
- 6 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Task Force 4.4

- 1 *Congress*-class frigate
- 1 *Aegis*-class cruiser
- 1 *Baron*-class destroyer
- 4 *Davion II*-class destroyers
- 2 *Davion I*-class destroyers
- 1 *Vigilant*-class corvette
- 2 *Vincent Mk. 39*-class corvettes
- 3 *Merchant*-class JumpShips
- 8 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 6 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 2 *Jumbo*-class DropShips
- 6 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Task Force 2.7 (Panpour)

- 7 *Robinson*-class transports
- 1 *New Syrtis*-class carrier
- 2 *Vigilant*-class corvettes
- 2 *Vincent Mk. 39*-class corvettes
- 5 *Merchant*-class JumpShips
- 9 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 3 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 5 *Jumbo*-class DropShips

Taurian Concordat Order of Battle Tentativa Defense Flotilla

- 4 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 2 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Pierce Defense Flotilla

- 2 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 2 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Task Force AMBER, First Detachment

- 3 *Winchester*-class cruisers
- 2 *Dart*-class cruisers
- 6 *Wagon Wheel*-class frigates
- 4 *Concordat*-class frigates
- 5 *Pinto*-class corvettes
- 18 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 12 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 12 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

Task Force AMBER, Second Detachment

- 3 *Winchester*-class cruisers
- 3 *Dart*-class cruisers
- 7 *Wagon Wheel*-class frigates
- 4 *Concordat*-class frigates
- 4 *Pinto*-class corvettes
- 20 *Leopard CV*-class DropShips
- 12 *Manatee*-class DropShips
- 12 *DroST IIa*-class DropShips

BATTLE FOR RIDGEBROOK

The Battle for Ridgebrook is often but a mere footnote in most military histories, but it also represents the most “typical” naval engagement of the Age of War and early Star League eras. Two small naval contingents battled each other in orbit and open space close to a key world, using the planet’s moons as well as artificial satellites just as a MechWarrior would use forests and hills. The Taurian ships concentrated primarily on the SLDF transport DropShips in a simple attempt to prevent as many troops from landing as possible. Meanwhile, the Star League ships did their best to punch a hole through so that their troopships could land safely.

Instead, Wexworth intended to surround and cut off the Taurian capital. His five corps would advance across the Taurian frontier and pin down the Concordat’s military before focusing three corps in a drive on the Hyades.

Ridgebrook and Keuterville were the first Taurian worlds targeted, with responsibility given to I and III Corps, respectively. IV Corps did not jump off immediately, as it was forced to redeploy to take responsibility for Panpour. VI Corps, on the other hand, moved to secure Malagrotta.

Ridgebrook

The SLDF’s First and Second Divisions entered the Ridgebrook system on 15 May, protected by their own WarShip escorts and elements of the Third Battle Fleet. Third Fleet took the lead, encountering a squadron of Taurian WarShips in orbit over Ridgebrook itself. A five-hour battle ensued, ending in the loss of three SLDF WarShips and four Taurian WarShips, though also the loss of ten SLDF DropShips—more than a regiment of troops, vaporized in space before they even reached the planet.

When the First and Second Divisions did make landfall, they set out to avenge their comrades. The planet itself was lightly populated, with most activity centered on the Westridge continent. First Division made landfall beginning on 22 May and encountered only light resistance until the 25th, when Second Division began grounding within easy marching distance of the planet’s capital of Estacada. The Second’s DropShips immediately came under heavy fire from Taurian gun and missile batteries positioned in the Goldenridge Mountains overlooking the city. Two battalions of ‘Mechs and armor, along with five of their supporting DropShips, were wrecked during the course of the day.

That began the SLDF siege on the Goldenridge Mountains. Though the Taurian defenders had no BattleMechs, they possessed a strong armor force backed up by some of the heaviest artillery in the Concordat. From their Goldenridge fortresses, they could cover the world’s largest city and primary transportation hub, and they had built a triple layer of defensive lines that would keep the Star League occupied for some four months. The Taurian defenders in both the mountains and the city made the Star League troops pay dearly for every victory, fighting to the bitter end; the final bunkers were cleared out on 12 September, with fewer than a hundred Concordat soldiers taken alive out of the mountains.

Keuterville and Malagrotta

III Corps’ Ninth Division landed on Keuterville, having run into an almost-nonexistent naval defense flotilla. The world’s population was scattered across three continents, with few major population centers, but a strong planetary defense force possessing three regiments of fast armor and two battalions of ‘Mechs. Taurian Colonel Lissan Khilliko led her defense forces into a classic guerrilla campaign. SLDF Lieutenant General Besik Yulan attempted to wage a straightforward assault campaign, occupying every settlement and dispatching search-and-destroy missions to locate and eliminate Khilliko’s forces. Instead, his actions gave Colonel Khilliko literally hundreds of targets of opportunity to strike at. After six months of minimal results with losses totaling more than 2,000 soldiers killed in guerrilla actions, more than a hundred ‘Mechs and tanks destroyed or severely damaged, and dozens of broken timetables, III Corps commander Major General Elisska Wright replaced Yulan with a specialist. Lieutenant General Prieste Jamand, a former Capellan special forces officer, spent the next five months waging a guerrilla campaign of his own. By March, the violence largely died down, allowing Jamand to move two brigades off-world. Still, Khilliko managed to hold in place a full SLDF division for the majority of a year, yet another small victory for the Concordat.

Both the SLDF and the AFFS had closely monitored the Malagrotta system since the incident there five years earlier. While Taurian WarShips had been seen patrolling the region ever since, they had not returned to the system. Still, IV Corps commander Major General Amar Lagat erred on the side of caution and tasked two strong naval strike squadrons to pacify the system. Encountering no resistance, the Sixteenth Division followed, quickly taking control of Malagrotta, Fontana and a dozen more moons and asteroids with mining concerns.

And All the Rest

VI Corps truly jumped off in July, making dual assaults on Csomad and Armington. Though both systems were lightly populated and poised in the furthest “corner” of the Taurian Concordat, General Legat nonetheless found the worlds were not pushovers. As Star League soldiers across the Concordat were quickly discovering, the citizens of each world seemed to rise up as one to oppose Inner Sphere occupation.

On Csomad, the people attempted to fight a guerrilla campaign like as their countrymen were fighting on Keuterville. They were nowhere near as successful, however; the Taurians lost Colonel Maria Ruben within the first week of fighting, and with her the only strong officer on-world that could keep the many scattered partisan leaders in line. Likewise, Seventeenth Royal Division commander Lieutenant General Kamsing Ward did not make the same mistakes as General Yulan on Keuterville, and soon took advantage of the broken chain of command among the Taurians. Within two months, the bulk of the guerrilla bands had been destroyed or otherwise neutralized, though Ward still faced many months more subduing the population.

The battle for Armington initially seemed a straightforward military campaign for the SLDF Eighteenth Division. Within days of landing, the Eighteenth was attacked by what seemed to be the bulk of the world's armed defenders. The Taurians lost two regiments of armor and three more of motorized infantry in just three days of battle on the plains surrounding Armington District, the world's capital. The rest took to the planet's wilds, likewise attempting to wage a guerrilla campaign. When Armington's people attempted to rise up against the League invaders, Lieutenant General Dugri Cameron-Jones focused his Eighteenth Division on just a few settlements at a time, cut off all communications and critical services, and began forcibly disarming every one of Armington's citizens. Before moving on, his troops turned services such as water and electricity back on, but they continued to cast a communications blackout over the world. By the end of the year, with countless throngs of guerrillas in custody or dead after standing up to the League soldiers, only a few isolated guerrilla attacks were being registered every week.

House Davion's troops also began to move against the Concordat, though at nowhere near the rate of the Star League. Possessing only enough transport and escorts to launch a single assault, Alexander Davion's military targeted the location of its greatest defeat: Tentativa. Both sides had monitored the otherwise-insignificant system closely since the epic battle there, so it was no surprise to Davion's naval commanders that the Taurians had placed a strong planetary defense flotilla there shortly after the battle, or that a roving WarShip squadron regularly visited the system.

Two allied task forces—one AFFS and one SLDF—jumped into the Tentativa system in August, hoping to ambush the Taurian squadron which had just been spotted there. The Taurians and the combined Star League squadrons sparred with each other at a distance for several days while *en route* to Tentativa itself, fighting a brief battle over the world before the outnumbered Taurian WarShips jumped out of the system from a transient point. The remaining defense flotilla lasted mere minutes against the remaining allied WarShips.

That opened the door for Federated Suns troops to land on Tentativa. AFFS Major General Troy Neville fought a brief by-the-numbers campaign against the few organized militia armor and infantry battalions before proceeding to pacify the world's relatively small population.

SLOW ADVANCE

Along the Taurian front, success was measured in casualties received and inflicted, but throughout the Inner Sphere the promised quick conquest of the Taurian Concordat looked to be a massive failure. In just three months of war, Star League troops had set foot on a mere six worlds—a far cry from the almost sixty claimed by the Concordat. The Council Lords demanded answers, as did their citizens.

To his credit, SLDF Commanding General Carlos Lee didn't throw General Wexworth to the wolves. House Davion's debacle at Tentativa proved that the Taurian Concordat had the ability to project massive naval power, which General Wexworth had to be careful to either avoid or overwhelm with the League's own naval

juggernaut. Until the Taurian fleet could be pinned down, the Star League advance would be slow and careful. At the same time, entire Taurian populations were rising up to oppose Star League occupation, further complicating timetables.

General Lee bought his subordinate some time, as did news of successes along the border, but the First Lord and his Council would tolerate the slow-moving campaign for only so long. Wexworth needed some wins, and he needed them soon. To aid him, General Lee began to transfer some of the Reserve Corps units to the Taurian frontier, freeing Wexworth's frontline troops from occupation duties.

Meanwhile, Wexworth's troops continued onward. With Ridgebrook largely pacified, I Corps pushed on to Wrentham. First and Third Divisions were Wexworth's vanguard there, meeting a determined Taurian defense. Though the two divisions' BattleMechs made quick work of the Taurian armor, the defenders' lightning attacks likewise extracted a heavy toll in men and materiel from the invaders.

EXPANSION...

IV Corps made its first moves of the war with an assault on Anaheim in October 2578, having to wait for a naval escort to the system. As it turned out, the heavy escort in to Anaheim was unneeded, with the Twelfth Division making landfall on the 14th. Initial battles for the world turned decisively in favor of the SLDF invaders, but by the end of the month the Twelfth Division found itself in a guerrilla morass they were unprepared to fight, much like the situation on Keuterville. Unlike Keuterville, however, the Twelfth quickly found itself cut off from its lines of communication; the SLDF Fourth Battle Fleet Attack Squadron Two departed the Anaheim system by the 23rd, leaving the window open for a Taurian squadron to arrive and scatter, capture or destroy the majority of the Twelfth's naval escort and transport flotilla. IV Corps commander Major General Amar Lagat spent the next six weeks securing contact with the Twelfth and then reopening the lines of communications; the bulk of IV Corps began to transfer to the world in January of 2579 to reinforce the Twelfth and be in a better position for the next operation.

VI Corps continued advancing along its front, attacking Estuan in November of 2578 with Lieutenant General Kelly Nakamura's Sixteenth Division. Like Armington and Csomad, Estuan possessed a relatively small—but vehemently anti-Star League—population with minimal defenses. A Taurian naval patrol initially gave Nakamura some concern, but the Taurians withdrew after the loss of a corvette and two assault DropShips. The battle for Estuan lasted three weeks—primarily as Nakamura's troops hunted down the organized Taurian defenders—but the guerrilla campaign continued on for months longer before Nakamura could do more than simply react to each attack.

House Davion's corps likewise continued its transport-limited campaign with an assault on Traussin. Six Davion regiments landed to face just two regiments of armor, backed by what seemed to be the entire population of the world armed with rifles and makeshift satchel charges. It was here the Federated Suns troops had their first bitter taste of the Taurian resistance movement.

...AND REDEPLOYMENT

General Wexworth received new orders in March 2579: show significant progress in the war against the Taurian Concordat or be replaced. To the ambitious general, the subtext was also crystal clear—perform or lose whatever hopes you have of a future career.

Operation BULL RUN's timetables were clearly not realistic when compared with the ferocity of the Taurian opposition. Wexworth needed to focus his strength to completely overwhelm the Taurian defenders, prompting him to make several redeployments. He pulled III Corps completely off the line and poised it for a deep strike into the Concordat. Meanwhile, he expanded the I and VI Corps fronts, returning responsibility for Panpour to the AFFS auxiliary corps. Likewise, he pulled IV Corps off of their front and readied it for the greatest assault in the war yet, slowly replacing them with reserve troops transferred in from the Star League's interior.

These movements could not be performed overnight, and the difficulties were compounded by ongoing Taurian resistance on worlds already claimed. Moreover, the steady stream of supplies and replacement troops promised by the SLDF headquarters had yet to materialize, forcing the general to cannibalize support units and scrounge what he could. Wexworth was ready to begin his campaign anew as a new year dawned. Meanwhile, he dispatched three naval assault fleets on seek-and-destroy assignments; he wanted to destroy the Taurian navy, and he wanted to do so before the attacks began again in earnest.

A NEW STRATEGY

In the months that the SLDF navy traveled up and down the Taurian frontier, they met significant Taurian forces only twice, and both times the outnumbered Taurians retreated rather than be pulled into potentially decisive battles. Meanwhile, those same Taurian WarShip formations seemed content to harass Star League shipping lanes and ground force escorts. While 2579 saw little additional ground action save for consolidation of gains already made, five Taurian and nine SLDF WarShips were lost in isolated actions that further prompted Wexworth to assign additional fleet support to each of his corps.

Many in the Concordat saw Wexworth's pause as a reason for celebration, that the sacrifice of so many of their countrymen had blunted the Star League's invasion. Protector Calderon and his senior advisors, however, recognized the truth. The SLDF was simply regrouping before a new assault—one bloodier than the last.

THE PLEIADES

General Wexworth took personal command of the next major assault in February 2580. Leading the entirety of IV Corps, reinforced by two divisions from I Corps, he assaulted the Pleiades Cluster, landing simultaneously on the three major inhabited worlds in the cluster. Each was heavily industrialized and well-populated, and possessed strong local garrisons. They were also located within a globular star cluster that made precise navigation within the cluster difficult for all but the most experienced crews.

Wexworth began with a naval assault. Two SLDF fleets, each some thirty WarShips strong, entered the cluster and began to search for the expected Taurian defense fleet. The Pleiades Fleet met the Second Battle Fleet amid the Deep Pleiades Asteroid Field, near the gas giant Archimedes, on 11 February, initiating a desperate three-day battle. The Pleiades defenders attempted to destroy as many Star League ships as possible while the Second Battle Fleet held the line, waiting as the First Battle Fleet raced to lend their support. By the end of the Battle for the Pleiades, thirteen Taurian and fifteen Star League WarShips were destroyed, along with dozens more DropShips and hundreds more fighters on both sides. The surviving Taurians slipped away at proximity points while three of their fellow crews held off the Star League advance with their lives.

The Star League WarShips blazed a path through the cluster for Wexworth's ground forces, ever wary of surprises the Taurians might have nestled away within the cluster's countless planetoids—especially suicide cargo ships (known as fireships) carrying either a nuclear warhead or packed with a mix of explosives and scrap (designed to rip apart enemy ships), as well as the numerous hidden bunkers armed with anti-ship weapons. Eleven transport DropShips were damaged and three more destroyed in this way during the burn in to the Pleiades worlds of Electra, Maia and Merope.

The landings began simultaneously on 23 February, with IV Corps tasking one division to each world. The results were the same on each. After allowing the Star League vanguards to land unopposed, the Taurian defensive forces attacked from the ground and the air, throwing wave after wave of infantry and armor into the battle while their aerospace fighters and BattleMechs focused on opening holes in their lines. Wexworth's troops succeeded in holding on to their landing zones on all three worlds, but only barely; on Maia and Merope, only the timely intervention of First Battle Fleet fighters allowed the Star League ground forces to carry the day.

Wexworth immediately deployed reinforcement brigades from I Corps, holding one division in reserve, and ordered his troops to advance. Under the cover of heavy Battle Fleet fighter screens, Wexworth's troops made slow but steady progress toward each world's key industrial centers. But as they entered each city and town, they found strong regular defense forces and throngs of citizens willing to use their own bodies as shields or weapons. Star League MechWarriors and tank crews constantly looked for roadblocks that might also signal the presence of insurgents or suicide bombers. Or crowds of women and children that attempted to box them in to make artillery or air strikes against them easier. Or simply buildings or vehicles loaded with explosives that would be remotely detonated as they passed by.

Nevertheless, the Star League troops pressed on. By late spring, they were beginning to make significant headway and by summer, most of the worlds' industrial output was halted. Occasional Taurian supply ships would arrive from pirate points, bringing reinforcements and especially war materiel, but the longer Wexworth's ships remained in system, the better they were able to identify and cover possible Taurian pirate points. The general deployed his reserve brigades in June and July, giving his ground troops the strength he hoped they

would need to finish the campaign. The Second Battle Fleet departed the system on 11 July, along with half of the First Battle Fleet.

Maia fell first on October 7, with Merope following suit soon after. The people of Electra held out the longest, lasting until the end of November before the Taurian defense force fell apart. By that time, each of Wexworth's five divisions reported operational strengths of less than forty percent. Replacement troops and equipment were on their way, but it would be quite a while before I and IV Corps would again be ready for battle.

LOTHAIR AND ANAHEIM

While I and IV Corps assaulted the Pleiades, VI Corps turned its attentions toward Lothair. Though only recently added to the Star League's interstellar atlas, Lothair was already a heavily-populated world with a burgeoning industry. The Concordat had attempted to keep the existence of Lothair a secret for as long as possible, though intelligence gathered by the Star League in the first year of the war pointed war planners directly to the world. General Wexworth hoped that a simultaneous assault on Lothair and the Pleiades would further keep the Taurians off balance.

Either Victralla or Warren was originally to be VI Corps' next target, but Lothair seemed a more significant strategic target. Few specific details about Lothair were available, however, forcing General Vriss and VI Corps to design the battle plan on the fly. Vriss and his troops soon found themselves in much the same situation as I and IV Corps in the Pleiades, facing heavy resistance in the form of both Taurian regulars as well as citizen brigades. While Vriss did not have the same kind of naval task force to back his troops that Wexworth did, neither did he face quite the same level of opposition.

Nevertheless, the campaign for Lothair was both bloody and time consuming. Against the city of Satrinos and both Lothair Industriplexes Two and Four, progress was measured both in centimeters as well as in casualties. The final battles with the defending Taurian regulars occurred in late October and early November, while the rest of the world was not pacified until many months later.

Part of the reason it took VI Corps so long to pacify Lothair was because of a resurgent resistance movement on Anaheim. Half a dozen DropShips inserted more than a thousand Taurian regulars specially trained in guerrilla tactics to wage an unconventional war on the SLDF behind the lines. The guerrilla campaign forced General Vriss to divert many of the replacement soldiers bound for Lothair to Anaheim to help put down the resistance movement.

SUPPORTING PLAYERS

While I, IV and VI Corps were all deeply involved in battle in and around the Pleiades, III Corps stood on the sidelines. Ninth Division eventually turned over responsibility for Keuterville to SLDF reserve units, freeing it to regroup with the rest of its corps. It would sit on the sidelines throughout 2580.

The Davion Corps continued to pursue its own slow campaign, striking the world of Cohagen in October 2579. Once again hampered by the lack of escorts and transports, Major General Neville dropped the equivalent of an SLDF brigade there, and over the course of

the next five months moved more and more troops in, especially infantry. As with every other Taurian world struck so far, the citizens proved every bit of a challenge as the regular defenders. In the case of Cohagen, powerful storms raged across the planet for weeks or months at a time, further setting back the Davion timetables.

Meanwhile, Taurian guerrilla fighters slipped onto Cohagen, Traussin and Tentativa, as well as Armington, Csomad and Estuan, further inflaming the local populations and keeping both Star League and Davion troops assigned to those worlds from redeploying elsewhere throughout 2579 and 2580.

GAINING MOMENTUM

The Pleiades Cluster was under Star League control, as were almost a dozen other worlds. Nearly a third of the Taurian Concordat's industry and economy was under Ian Cameron's thumb, or soon would be. The Concordat nevertheless continued to resist, and while a significant dip in its readiness or resolve had yet to materialize, General Wexworth knew that something would have to break soon.

As 2581 dawned, Wexworth continued to tighten the noose, beginning with the core worlds surrounding the Pleiades. The renewed campaign would begin in spring, once the tremendous holes in his I and IV Corps could be filled with replacements.

FLINTOFT

15 March 2581 brought the First Battle Fleet to the Flintoft system, where a Taurian fleet was equipping the system's defensive flotillas with scores of the fireships that had been so effective in the Pleiades. Nine hours later, sixteen SLDF WarShips were crippled or destroyed; the Taurians lost nine WarShips, more than twenty DropShips and over a hundred fireships.

Though costly, the battle opened up the lane to Flintoft, where the Second and Third Divisions landed on 27 March. With a number of good targets to choose from, I Corps commander Major General Ilaria Zennaro directed her troops to secure the planet's industrial belt—a series of cities built along the Copper River Valley, each fed by a steady stream of raw materials mined in the local mountain ranges. Zennaro didn't like the idea of fighting in the lowlands with mountains all around her, but judged that a rapid victory in the industrial belt was worth the risk.

As the Second and Third Divisions made landfall, Flintoft's defenders presented Zennaro with their second surprise. A force of more than three hundred conventional aircraft began to constantly bomb and strafe the I Corps positions, beginning a two-week battle for aerospace superiority. Twice Zennaro considered pulling her divisions out, but instead allowed the Star League fighter wings to establish superiority, drawing out most of Flintoft's garrison in the process.

Between the middle of April and the end of July, Zennaro's divisions took the Copper River Valley, eliminating most of the world's defenders while also placing the majority of Flintoft's people under their control. From there, they spread out to bring the rest of the world under their control, focusing first on the rest of the northern continent under before progressing towards the more agrarian southern reached. This process took another eleven long and costly months.

THE FIRESHIPS OF FLINTOFT

The naval battle at Flintoft's nadir jump point was, first and foremost, a mistake. The Taurian fleet was scheduled to deliver its cargoes of extra defensive DropShips and a veritable constellation of fireships to the Flintoft system months earlier, but changing priorities and shifting schedules within the Taurian armed forces caused numerous delays. Without those delays, the Taurian WarShips would not have been there, and the battle certainly would have gone much differently. As it was, while the fireships proved they were not quite the decisive weapon the Taurians hoped they would be, they did force a change in tactics and ship deployments within the SLDF.

DECISIVE ROBSART

While I Corps struck Flintoft, III Corps aimed at Robsart, a provincial capital with a known heavy garrison. After the indecisive naval action within the Pleiades Cluster, and considering the importance of the world to Calderon and his people, Wexworth detailed additional naval support to the probing force. It was a prescient move: the Taurians had positioned a strong naval presence of their own there and were also mustering a massive strike fleet in the nearby Midale system.

As soon as the Star League fleet jumped into the system, both commanders sensed the coming of a naval storm unlike any other in this war. Taurian Marshal Gisela Cardenas planned to meet the Star League fleet near Robsart VII; she dispatched courier ships to summon as many WarShips as possible. Meanwhile, scores of fireships, supported by eleven assault DropShips positioned at the nadir jump, point attacked the SLDF fleet; for the price of every Taurian vessel at the jump point destroyed, two Star League WarShips were disabled and seven DropShips destroyed.

SLDF Admiral Janissa Franklin likewise made the call for additional assistance, though her couriers left the system some forty-eight hours after Cardenas'. She saw the Taurians moving toward the seventh planet, and while she fully expected the Taurians had something up their sleeves, she knew she could reach the world before the Taurians and believed her ships could handle Cardenas' surprise. Franklin also planned to bring her reinforcements in close to the seventh world, ready to commit immediately to battle; she meant to have the advantage.

The two fleets met on 20 March 2581 near Robsart VII. Franklin's ships had, indeed, reached the world seven hours before Cardenas, finding no surprises waiting for them, then turned to meet Cardenas before her ships entered orbit. While Franklin burned straight for her, Cardenas circled the Star League fleet, attempting to buy time while keeping them at range. The cat-and-mouse lasted more than an hour, until the Midale fleet appeared from behind the gas giant. The two Taurian fleets descended upon Franklin's ships. Six hours later, the two fleets broke contact; the Star League's superior firepower had kept the Concordat's greater numbers from overwhelming them, and by the first battle's end both fleets had lost a quarter of their strength. The two fleets met again seven hours later in a long-range battle over Robsart VII, relying primarily upon their fighters and assault ships to probe for weaknesses; once again they broke off after two hours of combat.

Nine hours later, Franklin's reinforcements began to arrive. Over the course of the next two hours, forty more Star League WarShips appeared. The League ships were still hours away from joining the fray, prompting Cardenas to attack before she lost the advantage. This new battle waged for just an hour before Cardenas retreated ahead of the advancing Star League reinforcements. Cardenas was now outnumbered and outgunned; she had some surprises she could still call upon, however, so long as she could remain out of the range of the Star League guns.

On 25 March, Cardenas again turned to face the Star League fleet amid a large LaGrangian dust cloud, behind which a Taurian squadron had arrived, carrying additional fireships. The cloud obscured sensor readings on both sides, forcing both admirals to rely upon their fleet squadron commanders to prosecute the battle. Cardenas hoped to take advantage of what she saw as lingering rivalry and communication problems within the SLDF. Instead, Franklin's crews performed like clockwork, isolating and eliminating entire Taurian WarShip squadrons while guarding their own flanks with fighter and DropShip screens. After five hours of battle, half of Cardenas' fleet was in ruin; she called for a general retreat, but even that took another two hours to reach the rest of her ships.

Cardenas' fleet ran for another day before jumping out of a pirate point to a proximity point near the system's main world; they burned in to Robsart, where they linked up with the rest of the Taurian reinforcements. 30 March brought the next major engagement, the start of another three days of battles in and around the world, its three moons and countless artificial satellites—from which Cardenas could call upon several new waves of fireships and gunships. By 2 April, however, Cardenas had lost more than two-thirds of her fleet to Admiral Franklin, while in return claiming only thirty League capital ships. Cardenas withdrew what was left of her fleet to a LaGrange point; all but six managed to jump away safely on 4 April. Franklin's pursuing ships ravaged the remaining Taurian ships in mere minutes, leaving behind nothing but a debris field.

A wary Admiral Franklin carefully searched and scanned the Robsart system for the next week; she wanted no more surprises. The naval battle for the Robsart system had already cost her thirty WarShips—a full quarter of her fleet, while another fifty had suffered such heavy damage that they would likely spend years in repairs. One would never leave the system, while the other two would have to wait decades until salvaged and repaired by the very first *Newgrange* yardship in 2603.

Franklin called the Robsart invasion force in, which reached the world by 20 April. By the time III Corps reached the world, however, Robsart was already in flames. Admiral Franklin, angered by the loss of so many ships and so many of her spacemen to often-suicidal tactics, ordered the orbital bombardment of the world, beginning with its capital. Thirty thousand alone died in Carrizozo, while more than two hundred thousand more died across the planet as Franklin struck one city after another. Many more died in the days afterward of their injuries while millions were left homeless and without medical care or services.

Major General Eliska Wright's III Corps landed on a world denuded of industry and civility by Franklin's orbital assaults. The admiral had crippled the world's defenses, but in the process also solidified the emotions of the world's survivors. Suddenly, Wright's troops no longer faced

protesters and guerrilla fighters, they faced a human wave that cared about nothing but overwhelming and destroying the Star League invaders. Over the course of the next three months, Wright's III Corps was forced to gun down tens of thousands of Robsartians, many wielding whatever piece of debris they could carry.

By the middle of July, the fighting began to taper, though not because of III Corps' actions. The people of Robsart were exhausted, having largely survived the past three months on whatever scraps they could find or pillage. Even stores kept on local farms or in cooperative warehouses lasted only so long, opened to feed the starving people of Robsart or burned to prevent the Star League from taking them.

General Wright declared Robsart pacified on 30 August, though garrison troops and Star League contractors sent in to rebuild the world and provide medical assistance continued to experience heated resistance to their presence for decades after the war's end.

General Wexworth declared Robsart a strategic victory. He had broken the back of the Taurian navy, which now consisted of just a few dozen scattered and battered WarShips. In return, the SLDF navy had lost just thirty WarShips, less than ten percent of its active strength. And while many more ships would be out of commission for repairs, those losses were easily absorbed. The Star League still possessed a fleet of more than four hundred WarShips.

COMES ARES UNLEASHED

The Battle for Robsart marked a dual turning point in the war. Though the Taurian navy's final death throes would not come for some time yet, it was no longer the tremendous threat that caused the SLDF to tiptoe carefully through the Concordat. But at the same time, national feelings within the Taurian Concordat took a decidedly vicious turn. After Robsart, the proverbial gloves came off. By the end of 2581, the Taurian people were resisting in any way they could, from human wave tactics to employing nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical weapons.

The relatively civilized war that General Wexworth had envisioned suddenly disappeared. In its place was a dark beast that neither side was yet truly prepared for.

IN THE WAKE OF ROBSART

After refitting from the Pleiades campaign IV Corps targeted Brusett. The Tenth Division landed on 2 July 2581 to an absolute surprise: city after city lay abandoned, simply waiting for the occupation forces. Believing that Brusett's people had evacuated rather than be evaporated by Star League WarShip fire, Lieutenant General Absalom Graves ordered his troops to carefully search the cities for traps before abandoning their field encampments and occupying those valuable targets. Within days, a sickness affected the entire division, one that was quickly traced to poisoned water supplies. Attached Star League medical corps teams quickly synthesized an antidote, but not before the combined efforts of the poison and strong Taurian attacks claimed the lives of more than three-quarters of Graves' division, some six thousand soldiers, including the general himself.

The rest of the Tenth barely held on, thanks to quick work from its escort WarShips, which struck key Taurian formations with orbital fire. Reinforcements began landing nine long days later.

On Werfer in August, VI Corps' Eighteenth Division was confronted by a combination of makeshift radiological and chemical bombs that ended up killing more Taurians than it did Star League soldiers. On both worlds, the SLDF commanders ordered a scorched earth campaign in response, but their efforts were blunted by powerful Taurian garrisons equipped with heavy armor as well as BattleMechs. Neither campaign would be complete within a year's time.

DIEFENBAKER

Wexworth's victory in the Pleiades was incredibly important, and with the victory at Robsart the general looked to maintain the initiative while further isolating the Pleiades from possible counterattack. He tasked the Second and Ninth Divisions to strike Diefenbaker in August 2581, pulling those troops from the continuing battles on Flintoft and Robsart, respectively.

Recognizing the rapidly changing nature of the war, the general's drive began with a significant departure from his normal tactics. In early July, two commando battalions dropped on Diefenbaker in captured Taurian ships. Within days they had cut key communications, power and mag-lev lines, and by the end of the month caused so much havoc that Taurian commanders redeployed the majority of Diefenbaker's defenders to guard key infrastructure sites. This opened the door for quick SLDF gains when the Second and Ninth Divisions landed on August 9. After the Star League regulars landed, Wexworth's commandos took on an additional task: disrupting the Taurian partisan activities.

THE BATTLE OF ROBSART

Neither fleet commander could have imagined that Robsart would be the most decisive naval action of the war. Both Admiral Franklin and Marshal Cardenas simply looked at what they had, what their enemy had, and the environment of the battlefield. Neither had the benefit of surprise, and both called in reinforcements.

By battle's end, nearly the entire Taurian fleet had seen action in the Robsart system, and most ships were left blasted or burning hulks. On the Star League side, almost a quarter of the SLDF's entire fleet participated in the battle. The one circumstance that the Taurian navy had hoped to avoid came to pass at Robsart—the Star League had achieved a local numerical superiority. The Taurians may have possessed a greater spirit than their Star League opponents, but the League had the technological edge and the ability to repair and supply its ships at a far better rate than the Taurians.

The Battle of Robsart broke the back of the Taurian navy. No longer could the Concordat assemble anything more than a temporary local superiority. This freed the SLDF from the artificial constraints of having to provide large escort forces. But while the Taurian navy may have broken, the Taurian spirit emerged from Robsart with a renewed energy, tempered only by its viciousness. The war was long from over.

FRANKLIN'S WAR

After the Battle of Robsart, Admiral Janissa Franklin found herself in the unenviable position of being the victor of a dramatic battle as well as the apparent instigator of a series of war crimes. When she first received congratulations from General Charles Wexworth, her commander on the Taurian front, he asked her to report on allegations that she'd ordered orbital bombardments of civilian targets.

While the Star League Council had suspended the provisions of the Ares Conventions for the course of the Reunification War, General Wexworth had made his position on the subject clear to all of his subordinate commanders: that in absence of direct orders from Wexworth himself, the Star League Defense Forces engaged in his theater of operations would not target civilian populations or use WMDs. Admiral Franklin knew that she was in violation of Wexworth's policy, and that alone would be enough for him to remove her from command. And while the courts-martial would likely acquit her of wrongdoing, she would no longer be in command of the largest WarShip fleet ever assembled at this most critical of junctures. She needed another resounding victory, one that would cement her position and prevent Wexworth from simply removing her.

Admiral Franklin replied matter-of-factly. In her opinion, she had made the correct choice. The Taurian people were resorting to suicide tactics to take out every Star League soldier they could. By razing the largest cities on the world, she prevented tens of thousands of potential partisans from taking up arms against the League while also overtaxing the world's services networks. Her decisive action saved SLDF lives.

She dispatched her reply by courier, but before Wexworth could receive the reply she sortied a small task force under her flag. She intended to deliver one final blow to the Taurian fleet, and do so before any of Wexworth's courier ships could find her. And so the third-ranking officer on the Taurian front embarked on her own private war.

From May to November 2581, Admiral Franklin's task force jumped from system to system in search of the remainder of the Taurian navy. Instead, she located but a handful of patrol and intelligence vessels, destroying three and capturing seven. She also positively located and identified fireship squadrons and support vessels guarding jump points in five different systems.

She never found the remainder of the fleet she was looking for, but she did collect a wealth of much-needed intelligence on future target systems while disrupting Taurian shipping for almost eighteen months. Her private war did, in fact, save many SLDF lives. And though Wexworth relieved her and charged her with treason, the SLDF courts-martial quickly cleared her of wrongdoing, allowing her to assume a new assignment on Terra—even if it was behind a desk.

—Dr. Susan Lee, *Fire-Birth of the Star League*, New Avalon Press, 3061

The Star League invaders secured several major industrial sites within the first week, and the planetary capital of Frasier—as well as every major settlement on the world—by September. Unfortunately, the rest of the Diefenbaker campaign would be a far more difficult proposition, as the Taurians retreated into the world's rugged hills and mountains. While the Star League troops could still make precision strikes with BattleMechs and aerospace fighters, the bulk of the fighting was left to the infantry, casualties among whom quickly soared.

The SLDF troops nevertheless pressed on, encouraged by Wexworth's commandos, who often led the charge with an airborne assault or a treacherous flanking maneuver. By the end of November, Diefenbaker's defenders had been reduced to a regiment in the Corigan Hills overlooking Frasier; commanded by "General" Illicia Braxton, a former Taurian officer, these mixed Taurian regulars and citizen volunteers occupied the myriad defensive positions that often limited Star League advances to meters at a time. It took more than a month of constant airstrikes and artillery barrages, coordinated closely with infantry assaults, to breach the final Taurian lines and summit Hill 475. But instead of capturing those last Taurian holdouts, they discovered those final 400 defenders had taken their own lives rather than let themselves be captured—a less than satisfactory end to a month-long battle that saw the virtual elimination of half a dozen SLDF infantry regiments.

DAVION GAINS

Despite his recent victories, General Wexworth was anxious. While he had five full corps at his disposal—more than 120 regiments, including the equivalent of more than forty BattleMech regiments—the nature of the Taurian war meant that he often had to task one or two full divisions to each world. At the same time, his colleagues on the Canopian and Outworlds fronts needed a mere fraction of those forces to subdue their target worlds. Moreover, he considered one of those corps—the Davion auxiliary corps—all but useless. Since the Tentativa debacle four years earlier, it did not possess enough JumpShips to move all of its units, and claimed only three escort WarShips—far less than was necessary to protect a force of that size.

Wexworth complained incessantly to SLDF Commanding General Lee, and to anyone on the Star League Council that would listen to him, that the Davion Corps was little more than a border garrison. If he was to finish the war for the Concordat, he needed a real corps of troops.

For his part, First Prince Alexander Davion argued within the Star League Council that his troops were hamstrung by the lack of available transport ships—an argument that often rang hollow considering his nation's maneuvers along the Outworlds Alliance border. In late 2581, however, the Prince made a stand, inadvertently aided by General Wexworth's own reports and projections. First Lord Ian Cameron agreed with Davion that, although fronts against the Magistracy of Canopus and the Outworlds Alliance had both been opened, the Taurian front was the most critical, and deserved the lion's share of support. Cameron immediately ordered a third of the Star League JumpShips and WarShips supporting the war against the Outworlds Alliance be placed at the disposal of Davion's corps. Operations on the Outworlds front came to a screeching halt, but by the end of 2581, the AFFS corps finally had the ships it needed to wage the kind of warfare Wexworth demanded.

PIERCE AND WIEPPE

Wexworth gave AFFS Major General Neville one mandate in December 2581: "get in the game." Neville, in turn, pointed his regiments at the worlds of Pierce and Wieppe, the Concordat's final two original border worlds. Braving fireship formations that harassed them on the burn in, the Federated Suns corps made its first assaults by the end of the month.

Five regiments of Syrtis Fusiliers, supported by five more Federated Suns light cavalry and infantry regiments, struck Pierce on 22 December, occupying seven large cities and towns in as many days and scattering the world's militia with little difficulty. The Davion troops soon learned the reason for their incredible successes: Pierce's defenders struck back in the opening days of February, all but demolishing the capital city of Schuler, as well as Ahloso and Bristow, with a series of powerful bombs set off within the cities' sewers and underground tunnels. Within minutes the cities were reduced to rubble. Thousands of Davion soldiers died in the blasts, as did more than twelve thousand citizens. Hundreds of combat vehicles and BattleMechs were buried or otherwise damaged. The surviving AFFS troops spent more than a month sifting through the rubble, digging out their comrades and their combat vehicles, before resuming limited combat operations. It was another two months repairing all of their damaged vehicles before the Davions truly resumed the attack.

On Wieppe, the end result was little different. The Avalon Hussars landed on 29 December to strong resistance and a pall seemingly over the entire world. The Taurian citizens had put the torch to countless millions of tons of grain and other foodstuffs, as well as to their not-insignificant reserves of petroleum—both refined and crude. Taurian armor and citizen-infantry formations would attack out of the roiling smoke clouds and just as easily dissolve back into them. Meanwhile, the Davion invaders had not only their own units to feed, but also the people of every Wieppe city, town and village they captured; unable to live off the land by seizing food stores as they normally would, they were forced to ship food in, further tying up much-needed transport ships. Worse still, as both invaders and citizens alike subsisted on minimal rations, health problems caused by the near-constant smoke clouds hanging over the populated regions multiplied tenfold, overwhelming the civilian and military hospital systems. By mid-March, hundreds were dying each day of respiratory infections that otherwise could have been cured with little problem; medicines, cheap and plentiful on any industrialized world, had to be shipped to Wieppe in bulk, and even then more than half of each shipment was reserved to treat the Davion troops.

On both worlds the Taurian people resisted with everything they could, but also sooner or later exhausted themselves. Major General Neville's troops bided their time, holding on to what gains they'd already made and pursuing a campaign of lightning strikes and deep raids. They choked off both worlds, cutting the flow of food and other resources until their opponents were too exhausted and hungry to put up a fight. Wieppe was in Davion control by the beginning of October 2582, while Pierce held out until the next year.

HALT

The war against the Taurian Concordat had lasted four years already, during which time General Wexworth's five corps had captured a third of the Concordat. But the price of the "six month" campaign was a butcher's bill; every Star League regiment involved in the war had suffered casualties—wounded and dead—numbering between half and one-and-a-half times their original strength, as well as a similar number of war machines—BattleMechs, tanks and fighters—destroyed or rendered irreparable. No regiment was at full strength, and many were hovering around sixty percent strength or less, numbers that dipped even lower once factors like sickness and battle fatigue were considered. The SLDF was having serious problems keeping up the steady flow of replacement troops and equipment.

General Wexworth saw those numbers change for the worse every day, and even as he pressed his strongest force—the Davion Auxiliary Corps—into action, he ordered the rest of his troops to switch to the defensive, giving them time to rebuild their physical and mental strength. He also renewed his requests—soon enough turning into demands—for more troops; at their current casualty rates, his divisions and regiments would not last much longer.

400 AND THE BLOODY 88TH

Throughout the Reunification War and in the years that followed thousands upon thousands of tri-vid productions presented fictionalized—oftentimes highly so—accounts of nearly every major battle fought during the war. With so many different decisive battles to choose from, the Battle of the Corigan Hills on Diefenbaker was probably featured in more productions than any other.

It's not difficult to see why that battle was the subject of so many features. It is a story rife with bravery and overcoming overwhelming odds. A single regiment of Taurian defenders held a key fortified position against two entire Star League divisions, or on the flip side an exhausted and horribly understrength Star League infantry force fought centimeters at a time up a steep hill, honeycombed with battle works, against a determined enemy unafraid to die for their cause. And in the end, the final 400 Taurian defenders committed suicide so that they would not be captured, while the Star League's 88th Light Horse regiment, down to its last few companies after fighting its way up the hill for over a month, finally crested the hill and raised the Star League flag over one of the bloodiest battlefields of the war.

Powerful stuff, no matter what side you take. Just months after the battle, the Taurian government released a quasi-documentary of the battle, *Ghosts of Diefenbaker*, designed to further stoke the flames of national pride. Meanwhile, three years after the battle had concluded, Southern Cross Productions shot *Hill 475* on location, telling the epic story from the Star League perspective.

Those were the first of many retellings of the story, with one seemingly popping up once every decade or so through the end of the Star League era, and infrequently after that, depending upon the prevailing winds of interstellar relations. Perhaps the most memorable were the tri-vids *400* and *The Bloody 88th*, though each for very different reasons. *400* was a highly stylized production that took significant liberties with the facts to tell the story of legendary heroics in the face of impossible odds. Released in the Taurian Concordat in 2762, and quickly making its way across the Inner Sphere, it made significant money and is still popular in some circles. On the other side, *The Bloody 88th* told the story from the Star League perspective, using amputees—as well as, if the rumors can be trusted, many prisoners that were maimed or even killed during the hyper-realistic battle recreations—to add to the verisimilitude. That was released in 2693, earning many awards and becoming nearly mandatory viewing material in schools across the Inner Sphere.

—Calvin Duncan-Reeves, *The History of Cinema at War*, New Earth Productions, 2994

Commanding General Carlos Lee and his command staff were not convinced. Moreover, the Star League Council ordered them to open up the final front of the war—the invasion of the Rim Worlds Republic—in 2581. By then, nearly the entire SLDF, along with a majority of the militaries of three Star League member-states, had been committed. The Star League Council, interested only in results and not the realities of war, demanded that Lee find the troops he would need to fight the war against the Rim Worlds.

Unfortunately for General Wexworth, General Lee decided to pull the troops needed for the Rim Worlds campaign from the Taurian front. Simple astrography showed the SLDF High Command that the wide Taurian front was rapidly diminishing from more than 250 light years wide to a relatively concentrated 80 or so light years, and fewer units would be needed to advance along this narrow front. Of course, that was a wholly simplistic view that both ignored the realities of interstellar war as well as a swath of minor Taurian systems from Hanseta to the Badlands Cluster (later known as the Pirates Haven). General Wexworth did not receive the reinforcements he'd requested, and he was about to lose both IV and VI Corps—already, the Eleventh Royal Division from IV Corps had been pulled from the Pleiades, while the rest of both corps were scheduled to pull off of the line as soon as they were relieved by additional units from the First and Second Reserve Corps.

In fact, Wexworth would have lost the rest of IV Corps and the majority of VI Corps already had they not been engaged, a fact not lost on the general. So while he continued to press for additional replacements and reinforcements, he attempted to keep those troops he did still have engaged. He made plans to shift troops from I and III Corps around to free the remainder of IV and VI Corps to strike elsewhere.

General Wexworth never had the chance to implement his plan. Just days after learning that Diefenbaker was firmly in SLDF hands, General Amalthia Kincaid arrived from Terra, relieving him of command.

THE YEAR OF BLOOD

General Amalthia Kincaid assumed command of the Taurian Front on 17 January 2582, bringing a new energy and a new way of thinking to a front that had long ago stagnated under Charles Wexworth's cautious and conventional approach. She also brought with her a significant force of replacements and reinforcements, some of which she had already formed into a special provisional brigade. These five Striker regiments, composed exclusively of jump-capable 'Mechs and infantry, as well as a heavy force of self-propelled artillery, were the brainchild of Lieutenant General Elias Priest, Kincaid's chief of staff, and would take Wexworth's use of irregular commando warfare on Diefenbaker to the next level.



Kincaid did not straight away push the SLDF back onto the offensive, despite repeated demands from Terra for immediate results. I and III Corps had just concluded their ground operations on Diefenbaker, Flintoft and Robsart, while the Davion Corps had just barely invaded Pierce and Wieppe. They needed time to rest and refit. Moreover, they needed time to learn how to fight the kind of war that Kincaid would be waging. She began reorganizing her regiments, concentrating 'Mechs, tanks and infantry into dedicated brigades. The generalist regiments and brigades of the SLDF gave way to specialist units that could better focus their strengths.

Replacement troops and equipment also began to flow into units that had been understrength for years. Kincaid set up recruiting and training stations on Firgrove, Mendham and Ridgebrook, opening new lines of replacement troops independent of the Great Houses. Kincaid and Priest plucked select battalions from I and III Corps, assembling them, along with replacement brigades and the strikers, into the provisional XI Corps.

As March of 2582 dawned, Kincaid was ready to renew combat operations along the Taurian front. XI Corps, under the command of now-Major General Elias Priest, prepared for war. Priest's combination of veterans and raw recruits would either validate Kincaid's new tactics or prove their downfall.

STRIKERS ON HORSHAM

Save for the extensive shipyard complexes within the Hyades Cluster, Horsham was home to the Taurians' last remaining naval production yards—primarily producing JumpShips and DropShips for the Taurian nation. After the battles of Flintoft and Robsart, it was also clearly the origin of many of the Concordat's fireship squadrons. If the SLDF was to continue on to the Hyades Cluster, Horsham would have to fall.

General Kincaid ordered Second Fleet to clear the approach to Horsham, with the bulk of Admiral Cassius Bekatorou's fleet jumping to the nadir point on 21 February after a group of ships had already spent a month covertly gathering intelligence. Bekatorou identified the largest concentrations of Taurian naval activity and meant to simply destroy everything in his path. His heavy WarShips provided cover for more than a regiment of fighters to clear the jump point of fireships and Taurian DropShips, while the three Taurian WarShips stationed there, along with two others under repairs and two score DropShips in varying states of repair and function, lasted just minutes against the withering Star League fire. Bekatorou's marines seized the massive Horsham Nadir Shipyards after more than forty-eight hours of hard fighting, during which time the Taurian defenders sabotaged or outright destroyed almost every operational slip. By battle's end, the shipyard was little more than a useless, hollow shell.

Bekatorou's fleet continued to clear the system, engaging and destroying another formation of DropShips and fireships at the zenith point, as well as a three-WarShip squadron hiding behind the fifth planet, before securing space around Horsham. The world's orbital shipyards likewise fell to the admiral's marines, though once again actions by the Taurian defenders left the yards useless.

The admiral's fleet kept Horsham under siege for more than a month, destroying every Taurian ship that approached the world and launching random air attacks on Horsham's defenders. XI Corps' Striker Brigade arrived in orbit on 9 April, attacking the next day. They began with nighttime orbital drops on Taurian defense bases, supported by Bekatorou's fighter squadrons, which scattered the world's defenders. From there, they targeted one industrial complex after another, beginning with the planet-bound DropShip and spacecraft factories and armament producers. Bekatorou's fighter squadrons kept Horsham's garrison largely bottled up, allowing Lieutenant General Isaac Decose's Strikers to capture almost two-dozen valuable production sites intact, including thousands of workers and soldiers.

The coordinated air and ground campaign continued unabated for four months, by which time Horsham's defenses were all but wiped out. Only three isolated pockets of resistance remained as August arrived, and Decose wiped each out in succession with combination air drops coordinated with a heavy ground advance. 29 August 2582 marked the final assault on Little Mystic Mountain; three days later, General Decose declared the Horsham campaign complete.

THE CARMICHAEL GAMBIT

General Kincaid may have brought a host of new ideas to the Taurian front, but she also recognized a good plan when she saw it. General Wexworth had started to free up IV Corps at the end 2581 of for a strike that would keep them engaged for some time to come; General Kincaid saw no reason to change those orders (and allow the freed IV Corps to be redeployed to the Rim Worlds front). And so the bulk of IV Corps, the Tenth and Twelfth Divisions, landed on Carmichael on 8 March 2582.

From the outset, troops on both sides knew that the battle for Carmichael would be a difficult one. Rich in natural resources, the world possessed strong gravity and several atmospheric taints, factors further compounded by the powerful storms that continuously whipped

THE BATTLE OF HORSHAM

The action in the Horsham system typified the kind of naval combat that pervaded the Taurian front in the wake of Robsart. Even an important system like Horsham received but a minimal Taurian WarShip presence; defense of the system was left primarily to DropShips and other small craft, a move that clearly had little impact upon the Star League's Second Battle Fleet when they arrived in-system.

At the same time, SLDF naval tactics were truly coming to maturity. While overwhelming force was still the *modus operandi*, that force was being employed more intelligently and with better precision. Gone were the mass melees; instead, Star League admirals would approach from a distance and destroy their enemies with ranged shots, supported by heavy fighter screens sent ahead to deal with enemy fighters and DropShips. Moreover, with the threat of the Taurian navy all but eliminated, intelligence-gathering ships could be dispatched weeks or months ahead of the invasion fleet, giving invasion commanders a much better picture of what they would be facing.

RESERVE WAR

The Reunification War placed many unforeseen stresses upon the Star League military—logistics and manpower being the predominant concerns. The question of logistics was never truly solved, as each front produced its own unique challenges, but on the Taurian front the most pressing problems were largely resolved by the time General Kincaid took command. Manpower, on the other hand, would haunt the Taurian front throughout its two decades of war.

In reality, the “manpower problem” can be broken into three distinct subsets. The first and most immediately critical was the need for a steady stream of replacement troops. This, of course, was a problem that the SLDF hadn’t truly considered as its estimates had the invasion lasting but six months; each of the four SLDF corps assigned to the front were overstrength to begin with, and it was expected that any casualties sustained would be recouped after the war. When the first assaults of the war weren’t complete within six months, the SLDF High Command rushed to get new trainees into the field, in the process further complicating the process of getting both men and materiel to the front.

A second similar, but distinctly different, problem came as the enlistments of the soldiers on the line came up. That required even more trained troops—both combat troops and support personnel—to be shipped to the front, but until the SLDF could catch up, thousands of enlistments were involuntarily extended.

The third, and arguably greatest, of the problems was simply having a large enough force on the line to win. As the Reunification War continued and expanded, the SLDF overextended itself. By the mid 2580s every SLDF corps was involved in combat or support operations, as was a third or more of four member-state militaries. Every front needed more manpower.

Both SLDF Reserve Corps were activated in 2578 to help fill the gaps, but rather than mobilize the entirety of both corps, which would begin a maximum four year clock after which the reservists would stand down, SLDF Commanding General Carlos Lee initiated limited mobilizations. By 2582, these limited mobilizations turned into a rotating schedule under which a third of the two Reserve Corps would be activated at any one time, at first for fifteen months, then eighteen, and ultimately twenty-four months at a time, with almost two years of down-time between deployments. This schedule stressed, but ultimately did not break, the reserve system.

Each of the four Great Houses involved in the Reunification War experienced these same problems to one degree or another, and each responded in

across the planet. It was a miserable but valuable world that would require a significant investment of time to pacify.

The first battles progressed as well as any Star League soldier could expect; the initial strike on the single largest city—really a loose community of less than 6,000 miners, refinery and factory laborers, and longshoremen—left the world’s primary spaceport in Star League hands, along with dozens of wrecked factories. Carmichael’s garrison scattered to the four winds and, supported by seemingly all 200,000 of the world’s citizens, fought a guerrilla campaign, aided immeasurably by the storms and rough landscape. Aerospace fighters and WarShips were useless save to place the world under blockade. Pacifying Carmichael almost literally meant scouring every home, structure and cave system on the world, all the while waiting for enough of a break in the storms to do so.

By the end of 2582, less than ten percent of the world’s population was under Star League rule.

XI CORPS ACTIVATED

General Kincaid gave XI Corps its first battle assignment in May. As the Striker Brigade continued its fight on Horsham, the Thirty-first Division’s Ninety-second Brigade looked toward Bromhead while the Thirty-second Division’s Ninety-fourth Brigade targeted Rollis, both reinforced by elements of the Ninety-third Brigade. Kincaid hoped this would be the beginning of an end-run campaign that would ultimately isolate the Hyades Cluster. To both systems, Kincaid assigned strong naval support in the form of the First and Third Battle Fleets, while also readying III Corps to provide additional support, if needed.

Lieutenant General Luciana Jin reached Bromhead on 13 May, after the First Fleet cleared the system of naval opponents. Just as on Horsham, Jin’s troops dropped right on top of the world’s defense posts after more than two weeks of heavy pounding from the First Fleet’s fighters. Fort Dumas and Lakin fell quickly that night, but the battle for Fort Morgan lasted nearly two weeks as the Taurian defenders put over four hundred tanks that had been destined for shipment onto the line. The Bromhead citizens’ brigade massed to oppose Jin’s troops. Jin called down airstrike after airstrike over the course of those three days, and though she finally put an end to resistance at Fort Morgan, she lost more than half of her troops. Her subsequent strikes on key locations suffered, preventing her from repeating the same kinds of successes as the Strikers had achieved on Horsham. The attacks on Bassett, Harlington and Randolph ultimately succeeded but the Taurians managed to sabotage and disable much of the industrial base on the world.

As with Bromhead, the Ninety-fourth Brigade struck Rollis after Third Fleet cleared the system, though in the case of Rollis the naval battles lasted more than a month as Admiral Tomohiro Shouaa tracked down eighteen DropShips and more than a hundred fireships and other small craft scattered around the system. The Ninety-fourth entered the system a week after Admiral Shouaa’s fleet did, and following an escort, made its way to Rollis on 29 May while Shouaa’s fleet continued to clear the system.

The Ninety-fourth pursued a similar strategy on Rollis as their comrades did on Bromhead and Horsham, though without the benefit of weeks of heavy aerospace bombardment. They dropped in a lightning nighttime strike on the heavily-industrialized Saint Gabriel, taking the city and its factories intact. Two weeks of heavy action in and around the city followed as its civilian population rose up against the Star League troopers and Rollis’ garrison rolled in. Lieutenant General Cae Liu arranged the Ninety-fourth in a wide defensive stance that could rapidly respond to Taurian incursions, but on 9 June a determined counterattack broke through to the Vargas Petrochemicals plant. The combination of the resulting gas expulsions and chemical spills brought the fight within the city to a grinding halt; thousands died over the course of the next three days because of exposure to chemicals, while five times that number were hospitalized. The city was rendered uninhabitable, forcing tens of thousands to flee and changing the nature of the Rollis campaign.

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General Liu's Ninety-fourth Brigade chased down the Rollis garrison even as the world's people fought back with every weapon they could scrounge or fabricate. The accidental chemical release at Saint Gabriel became the standard on Rollis, with Taurian soldiers and citizens alike fashioning makeshift chemical weapons that more often than not killed or wounded more Taurians than they did Star League soldiers. This continued until the Third Fleet could focus its energies on the world; as soon as their fighters and WarShips arrived in orbit, the battle for Rollis changed. The Third Fleet targeted garrison and partisan formation alike, allowing the now-understrength Ninety-fourth brigade to move with relative impunity and target one strongpoint at a time.

Bromhead fell by the end of September, freeing up elements of the Ninety-second and Ninety-third Brigades to reinforce the Ninety-fourth on Rollis, where the final Taurian defenders held out until the end of the year. In all, XI Corps had suffered more than ten thousand casualties on the two worlds, many among non-combat units assigned in Saint Gabriel; civilian casualties were estimated seven to ten times that number.

their own way, skirting Star League law to expand the capabilities of their militaries. House Steiner, for example, contracted a number of logistical and support functions to civilian corporations while likewise eliminating numerous uniformed support positions so that it could create new combat units. House Davion, on the other hand, hired thousands of former soldiers, armed them (with heavy tanks and some BattleMechs) and gave them uniforms, and sent them to seven different worlds. Alternately calling them police forces or contract security forces, Davion nonetheless created some of the first modern mercenary forces.

—Abil Gebreselassie, *Soldiers of Fortune and War*, Tamar Publications, 3034

DAVION SLOWS

The loss of VI Corps to the Rim Worlds front did far more than denude the largest and bloodiest front of much-needed combat troops. It removed troops that were sorely needed to garrison recently conquered worlds with decidedly hostile populations. The move of First and Second Reserve Corps to the front helped to mitigate that effect, but not entirely eliminate it. The reserve troops were just as professional as the Star League regulars, but the nature of their reserve status meant that units could realistically only deploy one-quarter to one-half of their total strength at any one time. And while General Carlos Lee would not authorize an indefinitely long total mobilization of the Reserve Corps, he did authorize limited mobilizations that would ensure a constant rotation of reservists, meaning that, on average, effectively three to four divisions of reserve troops would always be available as garrison troops.

While this immeasurably aided I and III Corps in administering worlds taken along their front, the Davion Auxiliary Corps was on its own. Prince Davion did assign some additional forces to aid in the garrison effort, but Major General Erik Lambourne, who had replaced Major General Neville as commander of the Davion Corps, was forced to assign more and more of his regiments to garrison duty.

Nevertheless, in May he dispatched a combined Syrtis Fusiliers/Avalon Hussars task force to Verdigreis. As with most other worlds in the Concordat's spinward reaches, Verdigreis possessed a relatively small garrison and a similarly small, but also deeply patriotic, population. Six months of hard fighting on the part of Lieutenant General Amanda Hasek's troops pacified the world, though at the cost of what little infrastructure Verdigreis had once possessed.

CASE BLACK

Mitchell Calderon stood by and watched as the slowly-advancing Star League juggernaut consumed, one by one, the worlds of his Taurian Concordat. There was little he could do about it. The Concordat was the largest and strongest of the Periphery nations, but the forces he could muster were a pittance compared with the might of the Star League. And while he and his people ensured that every Star League victory was paid for in the blood of the Inner Sphere's youth, First Lord Cameron showed no sign of slowing or halting the war. Moreover, General Amalthia Kincaid, in just a few short months, was scoring victories that her predecessor would have taken twice as long and three times as many troops to accomplish.

Calderon looked to his military advisors to devise a plan that would again stagnate, if not end, the war. Case BLACK was their answer. The operation, which would take more than a year to accomplish, focused on one objective: the assassination of General Amalthia Kincaid.

NAVAL FEINTS

Case BLACK began in earnest in July of 2582, when the bulk of the remaining Taurian navy sortied from their bases in the Hyades Cluster, where they had been repairing and refitting up after their defeat at Robsart. The fleet headed spinward, leaving behind only a bare defensive fleet in the Hyades.

The fleet cautiously waited and watched, ambushing Star League intelligence-gathering missions in the Victoria, Warren and Caldwell systems with small squadrons. Marshal Gisela Cardenas then moved further spinward before splitting her fleet apart; the heavy WarShips continued to mass covertly as small attack squadrons rid systems like Mavegh, Montour and Cyrtion of SLDF and Davion intel ships. Her lighter vessels moved into League-held space to harry Star League and Davion shipping lanes. Between November 2582 and February 2583 the Taurians captured or destroyed five supply convoys, prompting General Kincaid to react.

The general knew that the Taurians were planning something large. Even as she ordered Third Fleet to find out what was going on in the Concordat's spinward reaches, she held her uncommitted ground forces in reserve. I and III Corps were ready to move, but on Kincaid's orders held their ground, ready to respond to any Taurian counterattack.

E-TORO VS. VOODOO RED

The Taurian Defense Force's "E-Toro", or Electronic Technical Observation and Research Office, was directly responsible for the Concordat's greatest achievement of the war: cracking the SLDF's VOODOO RED code.

Monitoring and decoding Star League communications had been E-Toro's mandate since its stand-up in 2572, and it received both significant funding as well as access to the greatest minds in the Concordat. Thousands of analysts, operating powerful supercomputer networks, worked to crack the multitude of codes used by the Star League government, the SLDF and the various Davion ministries engaged in the war effort. Some were relatively easy, based on well-known mathematical principles or ancient languages. Others were broken after encoding equipment or keys were captured, such as at Tentativa, or in extended action in the Pleiades.

But the SLDF's VOODOO RED code was the one code that no one thought could ever be broken. Only the most sensitive military communications were encrypted with VOODOO RED, and new encryption keys were sent out on a weekly basis. VOODOO RED had but one fault, that it was based upon the supposedly unsolvable Haggu-Thoms Uncertainty problem.

Mathematicians had attempted to solve the problem for more than three hundred years, until a graduate student at the Taurus Science Academy named Pelatore Charlis arrived at a solution in 2580. His academic advisors spent more than ten months trying to disprove the solution, and when they were unable

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commanding XI Corps, Major General Zhao Li, Kincaid's nominal deputy and chief logistician, and Admiral Cassius Bekatorou, senior naval commander in the Taurian theater, all fought for control of the front. Only IV Corps' two divisions and a handful of Davion units were then engaged, with I, III, XI and the Davion Corps all awaiting new orders.

Action on the Taurian front ground to a halt. General Zhao ordered a temporary hold on new operations until he could assemble the staff and review Kincaid's war plans. At the same time, General Priest immediately made his way to Kincaid's headquarters, where he took charge of her staff and began issuing preliminary orders to the four unengaged corps. Bekatorou linked up with Admiral Minn, determined to wipe out the last remnants of the Taurian fleet.

With two sets of conflicting orders issued under seemingly appropriate authority on the Taurian front, the corps and division commanders chose to remain neutral until General Lee appointed a new commander. This downtime also gave them opportunity to rest their troops and consolidate Star League control over the worlds they'd wrested from Taurian hands.

Meanwhile, the Taurians continued sending replacement soldiers and equipment into the field and supplying partisan movements on a dozen different worlds. After five years of unrelenting warfare, the Concordat needed a break. The Taurian people celebrated Kincaid's death for a week, with the members of the commando squad that killed her honored as national heroes. But even as the Taurians paused to celebrate the death of a hated enemy, they returned to work, knowing that the Star League juggernaut would soon enough resume its march. Protector Mitchell Calderon and his advisors closely watched the Star League intercepts for any news.

In fact, their intel coup gave them a front row seat to a complete breakdown of command and control on the Taurian front. Priest and Zhao battled each other for command, while Bekatorou pursued the Taurian fleet, which easily remained two steps ahead of its pursuers. The Star League generals also battled behind-the-scenes for a greater share of supplies and replacement troops; division and corps command-

Admiral Kristopher Minn, Third Fleet's commander, mistook the Taurian attacks as the actions of a broken fleet and its privateers, and dispatched nine hunter-killer WarShip squadrons to find and destroy these "last dregs." Instead, in five different engagements in March and April, Marshal Cardenas dealt stinging defeats to the isolated Star League ships before Minn's fleet found them. For the next two months Cardenas and Minn fought a series of running battles as they jumped from system to system. At Verdigreis, the Taurians startled a Davion patrol squadron that jumped away before it could be captured or destroyed. At Cohagen, Admiral Minn finally caught up with Marshal Cardenas, but broke off before the battle could be joined—a viral epidemic raged through his fleet, prompting the admiral to retreat rather than give the Taurians the advantage.

Minn retreated to Anaheim, calling in the Second Fleet to put a final end to the Taurian fleet. He was convinced that the Taurians were massing for an attack on the Davion Corps.

STRIKE AT THE HEAD

On Taurus, Protector Mitchell Calderon watched the proceedings with interest. His intelligence service had cracked the primary SLDF encryption code and his analysts were reading SLDF reports from the front. They were also paying very close attention to General Kincaid's movements. The opening they were waiting for finally came when they learned that General Kincaid would be inspecting the SLDF base on the Federated Suns frontier world of Firgrove in June.

A small Taurian commando team slipped onto the world using a captured Federated Suns transponder code. With General Kincaid's itinerary in hand, they waited until the ideal moment came on 3 June 2583, when General Kincaid paid a visit to Delta Company of the Fifty-sixth Ariana Lancers at their field encampment. The Taurian commandos fired a prototype particle weapon at the general, delivering a heinous wound. The Landers' Delta Company immediately took to the field to capture the commandos, but after a brief firefight, found only their bodies and the destroyed remains of the prototype weapon.

General Kincaid died four hours after she had been hit.

REST FOR THE WEARY

News of General Kincaid's assassination spread rapidly across the Taurian front, as did rumors of a Taurian "miracle weapon." Behind the scenes, Major General Elias Priest,

ers literally hijacked shipments from each other as discipline on the front disintegrated. AWOL rates skyrocketed. Calderon could only hope that this disciplinary epidemic would destroy the SLDF before it could right itself.

It nearly did. General Lee's simple orders confirming Zhao as commander on the front and elevation of Priest to that of deputy only brought the two generals into the same headquarters to fight. Zhao advocated the status quo until reinforcements could be brought from one of the other fronts and Priest, along with most of the staff, pushed for an immediate and strong push toward the Hyades. Behind the scenes, Priest eventually uncovered the veritable black market empire Zhao had built for himself.

A month of inactivity turned to three and then to six. General Lee toured the front personally in March of 2584, arriving unannounced to put an end to the bickering. What he found horrified him; he immediately relieved Zhao and sent him back to Terra to stand charges of corruption and dereliction of duty. He likewise relieved an openly insubordinate Priest, commanding the corps and fleet commanders to "clean up [the] mess and get off [their] asses."

Before returning to Terra he made one more unscheduled stop: to the headquarters of General Amos Forlough, the outspoken and colorful commander of the Star League's Outworlds Alliance front. Forlough arrived on the Taurian front on 19 August 2584 and assumed command of a bitter and broken command.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers may wish to review the Outworlds Campaign chapter as well as Amos Forlough's bio prior to continuing on in order to gain additional perspective on this controversial general.]

TIME TO BEGIN AGAIN

Forlough's first actions quickly set the tone. He sacked every corps and fleet commander under his purview (only AFFS Major General Erik Lambourne escaped the purge, though not without Forlough's strenuous objections), replacing them with subordinates with proven battle records. He also demanded absolute obedience, instituting a series of harsh punishments for even minor infractions; deserters would be punished by life imprisonment or death.

Within hours of assuming command, General Forlough not only disseminated these orders, he issued immediate battle plans to each of his four corps as well as to his battle fleets. The "vacation" was over.

BENEVOLENT RUTHLESSNESS

Every corps received a single target, a measure Forlough designed to give each a victory its soldiers sorely needed as well as demonstrate to every grunt, tanker, MechWarrior, pilot and spacer the spirit of their commanding general. The Taurians were clearly willing to sacrifice everything in the face of the Star League invasion; it was time to meet them with the same kind of savagery.

I Corps received Victralla as its target, III Corps targeted Lindsay, XI Corps targeted Warren and the Davion Corps targeted Caldwell. The three fleets assigned to the front would each exclusively support one of the SLDF corps. Forlough gave each fleet a simple set of directives: destroy or capture every enemy ship in the system, blockade the primary world, and give that world thirty days to surrender. If it did not surrender, use every means at the fleet's disposal to indiscriminately destroy everything of military or economic value on the world. In short, pursue a scorched earth campaign.

XI Corps and the Davion Corps reached their targets first, followed closely by I Corps. True to his orders, XI Corps commander Major General Alexander Touzinski razed the world beginning on 20 September with a combination of precision orbital strikes and ground assaults. Ten days later, Warren was in flames, with an estimated hundred and fifty thousand citizens dead; its provisional government capitulated that day.

On Caldwell, the Davion Corps achieved the same result by mid-November, while I Corps claimed Victralla in December after an eighty-day rampage that leveled every city and destroyed a year's worth of agricultural harvests. The Star League war machine had awakened, and wanted vengeance for its fallen general.

CALDERON'S RESPONSE

Protector Mitchell Calderon knew he needed to respond quickly if there was any hope of once again stalling the Star League war machine. As the SLDF advanced, he ordered the garrisons on Lindsay and Midale to stage a spoiling attack on III Corps' headquarters on Diefenbaker.

to do so, they and Charlis simply disappeared. E-Toro's director, Dr. Asta Gutierrez, snatched them up and put them to work. By mid-2582, they had cracked VOODOO RED and could read any communiqué encrypted with it, no matter what key was used.

Their work, of course, allowed Case BLACK to succeed, and further led to several Taurian victories—along with many more avoidances of total defeat. Information gleaned from VOODOO RED decryptions were parsed out sparingly, but by 2586, SLDF cryptologists suspected that the Taurians had somehow broken their encryption keys. They moved to a new key generation protocol, but even that didn't stop what they suspected were mass breaches of the code. They retired VOODOO RED in 2596—too late to affect matters on the Taurian front.

It was more than a century before Pelatore Charlis' discovery was made public. He and his team continued their mathematical research in secret, with E-Toro mathematicians continuing their work until an adjunct professor that also worked with E-Toro accidentally slipped the bit of "common knowledge" in a lecture at the Taurus Science Academy that Charlis had solved the Haggü-Thoms problem.

Dr. Pelatore Charlis was posthumously awarded the Nobel Prize in Mathematics in 2714 for his solution, some seventy years after he died. It was another twenty years before the Taurian Concordat admitted that it had broken VOODOO RED.

—Dr. J. Leverence Kenne, *Uncounted Heroes*, Atreus-Sci Press, 3041

Just two Eighth Division brigades remained on-world as a garrison, while the rest of III Corps was already *en route* to their JumpShips to make its attack on Lindsay (the corps had left Diefenbaker three days earlier). III Corps DropShips turned about and burned hard back to the planet, landing five days after the Taurians. That began a running campaign as the outnumbered Taurians took to the same hills that protected their countrymen so well just three years earlier. They held out an amazing five months, falling back every time III Corps threatened to surround or flank them, living off of the land and a grateful citizenry. III Corps commander Major General Natasha Azzi attempted numerous orbital strikes against the Taurians, but the same terrain that so well protected the native defenders three years earlier rendered her strikes just as impotent.

While the rapidly shrinking spoiling force held off III Corps, the TDF assembled a proper invasion force, centered around three BattleMech regiments: the Taurian Guard, the Concordat Velites and the Calderon Red Hand. Four hundred Taurian BattleMechs, supported by a comparable number of heavy tanks and some seven thousand infantry, arrived at a pirate point on 4 February 2585, landing under fire two days later. In space, three Star League cruisers battled five Concordat frigates, while on-world the two massive ground forces faced off. The capital of Frasier fell back into Taurian hands two days later, while the nearby industrial centers in Betune and Frida fell on the seventh. But rather than hold on to those cities, and give Azzi easy targets for her WarShips, Taurian Marshal David Lopez took what supplies he could and faded into the terrain. Within a month, he had made contact with the original attack force.

Lopez and Azzi played a game of cat-and-mouse for three months until Azzi literally took a wrong turn. She found herself and two mixed regiments of troops in a box canyon, an advantage that Lopez was not about to let pass. The Battle of Lost Valley lasted four hours, after which General Azzi and most of her troops were dead. So were most of the Calderon Red Hand, thanks to several lucky shots from the SLS *Hancock*.

Lieutenant General "Breezy" Hampton Craige, a former reserve armor commander and innkeeper, took charge of III Corps and rallied it. He pursued a slightly different strategy, using the WarShips at his disposal to strike at key passes and routes that Lopez might utilize. In this way he maneuvered Lopez's force out onto the relative flatlands of the Roedeker Highlands. Over the course of the next five days, the two forces maneuvered in and around the parallel Roedeker and Red Ridges under the almost-constant cover of mixed snow and rain clouds. All of Lopez's forces and nearly all of III Corps battled in this thirty-by-sixty kilometer patch of land in early June.

By battle's end some four hundred BattleMechs and five hundred tanks were smoking hulks, while thousands lay dead on both sides. Lopez withdrew with just fifty-two operational 'Mechs and four companies of armor to a landing zone just across the Castle Rock Ridge, one that cost him two DropShips crashed on a nearby peak (later named Cemetery Peak). Lopez escaped, but just barely. On the other hand, while General Craige could claim to have defeated the cream of the Taurian military, III Corps was in shambles; after a week of repairs, he had but two functional BattleMech battalions and seven companies

of armor at his command. III Corps may have eliminated its opponent and retained control of the world, but it was far from combat capable.

Both sides claimed much-needed victories on Diefenbaker. While Craige's victory earned him the respect of his commanding general and a permanent promotion to head III Corps, news of the Taurian victory spread throughout the Periphery. It not only further roused the spirit of the Taurian people, it also renewed the spirits of citizens and soldiers on each of the Reunification War fronts. The price may have been high, but Protector Mitchell Calderon claimed his nation's second major victory in as many years.

NO REST...

As III Corps desperately battled for control of Diefenbaker, Forlough pressed on. With Victralla firmly under the command of the Third Division, the rest of I Corps assumed responsibility for III Corps' target of Lindsay, reaching the system in May. After giving the world's people thirty days to surrender, I Corps destroyed one major city or production facility by orbital strike each day for two months before beginning a ground campaign that brought the final capitulation on 5 September.

Carmichael was a different story. The Eleventh Royal and Twelfth Divisions had been entrenched in a desperate battle for the world against both man and elements since early 2582. When General Kincaid was assassinated IV Corps claimed barely a quarter of the world. They continued the fight while the rest of the Taurian front stagnated, and were the only units that General Forlough complimented when he assumed command. But even after two years, and a loss of over one third of their combat strength, they had claimed just forty percent of the world.

General Forlough may have complimented their fighting spirit, but he nonetheless gave them the kick that they needed. Even as he pulled replacement troops from each of the other corps under his command to bring IV Corps' two divisions back up to strength, he provided the same instructions he gave every other corps under his command: bring the rest of the world to heel by the end of the year.

IV Corps didn't make that timetable, but again they were engaged on a world where severe weather could prevent movements for days or weeks at a time. One by one they rained orbital fire on the holdouts, beginning with the unoccupied domed cities home to the hospitals and pharmaceutical labs that kept Carmichael's people functioning, if not entirely healthy. IV Corps soldiers had to dig Taurian defenders out of dozens more mines and cave systems. They finally claimed victory on 25 October, three-and-a-half years after landing on the world.

...AND NO HOPE

XI Corps turned toward Sartu in March 2585, while II Corps—Forlough's old command, still slowly arriving from the Outworlds front—targeted Hanseta just days later. The Davion Corps attacked both Mavegh and Montour in April. In all cases, the worlds' citizens knew of Forlough's brutal tactics and made preparations. As their thirty-day deadlines expired, each of the worlds' populations moved *en masse* into thousands of hastily-constructed bomb

shelters, into the sewers, and into the wilderness. When the Star League bombs, shells and energy weapons finally rained down, the majority were protected. As soon as the orbital strikes were done, the people emerged to fight the fires and salvage what they could.

XI Corps battered the world of Sartu for twenty days before moving into what were once the largest cities with ground forces in an attempt to root out the crafty survivors. They found scores, or even hundreds, of shelters in each city, some just large enough for a family and others expansive enough to hold 5,000. Entire hospitals and schools had sprung up in these shelters, and most were secured not only with hardened doors but also with armed guards backed up by armed citizens. Occasionally, an infantry squad would uncover a militia bunker, and suddenly face a company of Taurian infantry or a lance of BattleMechs.

On Mavegh and Montour, the scenes were little different, though once he realized what the people of the two worlds were up to, Major General Lambourne focused his Avalon Hussars brigade on Montour, leaving Mavegh to a skeleton crew backed up by a powerful naval blockade force.

The people of Hanseta were not as well prepared as their comrades, and suffered tremendous casualties in the first strikes, at least in the cities. In many cases, poor planning and shoddy construction led to mass collapses in the shelters, while others suffered from inadequate or misrouted ventilation and improper drainage. The survivors poured out of the cities, where they met II Corps warriors. By June, II Corps commander Major General Sibel Drummond estimated that she had placed some half of the world's population under her control, but that still left her troops to scour the majority of Hanseta for those who had taken to the wilds.

The battles for all four worlds stretched on for months. General Drummond claimed Hanseta was pacified in October, but her troops still met sporadic resistance well into the next year. Davion General Lambourne declared Montour pacified in January 2586 and, after having moved most of his Hussars to Mavegh in August, claimed Mavegh by April. XI Corps finally had dominion over Sartu in March.

The quick victories that Forlough initially brought to the front had quickly given way to bloody, dirty campaigns requiring the Star League troops to dig their enemies out one by one. Once-proud units soon began to call themselves names like "Rat Catchers" and "Ian's Budget Exterminators." Morale and discipline, which had rapidly turned around after Forlough's arrival, once again plummeted.

THE STORM QUIETS

General Forlough himself was staggered by the lengths Mitchell Calderon's people were going to. He was also left speechless by his army's sudden inability to produce rapid results; the Taurians were certainly capable of adapting quickly, but this was something else. Perhaps the pyrrhic victory on Diefenbaker disabused the SLDF of the notion that it was invincible. Certainly, the mounting casualties on otherwise-minor worlds like Mavegh and

Sartu had their effect. Worse still, for the first time ever the SLDF was experiencing mass desertions.

Forlough needed to once again shake up the Taurian front. The rest of his old command, II Corps, finally arrived more than a year after he had expected them. That gave him a strong core to build from, but he still needed to instill absolute discipline and high motivation in his soldiers. He doled out brutal and public punishments, executing more than 100 deserters and rapists in a single day just before Thanksgiving 2586, while also sentencing 500 officers and NCOs found guilty of insubordination and dereliction of duty to twenty years of hard labor. He also singled out and recognized some of the effective, if brutal, units under his command. Second Battalion, Forty-third Infantry Regiment of the First Royal Division received the general's very first Blood Citation, for inflicting the most enemy casualties in battle on Victralla. He traveled up and down the Taurian front in the second half of 2586, simultaneously doling out brutal punishments while extolling the virtues of the "best warriors" in each particular unit he visited.

Meanwhile, he pushed more and more replacement troops into the ranks while his operations officers scheduled and conducted training exercises meant to get the new troops—as well as the old ones—into fighting shape. He further continued what he considered his predecessor's greatest accomplishment, and organized Striker regiments in every division. He meant to end the war quickly, and he needed everyone at their top fighting form.

SURROUNDING THE HYADES

The second half of 2586 saw little action, save for partisan attacks and a handful of minor naval engagements. While the SLDF recovered from its malaise, Calderon and his Taurian Defense Force prepared for the next phase of the war. Save for a few scattered systems only the core Taurian Concordat worlds remained unoccupied by Star League forces. The entirety of the Taurian industrial machine did nothing but pour out supplies and weapons for the war effort. The two remaining heavily-industrialized Taurian worlds, New Vandenberg and Taurus itself, were reinforced and then reinforced again.

TARGETING THE STRAGGLERS

In January 2587, General Forlough pointed Major General Lambourne and the Davion Corps at the Taurian systems of Cyrtion and Dumassass. Giving them no additional support—the general still held a significant grudge against House Davion for their interference while he was in command of the Outworlds front—and little direction, Forlough left them to their own devices.

CYRTION

Lambourne's Avalon Hussars, under the command of Major General Rance Davion, descended on Cyrtion on 13 February 2587 with a battle plan that refined Forlough's scorched earth strategy. Davion's WarShips and aerospace fighters selectively struck key infrastructure targets for thirty days. Power plants, communications centers, transportation hubs, water and waste processing

plants, military and government offices across the planet were all destroyed within the first weeks, as was any factory that manufactured weapons or other military equipment. Meanwhile he blanketed the world with a powerful electronic propaganda message that blocked out all other local transmissions.

When Cyrton's people hadn't surrendered after the first two weeks, Davion began targeting smaller and smaller objectives, eliminating emergency power sources, intercepting fuel and supply shipments, destroying key bridges and other transportation choke points, and especially striking hard at any suspected Taurian military concentration. He also authorized chemical weapon strikes on random cities and towns, throwing populaces already on the edge into panic.

During those first thirty days, the Avalon Hussars on the ground simply took control of an outlying airfield at Samilan and constructed strong fortifications. General Davion gave them orders the evening of 14 March. That night, the Hussars conducted seven drop operations, flooding the world's three largest cities with Federated Suns troops behind large-scale gas attacks and selective strikes on suspected troop and police strongholds. Four hours after attacking, Davion had virtual control over each city. Within hours, the first partisan counterattacks commenced, followed within a day by the first Taurian military attacks.

The Avalon Hussars' heavy BattleMechs and tanks easily repulsed the attacks, even when the bulk of Cyrton's garrison staged a massive spoiling attack on the Hussars' base at Samilan. Twice more over the next three days the Taurians attempted to break through, but managed only one localized penetration that was quickly beaten back by a determined counterattack by some two hundred cooks, techs and supply personnel. Broken, the garrison retreated, with Davion's troops hot on their tail.

By 22 April Davion estimated that he'd largely eliminated the Taurian military threat on the world. Over the course of three more weeks, thirteen more cities and key targets came under Davion's control, though they suffered some setbacks in Rabout and Wong Springs. They found determined and well-armed resistance cells within the automobile and agricultural machinery factories in those cities. Armed with makeshift armored vehicles, the workers and residents of these cities put up a determined defense. Davion forces poured horrendous fire into the cities and their factory complexes, but the Taurians simply pulled back into the ruins and let the Hussars come to them. Many of the battles for Rabout and Wong Springs seemed like they could have come from some post-apocalyptic tri-vid feature or a low-rated action/adventure serial.

Though the people of Cyrton put up a valiant fight and dealt the Hussars some interesting turns, the ultimate outcome was never in doubt. General Davion played upon the fears of the world's people, instead of killing them *en masse* and turning the survivors into hardened zealots. He took control of his final objectives on 17 October, though the Hussars continued pacifying small settlements for the next several months.

DUMASSAS

Dumassas was the Taurian Concordat's most distant frontier. Lightly populated with miners, ranchers and farmers, the world possessed no centralized government. Power on the world rested in the hands of a few, some backed by large Taurian corporations while others were self-made—be that through legal means or otherwise. Pirates and brigands, rustlers and outlaws all called the world home, selling their services to the highest bidder while the honest and unaffiliated simply tried to live their lives. Even the world's limited military garrison hired their services out to whoever would pay them best.

Leftenant General Amanda Hasek accordingly came at Dumassas with an entirely different strategy. She used the initial thirty-day period to build a picture of the political landscape. When the deadline expired, she simply chose the largest and most corrupt of the powers and dropped the full weight of the Syrtis Fusiliers on it. Ten days into her campaign, one of the corporate powers surrendered to her; she dismantled the corporate structure, letting her own logistics command subsume the corporate structure. In this way, she rapidly assumed control of the world.

The only true battles of this invasion occurred at Silver Gulch and in the foothills near Blue Rock Mountain. The former involved more than 1,000 brigands and refugee outlaws, banded together under the command of a former Capellan officer that attempted to ambush Hasek's troops. Instead, they were themselves surrounded after an alert Federated Suns expatriate tipped Hasek off. At Blue Rock Mountain, a combination of garrison troops, pirates and former strongarms put up a determined resistance. Their forty-two BattleMechs and two battalions of assorted armored vehicles were enough, nor was the brave stand made by the last 700 holdouts.

The invasion of Dumassas was complete by 11 May 2587.

IGNORING THE BADLANDS

Cyrton and Dumassas were obvious targets, but Badlands was a different story altogether. Situated somewhere amid a fifty-star globular cluster, it was a minor world only recently claimed by the Concordat. Despite SLDF monitoring ships closely watching the cluster for more than a decade, little was known about the world or what was on it. The best that the combined efforts of the SLDF and the Federated Suns intelligence services could piece together was that it was a hot, desolate planet that saw almost no traffic. In fact, not a single Taurian ship ever captured to that point had ever entered the Badlands Cluster.

Given the fact that it would likely require years of surveying to map the cluster, identify the world, and then identify safe jump points to use, both Davion and the SLDF ignored the Badlands Cluster, at least until a garrison was stationed there after the conclusion of the war. Even the Calderons basically left the Badlands Cluster alone. That ignorance would drive refugees, dissidents and outlaws into the Cluster throughout the remainder of the war, and in fact for the next several centuries. This veritable "haven" from outside interference would eventually be known as the Pirates' Haven Cluster in the years after the fall of the Star League and the coming of the Succession Wars.

STRIKING AT THE EDGES

While the Davion Corps focused on the farthest reaches of the Taurian Concordat, General Forlough gathered his five corps (including the partial IV Corps, which remained under his command) and gave them each a target that would clear the way to the Hyades. The general also ensured that each of his corps possessed an overwhelming force of WarShips. He meant 2587 to be a landmark year on the Taurian front.

NEW GANYMEDE

When selecting the world of New Ganymede as a target, General Forlough knew he was taking something of a risk. In bypassing systems like Desolate Plains and Midale, he was leaving significant threats behind him while reinforcements from within the Hyades Cluster could just as easily materialize. But this barren dustball was also an important producer of raw materials that the Concordat desperately needed.

The plan of action for the conquest of New Ganymede was simple and to the point: bombard every mining camp and settlement for four straight weeks and demand the world's capitulation. If the answer was no, commence with another month of bombardment.

At the end of the third month of continuous bombardment, I Corps advanced carefully—ninety days of orbital and aerospace strikes had pumped a significant amount of dust and debris into the atmosphere, much of it radioactive. MechWarriors and armor crews moved only in sealed vehicles, while infantry were forced to don specially armored and reinforced environmental suits.

On a world where resistance to the Star League invaders meant either a powerful orbital strike called down upon one's head or being pushed into a mine and then sealed in—or both—New Ganymede's people nonetheless stood firm. But they could not hold out forever, especially since less than a hundred thousand people called the world home. I Corps had control of New Ganymede by August.

MACLEOD'S LAND

MacLeod's Land was a crown jewel of the Taurian Concordat—heavily populated and industrialized, with a large agricultural base. It was one of the first worlds outside of the Hyades Cluster to join the Concordat, and had accordingly enjoyed some two-and-a-half centuries of Taurian bounty. To this clearly important world, Forlough assigned the only troops he could trust: his II Corps.

Forlough bolstered them with two elite Striker regiments raised from the best troops pulled from across the front, along with two armor and five more infantry regiments formed from replacement troops sent from the Terran Hegemony. The general meant to ensure II Corps domination of the world.

Major General Sibel Drummond led II Corps to MacLeod's Land on 16 January 2587, following the First Fleet's ramrod strike to the heart of the star system. The defense screen of more than two hundred fireships, three score assault DropShips and a series of orbital defense platforms did little more than scratch the invasion fleet.

True to form and his mentor's orders, General Drummond gave the world's parliament thirty days to surrender, during which time the First Fleet secured both jump points and eliminated three naval staging areas, including two Taurian WarShips, hidden within the system. On day thirty-one she obliterated every military base on-planet with nuclear strikes before beginning to systematically batter each major city to rubble, starting with the capital of Yourk. This was unlike any other attack made yet by the SLDF on the Taurian Front. Drummond constantly rotated ships into firing position, raining down orbital fire for four straight hours before letting the fires burn for the rest of the day, and then beginning again at first light. Three straight days of this leveled a city of over five million, an estimated third of which perished.

Meanwhile, his ground troops landed and, with aerospace support, secured Fort Ustin for themselves. II Corps' three Striker regiments carried the day, eviscerating the Concordat's Ninth Velites 'Mech regiment and five mixed armor and infantry regiments.

One by one, First Fleet targeted and razed the world's largest cities, while II Corps surrounded each, rounding up the survivors and wrangling them into makeshift refugee camps. Taurian Marshal Ulindor Vanshi tried to break II Corps' operations through direct assaults, employing human wave tactics and striking with nuclear weapons. Fourteenth Brigade lost more than two battalions to nuclear strikes on 13 February, while Tenth Brigade lost five companies of infantry and armor to another strike three days later.

This tit-for-tat lasted less than two weeks. Drummond maintained total aerospace supremacy, and her reconnaissance units soon uncovered Marshal Vanshi's hidden arsenals, each of which were vaporized by a combination of orbital strike and nuclear fire. While that did not end the MacLeods' ability to construct nuclear and radiological weapons—the Taurians constructed two more nuclear weapons, neither of which was delivered to their targets before being destroyed—it did bring an end to nuclear warfare on the world.

Drummond laid waste to city after city throughout March and April, and was soon using chemical agents to drive people out of the countryside and into refugee camps, where at the very least they could seek medical attention and find both food and clean water. II Corps fought two last battles with the partisan-reinforced garrison, along the Mechlan River Valley and at Mihiel. The Taurians stood no chance but did manage to take with them hundreds of SLDF troops when they detonated radiological weapons. The already-dead Taurians simply charged *en masse*, killing a few more before they were put out of their misery; the unfortunate Star League troops affected by the weapons were medevaced off-world, spending the rest of their short lives wasting away in hospitals on Firgrove and Mendham.

Drummond succeeded in pacifying MacLeod's Land by Thanksgiving of 2587, though no one celebrated.

THE BATTLE OF MONTOUR

The Battle of Montour would not only be the last major naval action of the Reunification War, it was the last major naval battle fought for almost two hundred years until the Amaris War and the end of the Star League. It was just the kind of battle that the Taurian navy had been avoiding since Robsart six years earlier. The Star League had the advantage in every way, and was further reinforced by a combined Davion-SLDF patrol squadron, which ironically included one WarShip that had survived Tentativa, commanded by an officer who had been on her first tour on that ship at the time.

By 1944 hours on 16 October 2587, the Federated Suns' navy finally repaid the debt of vengeance it had owed the Taurian Concordat for a decade.

Pinard was more industrialized than Landmark, prompting Major General Craige's III Corps to use a combination strategy. His fighter squadrons eliminated every major military installation on the world with nuclear strikes, while also hitting several of the largest and most important industrial sites with chemical and nerve agents. III Corps troops followed up by occupying those sites before orbital strikes demolished entire cities around them. Just as on Landmark, though, the Star League troops absorbed heavy casualties from Taurian nuclear and chemical attacks, combined with more and more human wave assaults. Pinard fell by the end of the year, though the costs on both sides were no less terrible than on MacLeod's Land or Landmark.

The Star League was creeping ever closer to the Hyades, and with it an end to the war.

HYALITE

While the bulk of General Forlough's corps focused upon the systems immediately surrounding the Hyades Cluster, the two divisions of IV Corps were tasked with subduing Hyalite, a lightly industrialized world well outside of the established Taurian core systems. Major General Elias Frederick Truscott, former Twelfth Royal Division commander and now leading the understrength IV Corps, took a page from the Davion playbook on Cyrton and pursued a campaign designed to confuse and frighten the people of Hyalite.

Truscott's fighters and WarShips quickly knocked out much of the world's infrastructure (in strikes meant primarily to damage and not to destroy) while his two divisions grounded and secured critical targets that cut off the largest cities from their primary sources of food, fuel and water. He likewise blanketed the world with powerful propaganda transmissions as scores of small commando teams moved to capture, kill or otherwise neutralize political and military leaders across Hyalite.

Hyalite's military garrison, strong for a planet of its size and importance, counterattacked out of darkness and under the cover of a massive storm. They struck the Twelfth Division's rear area, apparently sending Lieutenant General Keaton Okubo and his division reeling. But that was a simple ruse; General Truscott responded with a powerful counterattack spearheaded by the Eleventh Striker Regiment's end-run. Caught between two powerful Star League forces, the garrison attempted to withdraw only to be ripped apart by fast armor.

Truscott broadcast the elimination of the garrison force across the planet then sat back and waited. He began his corps' slow march through every city, town and village six weeks later, giving time for his starvation strategy to truly take effect. Hours of blaring noise, concussions, and select gas attacks preceded an orderly advance in ranks through each settlement. Local partisans organized numerous isolated attacks with homemade explosives, or improvised chemical—and even two attempted radiological—attacks.

General Truscott's strategy ultimately proved the correct choice. One by one, cities fell to his IV Corps' march across Hyalite. The world was firmly in hand by the end of September 2587.

THE FINAL HURRAH

With General Amos Forlough and his "Baby Killers" rolling over his best units and indiscriminately killing millions of his citizens, Mitchell Calderon needed to once again hand the SLDF a defeat. The Protector called upon Marshal David Santos to deliver the impossible. It was one request too many.

With reports indicating that all four Star League corps on the front were engaged in the systems surrounding the Hyades, Marshal Santos sortied the remainder of his fleet, escorting the Eighth Provisional Corps—a bare force of two BattleMech, three armor and half a dozen infan-

LANDMARK AND PINARD

Landmark and Pinard, like MacLeod's Land, were both core Taurian worlds. They were among the oldest and most heavily populated worlds outside of the Hyades. And like MacLeod's Land, neither went down without a fight.

XI Corps had responsibility for Landmark, a world with a particularly strong agricultural industry. The loss of this world would seriously hurt the worlds of the Hyades, several of which relied upon Landmark's bounty. Knowing this, Major General Alexander Touzinski employed a two-pronged strategy in subjugating the world. While his ships and fighters focused on razing the major cities, he used biological agents in the agrarian regions that ruined crops and sickened or killed people and livestock. Star League researchers specifically engineered these agents to break down and die off within months. Unfortunately, an unforeseen interaction with Landmark's environment caused a super-virus to mutate. The full effects of this virus would go unseen for two years before expanding into an epidemic that killed tens of millions and quarantined the world for three years until a vaccine could be developed.

General Touzinski and his corps accomplished their given task by the middle of October. The world was in flames, millions were dead and millions more both on and off of the world would starve, but Landmark had fallen.

try regiments—away from Taurus in May, destined for the Davion Corps area of operations. He hoped to strike at a swath of Davion-held worlds, inflicting as many casualties as possible and reigniting the fires of opposition. What Santos failed to take into account were the numerous Star League intelligence-gathering ships that had long been monitoring the Hyades Cluster.

SLDF Fourth Fleet commander Admiral Yukiko Pequeno, supporting operations at New Ganymede, received reports of the Taurian fleet's departure first and personally led two-thirds of her fleet in pursuit. As she received more and more sighting reports she picked up additional patrol squadrons and added them to her number; she had no certain idea how large the surviving Taurian fleet was. She also sent regular progress reports to General Forlough (ironically via the political offices the Star League had set up on each occupied world; she apparently did so in order to keep the other fleet commanders in the dark as to her movements and intentions, and in doing so unintentionally ensured the Taurians would never intercept her reports by decoding normal military traffic).

Santos reached the Montour system in October, easily batting aside the few Davion pickets left behind, and placed the world under blockade. He was within days of landing his troops when Admiral Pequeno suddenly appeared at a proximity point, while a Davion-led task force, which needed no cajoling when Pequeno had run into it a week earlier and invited it to join her expedition, arrived at the zenith point and burned in at high-G.

Santos, recognizing he was outclassed, burned away from the planet and tried to hide within the system until he could jump his fleet out. That didn't happen. Pequeno and AFFS Admiral Helden van der Geest caught up with the Taurians and from 11 to 16 October, the fleets did battle in and around the fifth and seventh planets of the system. Using the planets, scores of moons, asteroids and even a rogue planetoid as cover, Santos tried his best to break contact, but never reliably did so. Both League and Davion WarShips crews put an end to the Taurian navy. Marshal David Santos perished along with the rest of his crew when the Taurian flagship, the TCS *Samantha Calderon*, disintegrated in a firestorm. So, too, did the Taurian Eighth Provisional Corps die in space, having never reached the world of Montour.

TIGHTENING THE NOOSE

The stress of the war had taken its toll upon almost every Taurian citizen, but none more than Protector Mitchell Calderon. When he learned of Marshal Santos' failure at Montour he suffered a heart attack, dying less than a week later. His daughter, Marantha Calderon, succeeded him as Protector in a small, muted ceremony.

The question she had to answer now was what strategy to pursue. The Concordat's navy had been all but destroyed, and its army was incapable of standing up against General Amos Forlough's massive and bloodthirsty army. But while many millions of her citizens had died already, this war was about far more than territory. It was about freedom, which Marantha Calderon had grown up watching her fellow citizens give their prosperity and their lives fighting for.

And so the Concordat, such as it was, continued to fight.

Not that there was, comparatively, much left of the once-mighty Taurian Concordat. Outside of the Hyades Cluster, Calderon's nation could only claim six star systems—seven, if one counted the recently colonized Sterope system—and only New Vandenberg possessed anything resembling a true garrison.

Worse still, the spirit of the Taurian people had finally broken. The nation had lost seven worlds, its navy and its leader in 2587 alone. Its industries were in ruins, as was its economy. Its broken people nonetheless continued to resist, seemingly until their last breath. The Hyades Cluster, the heart of the Taurian Concordat, would be their final redoubt; Protector Calderon recalled what few defense forces she still had at her disposal to guard the Cluster; only New Vandenberg retained its massive garrison.

FEAR THE REAPER

First Lord Ian Cameron and General Carlos Lee toured the Taurian Front during the last quarter of 2587, spending Christmas with the troops. The war against the Outworlds Alliance had ended, and the invasion of the Magistracy of Canopus was winding down, freeing more troops and more resources to support ongoing operations against Taurus and the Rim Worlds. That news brought cheer to the hard-slogging army, as did the announcement on Christmas Day of General Amos Forlough's promotion to Field Marshal—a ceremonial position bestowed by special action within the Star League Council recognizing him as commander of the single largest and most powerful army in existence. In little more than three years, he had wrested control of a quarter of the Concordat—including some of the most important and heaviest defended worlds—from the hands of the Calderons. Accordingly, the First Lord and Commanding General presented Forlough the baton of the Field Marshal.

General Forlough, Field Marshal of the Star League, wasted no time before continuing towards the next logical target: New Vandenberg.

CHARON'S EXPRESS

Very simply the most important Taurian world next to Taurus itself, New Vandenberg boasted a population of over one billion, a tremendous industry and a huge garrison of Taurian regulars supported by a powerful militia. Forlough's troops faced an undertaking unlike any other before. The general detailed I, II and IV Corps to the undertaking, leaving his remaining corps in a reserve he knew he would likely need.

Forlough began the siege of New Vandenberg on 12 January 2588, dispensing with his typical thirty-day deadline for surrender. Instead, he ordered First and Second Fleets to immediately and continuously bombard the world. Orbital strikes rained down across the world, day and night, for forty straight days, while Star League fighters dropped more than five thousand tons of ordnance every day—mostly incendiary.

FORLOUGH STANDS HONORED AND REVEILED

General Amos Forlough retired from the Star League Defense Force on 30 January 2590. During his retirement ceremony, he was inducted into the Order of the Sword before giving a brief, generic speech extolling the virtues of the many Star League soldiers that he had commanded during his forty years of service. He then disappeared for more than a year, ostensibly writing his memoirs. In the meantime, two very different movements emerged surrounding the general.

Within the SLDF and patriotic circles emerged a very vocal movement demanding that the general be paid a far greater honor than a mere induction into the Order of the Sword, which they considered a relative slap in the face after all of his accomplishments during the Reunification War. They would not stop until he was awarded something more fitting a man of his position and accomplishments. While many argued that he be awarded the Star League Medal of Honor, most agreed that the Medal of Valor and induction into the Order of the Star were appropriate. SLDF insiders, of course, knew that it was the general's temper that ultimately cost him his command, but massive public support was enough to sway General Lee, who awarded Forlough the Medal of Valor in 2592. It took five more years, including numerous public statements by Lord Onaga, before First Lord Ian Cameron relented. General Forlough was inducted into the Order of the

The world was burning but defiantly held out. What Forlough found more infuriating was that his reconnaissance overflights had not positively identified any major elements of the world's garrison; they had clearly left their bases behind and were lying in wait. The general changed tactics somewhat on day twenty-one, ordering the fleet to defoliate the northern continent of Brittain. Day by day, WarShips flashed thousands of square kilometers of woodland out of existence while fighter forces used a combination of incendiary bombs and chemical defoliants to remove the cover.

When the world had not yet capitulated by day forty, and more importantly his reconnaissance units still had not found the world's garrison, Forlough knew he would have to rely on his ground forces to win the battle for New Vandenberg. Each corps received a drop zone—cleared by weeks of bombardment—and a series of targets that would lead them across Brittain. They began landing on 23 February, with I Corps almost immediately facing determined resistance in Harmony around the massive Vandenberg MilTech (today known as Vandenberg Mechanized Industries) BattleMech production site. The First Royal Division, reinforced by the Sixth through Eighth Striker Regiments, found themselves surrounded and penetrated by an asymmetric force of fast hovercraft, conventional and VTOL aircraft, and elite anti-Mech trained jump infantry; the First Royal held for twelve hours before pulling back and regrouping, pushing forward again with the help of the Third Division, but among the tight confines of the factory complex the defenders held the obvious advantage. After a week of attempting to take the plant intact, and the loss of more than a regiment of 'Mechs and armor, Forlough ordered his troops to pull back while the plant was leveled by orbital fire.

Elsewhere on-world, II and IV Corps fared little better. Colonel Alana Bar'Dyness, directing the Taurian defense on the world, had built a massive series of underground bunkers across the planet to house and supply her troops through more than a year of siege. Meanwhile, other bunkers housed hospitals, schools and shelter for tens of millions of refugees. The people of New Vandenberg were as prepared for this siege as they could be.

I Corps' failure to take Harmony, coupled with the higher-than-predicted casualties II and IV Corps were suffering, gave Forlough a moment's pause. New Vandenberg needed to fall quickly if he was to put an end to the war, and the only way he saw to break the will of the people was to inflict such horrid casualties as they had no choice but to surrender. On 3 March he ordered the mass use of chemical and nerve agents across the world, as well as select nuclear strikes on particularly tough targets. The Taurians responded in kind days later. Both sides inflicted massive casualties upon each other, but where the SLDF was

prepared to live and fight under such conditions, the people of New Vandenberg were not.

Forlough had virtual control over Brittain by the end of March, and after calling XI Corps in, he began the long and bloody marches across Saille and Vandrae. By May, Star League casualties were mounting so high that when the Davion Corps arrived in orbit, Forlough put them into the battle. By that time the battle for New Vandenberg less resembled a military campaign than a disaster recovery operation. While half of the assault force manned refugee camps, the rest dug through destroyed cities and suspected garrison bunkers, searching for the remaining holdouts.

A frustrated Forlough toured the world, trying to bring hope to his tired and despondent troops, but the stress of the campaign was taking its toll on their commander. The general watched as thousands of his troops were dying, and thousands more were being evacuated offworld as casualties. Terra provided a steady stream of replacements, but it was becoming increasingly evident that putting them into the fight would be like throwing lambs to the wolves. Forlough still had III Corps in reserve, but he knew that committing them would leave him nothing with which to respond to any Taurian counter-move.

Nevertheless, he was close to putting those veteran troops into the fight by mid-June when he received word that three regiments of elite Davion Guards BattleMechs, backed up by five more veteran infantry regiments, were on their way. Much as he hated to rely even more upon the Davion troops, he needed them and planned to put them in as soon as they arrived.

When they did arrive, the general famous for his angry tirades simply exploded in rage. The Davion Guards were led by none other than Major General Elias Pitcairn, his nemesis from the Outworlds Front. Forlough ordered the immediate arrest and detention of the entire Davion Guards expedition, something he certainly did not have the manpower to accomplish. The Star League and Davion Guards fleets in orbit maintained a tense distance from each other for a week while Pitcairn assured Forlough of his intentions to aid the Star League invasion of New Vandenberg in any way he could. Of course, the incensed general would hear nothing of it from the man he considered to be the greatest criminal of the entire war.

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Pitcairn withdrew from the New Vandenberg system on 6 July, having at least supplied the Davion Corps with additional men and materiel. And while General Amos Forlough dispatched communiqué after angry communiqué to General Lee and First Lord Cameron demanding the arrest, trial and execution of both Pitcairn and First Prince Alexander Davion, his troops pressed on with their duty. If anything, with Forlough no longer focusing on the day-to-day campaign, his subordinate generals found a way to finish the job themselves. The final battles for New Vandenberg were fought near the world's south pole, where the First and Third Striker Regiments surrounded and captured the last few companies of the 122nd Concordat Chasseurs on 23 August.

Though the SLDF continued to dig small pockets of resistance out for many months longer, New Vandenberg was finally in Star League hands.

THE REAPER IS RELIEVED

The cost for New Vandenberg had been the highest of the war. More than 5,000 Star League troops had perished in direct combat (thousands more dying in nuclear and other WMD strikes), while more than five times that many suffered debilitating wounds that would keep them out of battle permanently. Many would die of their injuries in the months that followed. I, II, IV and XI Corps were all hovering at combat strengths of less than forty percent, while the Davion Corps, having entered the battle much later, was still at sixty percent strength.

More horrible was the damage suffered by the world itself. Every major city had been blasted to bits, and every industrial center pounded to rubble. The once-thriving industrial world had lost almost everything; the only major factories still functioning were the handful that had successfully moved their operations underground. Somewhere between fifty and one hundred million citizens—the number would never really be known—had perished and hundreds of millions were homeless.

In short, the people of New Vandenberg were no longer capable of supporting themselves. The Bureau of Star League Affairs had to assume control; within weeks thousands of relief workers and tens of thousands of tons of supplies were arriving weekly to assist, but that barely made a dent. The rebuilding of New Vandenberg would be a process that lasted well into the next century.

Meanwhile, General Lee recalled Forlough to Terra, ostensibly to personally report upon the progress along the Taurian Front. Forlough recognized the writing on the wall, and stalled as long as he could, finally arriving in January 2590. By the time he arrived, his replacement had already assumed command of the Taurian Front; rather than face what he only assumed would be humiliation at the hands of the Star League Council and Alexander Davion, he chose to retire.

CLEANUP

General Lord Damien Onaga assumed command of the Taurian Front on 1 January 2590, having already spent the holidays visiting each of his commands. He brought with him not only welcome replacement soldiers and equipment but arrived at the head of the elite Star Guards Corps. After a brief respite in the wake of the bloody battle for New Vandenberg, the war would continue.

Before striking at the very heart of the Taurian Concordat, General Onaga turned his army toward the final Taurian worlds not yet under Star League control. The battle for the Hyades would be terrible, and he needed to both raise morale within his army with a series of victories as well as to blood the many fresh troops under his command.

Major General Pitcairn had already sacked Illiushin and struck at Renfield after departing the New Vandenberg system, damaging their war-weary garrisons. Both were major worlds, however, campaigns upon which would be costly in both manpower and time. Onaga bypassed them, instead pointing his corps at the worlds of Brockway, Desolate Plains and Midale. All three had been largely denuded of additional garrison forces over the past several years and would pose little threat to the Star League troops.

Unlike previous planetary campaigns on the front, General Onaga rotated combat units through operations on each world, giving as many of his new troops a blooding as he could. These operations were also purely military in nature; cities and other civilian objectives were only targeted as a last resort. As a result, the campaigns lasted longer, but inflicted far less damage. Desolate Plains fell in October, Brockway in November and Midale in December of 2590.

Star on 5 January 2597, four days after Onaga and two after General Amalthia Kincaid.

At the very same time, small but vocal anti-war activist groups cursed Forlough's name, demanding that he stand trial for a long series of war crimes. They tried numerous times to convince military and civilian prosecutors to charge him with these crimes, and when that failed they attempted to bring him to justice in civil courts, where they could at least strip him of title and force him to pay punitive damages. On three different worlds they attempted to charge him with crimes ranging from genocide (perpetrated both on the peoples of the Outworlds Alliance and the Taurian Concordat), to the massacre of civilians on Carmichael and Cerberus, to the mass destruction of private property on half a dozen worlds. They threw in the sack of Hanseta, the pillage of Victralla, and further charged him with dereliction of duty because of a minor breakout of some fifty prisoners on Dumassas.

The law, of course, was on Forlough's side. First Lord Ian Cameron's suspension of the Ares Conventions put an end to any question of war crimes, while only the SLDF courts-martial could prosecute dereliction and conduct unbecoming an officer.

General Amos Forlough, SLDF retired, died a Hero of the Nation in 2629. Nevertheless, his name remains today on a list of unprosecuted war criminals maintained by several supposed human rights organizations throughout the Inner Sphere and Periphery—some of which, ironically, fail to list Stefan Amaris.

—Dr. H.J. Farnsworth, *1001 Strange Twists of Fate During the Star League Era*, Express Publishing, 3010

ORDER OF THE SHOOTING STAR

Prior to the Reunification War, and indeed prior to the assault upon the Hyades Cluster, zero-g combat qualification was the exclusive realm of marines—typically the sons and daughters of dedicated spacer families—and a handful of special forces troops, each carefully screened and selected from the rolls of experienced military personnel. These personnel had to do far more than learn how to fight in zero-g; they were expected to transition easily from zero-g to high-g combat, to excel in small-unit tactics, to master the function and repair of scores of different types of weapons, to be able to conduct shipboard damage control measures while still engaging in combat, and even be able to take over the duties of injured or killed ships' officers if necessary. To be a marine meant you were part of a small and truly elite cadre.

During the Reunification War the needs of the Taurian Front taxed the abilities of the SLDF's marine corps to the breaking point—long before the breaching of the Hyades Cluster. The Taurians' massive fleet and extensive space complexes meant that every fleet's marine forces were constantly boarding enemy ships and stations, clearing damaged ships of enemy presence, turning back opposing boarders, and even disarming or otherwise rendering fire-ships and other suicide craft safe.

SLDF General Damien Onaga recognized that his marines were exhausted and in any event far too small a force to successfully pierce the thick defenses of the Hyades. He retained those elite troops for special endeavors, and instead began training his extensive ground forces in zero-g combat. Infantry, MechWarriors and vehicle crews alike began training in zero-g combat techniques and tactics, while conventional aircraft and VTOL pilots transitioned to become shuttle and assault craft crews. Only MechWarriors and pilots remained in the relative safety of their 'Mechs and shuttles; everyone else donned hastily-produced armored spacesuits and maneuvering packs.

Many couldn't handle it—either physically or proving mentally incapable of dealing with the inky blackness of space. Even battle-hardened veterans of the ground war found they were no more capable of zero-g combat than most green recruits. Those that did, however, became the heroes of the Taurian campaign.

Even heroes need recognition. The better-trained and specially qualified SLDF marines were unwilling to share their unique insignia with these dragooned masses. Then-Colonel Nicholas Cameron proposed a compromise: each ground-pounder that completed the training regimen and qualified for zero-g combat was

PIERCING THE HYADES

The Reunification War, having already lasted almost fourteen years, was about to enter its final phase. The nature of the war was also about to change dramatically. The Hyades was a globular cluster of more than a hundred stars, along with hundreds more planets and an indescribable series of asteroids, comets and other random stellar detritus locked in an intricate gravitational ballet. Eight worlds within the cluster supported populations estimated at over seven billion, while an additional billion more called the countless moons and asteroids in and around the cluster home.

To the uninitiated, that seemed an imminently possible challenge. After all, the Star League army had just laid waste to New Vandenberg in a campaign completed in less than a year's time. But the Hyades represented a much more difficult proposition. Interstellar navigation into the cluster required extremely precise calculations—far more precise than practiced even by most SLDF naval crews—if a ship was to avoid jumping into a gravity well or being damaged by debris. And while the coordinates of the most common safe proximity points were programmed into the navigation computers of nearly every captured Taurian ship, those points were also going to better defended than any experienced yet. The Star League fleets likely *could* jump in blind and batter their way through the defenses and blockades, but there was no guarantee of success.

Instead, the corps under General Onaga's command prepared to fight a very different kind of war. The eight main worlds orbited suns in just five systems within the Hyades; Onaga tasked his WarShip fleet with clearing each of the outlying systems of significant naval presence while his ground troops jumped from planet to planet, moon to moon and asteroid to asteroid within Taurus' system, clearing out the defenders before moving to the Concordat's homeworld itself. The Star League army was no longer a ground force—it would have to become the largest space marine corps ever created.

BREACHING THE PERIMETER

While I, II, III and XI Corps were battling on the worlds of Brockway, Desolate Plains and Midale, IV Corps and the Star Guard trained hard in the reaches of the New Vandenberg system. They were the first ones certified to fight zero-G and low-G combat operations. Throughout 2590, Onaga also built a massive fleet of small craft and DropShips, some provided by the Star League member-states, some captured from the Concordat, more built new by former Concordat firms, and more than a few dragooned from civilian merchants. These ships would clear the way to Taurus itself.

As ready as they could be, the first Star League ships penetrated the Hyades Cluster on 2 April 2591, beginning a costly four-year campaign that delved into the heart of the cluster. As WarShips assaulted the four outlying systems, Taurus' own agile DropShips, shuttles, gunboats and fighters carefully navigated their ways through the outer planets and asteroid fields. Taurian defenders appeared seemingly out of nowhere. Squads battled each other on spinning and careening rocks while fighters and assault craft engaged in a spinning, swirling ballet of death. Countless automated gun turrets and mines made the process deadlier.

The Taurians, of course, made Onaga's troops pay dearly for every single asteroid and moon they passed, oftentimes two or more times. This was the Taurians' home; they were battling for their lives on their own home turf. Taurian marines could simply jet away from a rock and return in hours or days. Even the powerful SLDF WarShips could do only so much, blasting rocks into smaller, more dangerous pieces that at least would pose as much a threat to the Taurians as it did the SLDF.

After a year of battling, Onaga began to rotate units from each of his other corps into the fight. By the beginning of 2594 he had pierced the first layer of defenses and destroyed the Taurians' Outland Gamma battle station. But that only meant that the outermost defensive layer had been pierced; the inner ring remained ahead of them.

Continued on p. 93

Two more years of hard-fought battles lay ahead of Onaga and his battered veterans. Behind them were the tough slogging campaigns on the ground, buried hip-deep in mud and choking back the stench of the dead and dying. The battles for the Hyades were the kind where a wrong move could send you careening into deep space, never to be recovered, where something the size of a pebble moving a hundred times faster than a bullet could pierce a cockpit and killed a MechWarrior in an instant. Even a small rip in a tough spacesuit could—and did—kill. Disease was no longer the greatest threat to a weary soldier. It was replaced by the loss of bone strength and muscle tone. Onaga tried constructing a large station just to give his nominal ground-pounders a place where they could rest and exercise in gravity, but the Taurians wouldn't allow it—nuclear strikes followed by a flurry of asteroids hurled by mass drivers at the station ended those plans before they began. Instead, Onaga tasked his SLDF WarShip fleet to aid his troops; their grav-decks were overloaded by soldiers, tankers and MechWarriors exercising diligently to keep up their own strength. Onaga rotated units through three-month tours in zero-G before returning them to the ground to rest and recuperate for six or more months.

The campaign was long, costly and stressful. Less than seventy percent of the ground troops proved able to cope with extended operations in space, and of those troops that could, forty to fifty percent ended up as casualties. But in August 2596, Lord Onaga broke through the final perimeter and his fleets were on their way into the heart of the Taurus system. Four full fleets of Star League WarShips, DropShips and fighters had cleared Taurus and its outlying systems of hidden Concordat naval defenses. Meanwhile, Onaga's ground troops were once again training in gravity, honing their long-dormant skills for the planet-bound battles to come.

awarded the Shooting Star qualification badge; for each campaign year in which an individual served in direct combat (for at least thirty days), that individual could add a campaign star to the badge. By war's end, a small cadre of SLDF MechWarriors and soldiers had earned a total of five campaign stars.

After the war, veterans throughout the Inner Sphere began to gather and organize into social and political groups. The veterans of the Hyades campaign in particular grew very close, forming the Order of the Shooting Star. Those veterans continued to wear miniature Shooting Stars on their civilian clothing—First Lord Nicholas Cameron chief among them. It was a closed brotherhood—one that particularly shunned marines and other spacers, who clearly had not been as versatile as they were—and one that very adamantly and vocally took care of their own.

The SLDF continued to award the Shooting Star until the Exodus (and even afterward until the forming of the Clans) to non-marines that successfully completed zero-g combat qualification, though never again in the same numbers as during the Reunification War.

THE END

As the Star League navy grew closer and closer to the interior worlds, Protector Marantha Calderon gathered her advisors together. Their strategy had failed. The Star League had sloughed off the horrible costs in manpower and materiel and kept coming. They had breached the Hyades, and were destroying the Concordat's final lines of defense. And soon they would come and lay waste to Taurus itself. Onaga had seven corps of troops to call upon—I, II, III, IV, and XI Corps, plus the Star Guards and the Davion Corps, while V Corps, now released from operations on the Outworlds Front, could mobilize for redeployment and VII Corps, currently occupying the Magistracy of Canopus, was also available. Moreover, General Lee would authorize a complete mobilization of the reserves to free up additional troops, if necessary, while Prince Alexander Davion was also willing and able to provide additional troops.

The whole might of the Star League lay at Calderon's doorstep. Continued resistance would only cost the Concordat more of its citizens and more of its industry. It had already long ago lost its freedom, and the Star League had more than proven its willingness to injure or kill any number of Taurian people to bring the nation under its thumb.

Marantha Calderon saw no other choice. On 22 September 2596, with a squadron of Star League WarShips already in orbit over her homeworld, she transmitted her surrender to General Lord Damien Onaga, delivering it throughout the Hyades. She committed suicide at sunrise the next morning. By the end of the day, her body had been cremated and her ashes spread among the stars of the Hyades.

The long war against Taurus was over, nearly nineteen years to the day after the first shots were fired during Case AMBER.

THE CANOPIAN CAMPAIGN

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

So, what do we know about the people our guys are going to be fighting? *<holds up a dataslate>* Well, according to the Star League Department of Economic Relations, prostitution accounts for seven percent of Canopian GDP—higher on some planets—and the production of blue movies is a national industry on Restitution. *<looks at the camera>* Girls, that means your men may be a little tired when they get back. And need their shots.

What else? Well, if you dangle you're not going to amount to much. Only women can vote and head corporations. Guess we know who wears the trousers in those households. Studliness and soldiering—that's all we're good for, guys, though it doesn't sound so bad to me. And none of this conscientious objection malarkey; if you want citizenship and its benefits you serve in the MAF. As a grunt, mind you. Want to be an officer? You pay for the privilege. *<looks at the data slate again>* That's three percent of GDP. The Elsies already seem to have adopted that policy.

—*Late Night Live* with Ross Mahon, Atrius Broadcasting Corporation, 2577.

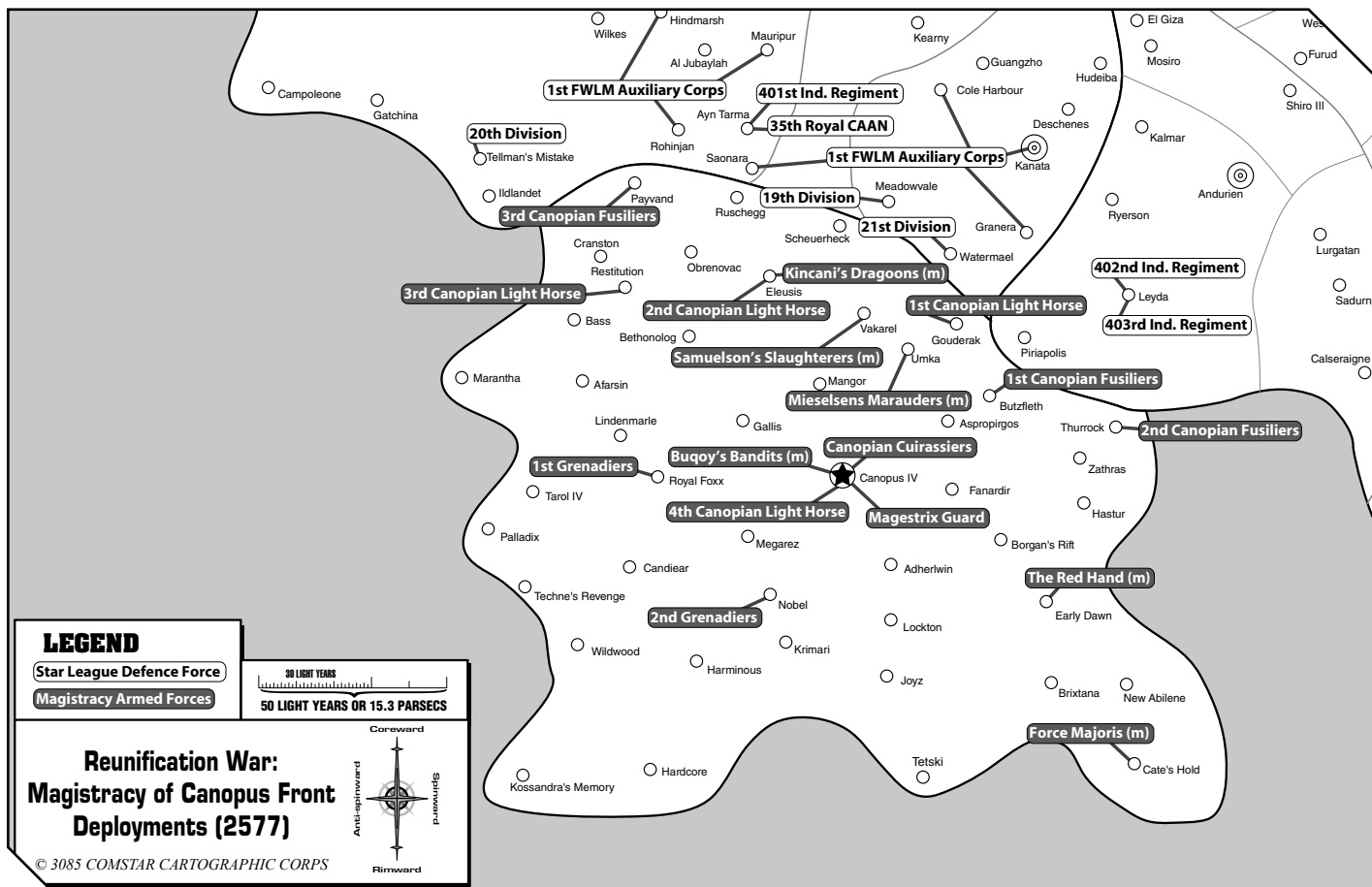
We're up against whores and deserters. How much trouble do you think they can be?
—General William Denning, Commanding SLDF 335th BattleMech Division, 2577

What does he offer us for the "privilege" of joining his Star League? What can he offer us that we cannot already buy?
—Magestrix Crystalla Centrella, 2576

Among the natural rights of the colonists are these: First a right to life, secondly to liberty, and thirdly to property; together with the right to defend them in the best manner they can.
—Samuel Adams, 1772

Despite her career military role—or more likely because of it—Captain-General Marion Marik was among the least hawkish of the Star League council and opposed the belligerent approach taken by the First Lord. To her, there was a vast gulf between cajoling someone into joining the Star League, as her father had done by fair means and foul, and forcing them to obey the Star League. As a federal leader she knew the innate problems in such an arrangement, but her voice was drowned out by those of political hegemony (the Camerons), self-interest (the Steiners) and rapaciousness (the Davions and Kuritas). Nonetheless, she knew her duty as a soldier and when the First Lord called for war, she responded with a grim determination.

The Reunification War began, officially, in 2578 but by March 2575 and rejection of the Pollux Proclamation the writing was on the wall. With conflict inevitable, both



SLDF TASK FORCE CANOPUS

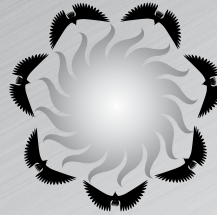
Commander: Captain-General Marion Marik
Constituent Units: SLDF VII Corps, FWL Auxiliary Corps
Initial Force Strength:
BattleMech Regiments: 43
Armor Regiments: 17
Infantry Regiments: 30
Aerospace Regiments: 12
Warships: 62

THE SLDF VII CORPS

Administrative Center: Procyon
Commander: Captain-General Marion Marik
Force Strength: 31 BattleMech regiments, 17 armor regiments, 30 infantry regiments, 12 Aerospace regiments
Constituent Units: Nineteenth Division, Twentieth Division, Twenty-first Division, 4 independent BattleMech regiments

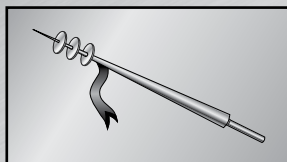
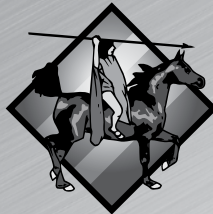
FIRST MARIK AUXILIARY CORPS

Commander: General Ian Marik
Force Strength: 12 BattleMech regiments
Constituent Units: Marik Militia (4 Regiments), Fusiliers of Oriente (2 regiments), Oriente Hussars (1 regiment), Stewart Dragoons (1 regiment), Orloff Grenadiers (2 Regiments), Regular Hussars (1 regiment), Defenders of Andurien (1 regiment)



THE MAGISTRACY ARMED FORCES

Commander: Magestrix Crystalla Centrella
Constituent Units: Magestrix Guard, Chasseurs à Cheval, Canopian Fusiliers, Canopian Grenadiers, Canopian Cuirassiers, Home Guard (Kossandra's Volunteers), Mercenary troops (Buquoy's Bandits, Samuelson's Slaughterers, Kincani's Dragoon, Mieselsens Marauders, The Red Hand, Force Majoris)
Initial Force Strength:
BattleMech Regiments: 17 (11 house, 6 mercenary)
Home Guard Regiments: 12
Warships: 11



the SLDF and FWLM began quiet preparations for war, though it was soon decided that Taurus, rather than Canopus, would be the primary objective. Only a single SLDF corps was assigned to the Canopian campaign, VII Corps, though this was to be bolstered by a substantial Marik Auxiliary Corps of a dozen regiments. Most of the military infrastructure was in place, thanks to the efforts of Shandra Noruff-Cameron and the United Triumph exercises, but VII Corps was not yet ready for action.

Suggestions in the Marik media that VII Corps was a paper tiger designed to scare the Canopians into submission were without substance, but the Captain-General did acknowledge that her command was “crippled and undernourished.” For all its manpower and war materiel, the corps had a distinct lack of supplies and lacked transport assets to move troops and material. Many of VII Corps’s divisions and regiments were confined to their garrison worlds until sufficient transport JumpShips could be procured or freed up from the other fronts. Civilian haulers made significant profits transporting military DropShips and cargoes to waystations near the Periphery border, to some extent making up for lost trade with their Canopian neighbors.

THE PHONY WAR (2575-2577)

Even before the prospect of war loomed the Magistracy Intelligence Ministry (MIM) had agents in some of these trade fleets, and news of the slow buildup percolated back to Canopus. Some of the more hawkish members of the Crimson Council advised the Magestrix to stage a preemptive strike against the SLDF’s weakly defended depot worlds. The Magestrix declined, believing Captain-General Marik was deliberately baiting a trap, hoping to lure the Magistracy Armed Forces (MAF) into attacks that would be politically and militarily disastrous. That restraint gave Marion Marik cause to consider the campaign ahead; the Magestrix and her officers weren’t the ignorant bandits Star League media portrayed them as—the cache worlds were indeed a trap, WarShips having ferried several divisions of troops to the border district in utmost secrecy. Detail on the worlds she was to fight over, and the quality of the opposition, was sadly lacking.

Ian Marik would later describe the initial plan of attack against Canopus as “a blind man with a machine gun versu a blind rat with a fruit knife—on a football pitch. At night.” While somewhat overwrought, the analogy wasn’t too far from the truth. The SLDF had tremendous firepower both on the ground and in space, but the military sledgehammer would be of little use if the opposition couldn’t be identified or could fade away. The only consolation for the SLDF was that the Magistracy was little better-informed, something they’d hoped to use to their advantage with the failed cache-world traps. Knowing it would be some time before the SLDF High Command made sufficient progress in the Concordat to let her loose, she endeavored to remedy the lack of solid intelligence on the Magistracy, while limiting what the Magistracy could learn from the Star League.

In what became known as the Phony War, 2576 and 2577 saw four agencies locked in a complex game of espionage, sabotage

and double-dealing. On one side was the MIM, whose agents diligently gathered what information they could on the movements of the SLDF and FWLM, passing information back to Canopus via smugglers who were attempting to avoid the Star League’s trade embargo. On the other were the Marik National Intelligence Agency (NIA), as well as the Hegemony Central Intelligence Directorate (HCID) and the SLDF Intelligence Command. In theory the Star League agencies had the Magistracy outnumbered and outclassed, but things immediately began to go wrong.

NIA and the HCID had a long and adversarial relationship that colored their interactions and hampered the sharing of information. Neither respected the SLDF-IC, which was still in its infancy, and did their best to ignore it. This meant that information rarely reached appropriate ears in a timely manner, instead being held in data silos that intelligence officers regarded as their personal fiefs. The agencies repeatedly doubled up on work, each sending agents to a world because they “forgot” to inform the other of their intentions. On Canopus, Magistracy security troops called to an incident found themselves witness to a gunfight between two Star League teams who, thanks to the lack of communication, had though the other was Canopian security. The MAF hauled the survivors off for interrogation and internment.

Intervention by the Captain-General finally prompted the two agencies to cooperate—her son Ian was made regional head of all Star League intelligence agencies operating in the Free Worlds League Operations Area—but while this provided a framework for the agencies to work within, it did little to counter the bad blood between them or prevent disagreements over operating practices. HCID was used to operating in regimented, almost clinical fashion. NIA was more flexible—cowboys, the HCID called them—adapting to circumstances and not above being creative. Unfortunately the NIA’s “creativity” extended to their report writing, and there were numerous claims of dodgy dossiers and misinformation. The NIA never lied or made things up, but they were adept at telling half-truths and slanting reports to present information in the manner they or their superiors wanted. This attitude, together with outright corruption on the part of the senior leadership, would result in the NIA’s disbanding in 2631.

Luckily for the Star League, the MIM was in little better shape. It relied on two groups of operatives: a small core of highly-trained paramilitaries, and hastily-trained intelligence gatherers. The trade restrictions placed upon Canopus were a more effective block to the MIM than any action by the NIA or HCID; no longer were Inner Sphere businessmen and diplomats coming to the Magistracy’s pleasure palaces and holiday reserves to be wined and dined and let slip trade secrets to the courtesans and entertainers. Similarly, the traveling entertainers who had become a mainstay of MIM operations in the Inner Sphere since Kossandra Centrella’s day were suddenly *persona non grata* in the Inner Sphere, their operations shut down and their people monitored. Information coming in was still considerable but it lacked focus and precision; the chaff far outweighed the wheat and threatened to bury the already grossly understaffed analysis teams.

OVER THE EDGE (2577)

Intelligence and logistics weren't the only issues facing Marion Marik and VII Corps. Efforts to establish a command post on Andurien, the world in the rimward region of the Free Worlds League that was deemed to have the best communications and infrastructure for the SLDF operation, fell afoul of politics with the Capellan Confederation. The presence of a Free Worlds Captain-General and FWLM troops, albeit under the flag of the SLDF, on Andurien was perceived by the Chancellor as an attempt to undermine the agreement between Albert Marik and Terrence Liao that had finally ended the disputes over the system. No amount of persuading could convince Ursula Liao to relent, and so the HQ was relocated to Cole Harbor, necessitating the redirection of several transport fleets and further delaying operations.

By early 2577, however, SLDF troops were in place and sufficient JumpShips were available to redeploy VII Corps and the Marik Auxiliaries. The Captain-General still had grave concerns about the quality of both intelligence and her astronavigation charts, some of which were 150 years older than the Magistracy. Fortunately, the attack plan was straightforward—a drive directly at the Magistracy's heart that had the potential to reach the capital in only four jumps—and thus was unlikely to be significantly derailed by enemy action.

On 14 May, Duke Brion Marik, the Captain-General's grandson (and a future Captain-General himself) landed on Canopus and was brought before the Magistratrix. Neither a military officer nor a diplomat, but rather an economist, he had been part of the Free Worlds delegation sent to cajole Crystalla Centrella in the wake of the Pollux Proclamation. The mission had failed, but he'd built a rapport with the pragmatic Canopian leader, which was why Marion had selected him for this last mission. Both sides knew that war was unavoidable, but Marion had no intention of making the situation any more difficult than it had to be. Calmly, Brion announced that irreconcilable differences existed between the Star League and the Magistracy of Canopus and that, henceforth, a state of war existed between the two parties. He declared, however, that such a conflict would be prosecuted in full accordance with the Ares Conventions, despite the First Lord having suspended the accords. The Magistratrix thanked Marik for his candor, and that of his grandmother, and promised to fight to protect their homes with dignity, tenacity and honor. There was an understanding: it would be a hard-fought and bloody war, but it would not be a dirty war.

The first wave of assaults was to target six worlds, securing jump routes to the Canopian capital. An SLDF brigade, backed by independent regiments and Marik troops, targeted each. If successful, the way would be open for a lightning assault on Canopus.

GOUDERAK (JUNE 2577)

The first blow fell on the border world of Gouderak. On 10 June, SLDF and FWLM WarShips simultaneously assaulted both the zenith and nadir jump points. The light pickets were no match for two-dozen WarShips, and quickly surrendered. The zenith cargo-transfer station did likewise, though the nadir facil-

ity put up token resistance and had to be secured by a marine boarding action. Within a week, elements of the Nineteenth Division's Fifty-fifth Brigade were on-world, securing the industrial complexes on the Halton continent and the planetary capital of Gouda Prime on arid Ayles. Securing the capital proved a minor headache for General Camilla Sjölander, not because of enemy forces—the company-strength detachment from the First Light Horse bolted off-world after token clashes with the Fifty-fifth—but rather the oppressive heat and lack of adequate water supplies; the city's water purification systems were adequate for the civil population—barely—but a SLDF division would have pushed things beyond breaking point, forcing the troops to draw supplies from their grounded DropShips. It was a stark lesson that living off the land might not prove possible and that logistics, rather than troop numbers, would be central to a successful outcome.

UMKA (AUGUST-OCTOBER 2577)

Hot on the heels of Gouderak, a second SLDF flotilla invested Umka. The initial fleet assaults went as smoothly as on Gouderak but the ground forces (irregulars supported by two battalions of the First Light Horse) refused to capitulate. The Light Horse were eventually forced off-world but the irregulars broke into small groups. Unlike Gouderak, with its rolling steppes and arid plains, Umka was a water-world with island chains forming the principal land areas. Aquaculture and deep-sea farming were the principal planetary industries and the Fifty-sixth Brigade easily secured the main complexes. However, winking out the guerilla forces in the archipelagos became a drawn-out process, particularly as units equipped with hovercraft (and in some case IndustrialMechs) could relocate across the shallow seas. It would be three months before the SLDF declared the world secure.

RESTITUTION AND CRANSTON (OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2577)

EDITORS NOTE: *Restitution and Cranston were among number of Canopian worlds lost during the Succession Wars.*

The third and fourth worlds targeted by the SLDF were expected to be hard fights and so were assigned to the battle-hardened Fifty-seventh Brigade and the Twentieth Division's Fifty-Eighth Brigade, respectively. On Restitution, NIA had reported massive defenses around the capital Magdeburg, site of the original colony and home to the planet's principal industry: the media. Restitution's exports were well-known in the Free Worlds, particularly to connoisseurs of low-brow dramas and dubious pornography. At first glance this didn't make Magdeburg a particularly important military target, but alongside the media were experts in image and video manipulation, data delivery and communication. The communications network on Restitution was as advanced as any in the Inner Sphere, and through it the defenders would be able to coordinate their defense across the planet's scattered badlands. Magdeburg *had* to be neutralized, but it soon became apparent that a traditional assault would

be difficult, both because of the newly-built defenses and the city's location atop a narrow bluff. Instead, elements of the Fifty-seventh Brigade would stage a daring direct assault into the city, bypassing the defenses. To do so, the SLDF had to win air supremacy and knock out any anti-air defenses in the city. The massed aerospace forces of both the Fifty-seventh and Fifty-eighth Brigades would pound the city, clearing the way for the ground troops. On 21 October, the assault began and the SLDF was shocked to find only token resistance. Overflights confirmed the presence of the civilian population, but the defenders were nowhere to be seen and none of the locals would shed any light on their location. The world was deemed pacified by the end of 22 October.

On Cranston, the nine 'Mech regiments of the Fifty-eighth Brigade expected a hard fight and the defenders didn't disappoint. Though outnumbered and outgunned, the Canopian troops used speed and maneuverability to harass the SLDF units, striking hard and then fading into the terrain. With most of its aerospace assets aiding the Fifty-seventh on Restitution, the Fifty-eighth was operating half-blind, depending on scouting missions by ground troops. Additionally, the weapons employed by the Canopians were of better quality and higher caliber than the SLDF had expected (SLDF-IC later identified the source as a group of arms traders in the Free Worlds League and Capellan Confederation). What had been planned as a week-long, hard-fought campaign dragged on into November. Then things turned nasty.

On 9 November, WarShips around Cranston reported a vessel arriving at a pirate point near the planet's moon. The bogey was inside the picket lines and its DropShip cargo was able to avoid the patrol vessels and ground on the northern continent. Analysis of satellite imagery identified the vessels as the Restitution garrison; rather than fighting one world's defenders, the Fifty-eighth now faced two sets of enemies, one of which was fresh and equipped with numerous aerospace fighters.

Numbers were still on the SLDF's side and General Michael Martinson made the decision to split his force, six regiments continuing to grind down the Cranston garrison while the remaining three regiments (together with a FWLM auxiliary regiment) prevented the Restitution forces from linking up. Defending the SLDF from air attack fell to a single mixed aerospace company who were outnumbered three to one by the Canopians. By the end of the campaign on 29 November, the first Star League Medals of Honor of the Canopian campaign had been won by these pilots, who came to be called the Bloody Few.

Restitution and Cranston would become watchwords for VII Corps; the Canopians were executing a highly-mobile defense, shifting troops around so that defenders might not be who or where they were expected. It was likened to a fairground shell game, the classic confidence trick where a pea is hidden under walnut shells. The SLDF had to work out which shell the MAF was hiding under—if any, as sleight of hand placed the advantage solidly in the defender's favor—and act accordingly. It was a mugs game, but one Marion Marik had no choice but to play.

BUTZFLETH AND VAKAREL (OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2577)

The final worlds of the first wave proved to be easy pickings. On Butzfleth, only a skeleton garrison of the First Canopian Fusiliers' Third Battalion remained to be quickly overwhelmed by the Sixtieth Brigade in a two-day campaign that ended on Halloween. Vakarel was almost as easy, though navigating the system's asteroid belts to secure the asteroid mining operations proved a time-consuming and tedious task. The 'Mechs of the Fifty-ninth Brigade were ill-suited to such operations; instead, responsibility fell to the WarShips' marine detachments while the ground forces remained cooped up in their DropShips pending the rare need for their firepower. Officially, the Vakarel campaign ended on 11 November, but the Canopians had other ideas.

On 14 November, the massed Canopian navy counterattacked Vakarel. Many of the SLDF vessels were operating in small detachments and found themselves hard-pressed by the assaults. The asteroid field task forces were in particular difficulty, with sensor effectiveness severely degraded and maneuvering hampered. One task force lost five JumpShips and a corvette escort, as well as two battalions of ground troops from the Fifty-ninth Brigade. Eventually the firepower and determination of the SLDF fighters, DropShips and Warships drove off the Magistracy fleet, but not before the Canopians had bloodied VII Corps' nose and won a great propaganda victory.

The near-disaster at Vakarel prompted Marion Marik to reexamine her plan. The first wave had taken a shotgun approach, exploiting the numbers that were her greatest advantage. While she had little fear that the MAF would overwhelm her troops, their dispersal and the Canopians' shell-game strategy hampered operations. In the future a more focused strategy would be followed, as much to limit the Canopians' targets as to allow the SLDF divisions to protect each other.

At this point the Canopians decided to change the rules of the game.

COUNTERSTRIKE (2578)

The architect of the MAF defensive strategy was Colonel Adam Buquoy, a second-generation Canopian whose parents had fled the Capellan Confederation. Like all Canopians, he'd served in the MAF but then had become a freelancer, serving in private wars in the Free Worlds, Lyran Commonwealth and Federated Suns. The formation of the Star League (and the glut of unemployed troops flooding the mercenary market) effectively put Buquoy's Bandits out of business in the late 2560s and he'd returned to Canopus. Crystalla Centrella, sensing the way the wind was blowing, needed battle-hardened officers to lead the MAF and she hired Buquoy and his unit. Though he'd never commanded anything larger than a regiment, the colonel had a keen eye and a near-encyclopedic knowledge of tactics and, by the time of the Pollux Proclamation, was *de facto* head of the MAF.

He made good use of the MIM to gather information on Marion Marik and her troops and, though tempted by the SLDF's

pre-war supply depots, had realized they were a ruse. Nonetheless, he recognized her supply chain and reliance on technology as key weaknesses in the SLDF. Deprived of materiel, the SLDF would be forced to fight on the same terms as the MAF. Supply depots had to be a target of the MAF if it was to survive. The trick would be attacking where and when he wanted to, not where Marik was inviting him.

During the first wave of SLDF assaults, Buquoy's feint-and-maneuver tactics proved effective, particularly in the battle at Vakarel. Operating in small units, the MAF was hard to track and pin down, but coming together at pre-determined points they proved devastating. Where and when to strike was like a scalpel incision; it needed to be precisely right or else the results could be fatal. Unfortunately for the SLDF, Buquoy proved to be a very skilled surgeon.

MEADOWVALE (JANUARY 2578)

On 9 January 2578, MAF troops crossed the interstellar border into the Free Worlds League and struck at the SLDF marshalling yards on Meadowvale. The assault force comprised four short regiments—his own Bandits, Samuelson's Slaughterers, Kincani's Dragoons and Mieselsen's Marauders—while other units including, the First and Second Canopian Light Horse and Third Fusiliers, struck at staging worlds such as Saonara, Granera and Ayn Tarma. Against a SLDF division the nine battalions wouldn't have stood a chance, but there were only two SLDF Mech regiments guarding Meadowvale. Unfortunately for the MAF, the element of surprise was lost when their initial assault failed to take the nadir cargo station before the crew could broadcast a warning. The SLDF defenders on-world thus had several days' notice of the incoming MAF and prepared a suitable welcome.

The principal base on Meadowvale, Camp Torrance, was one of a number of FWLM facilities built during the Second Andurien War when the world was hotly contested with the Capellan Confederation. A sprawling complex, the camp had been reactivated and fortified as part of United Triumph and had been further developed as a result of the Border Guards Agreement. In total, six caches had been established on Meadowvale, each defended by mixed battalions. These defenders were, however, second-line troops, ill-prepared to face the determined MAF force rapidly approaching. Plans existed for the defense of the camps, but neither the officers nor the troops had expected to put them into action. Buquoy's intelligence led him to suspect this, and so he determined to press home the attack, believing the speed and aggression would allow the raiders to prevail.

The Bandits spearheaded the assault, driving against Camp Torrance on 13 January. Opposing him was a mixed force of armor and infantry, backed up by an odd assortment of 'Mechs that included a number of *Helepolis* 'Mech-artillery units. These chimeras proved little match for the Bandits and were quickly overrun. The armor elements of the defenders provided a dogged and more resilient defense. Several buildings in Camp Torrance were destroyed by the Bandits, but the tenacious defense prevented the total destruction of the complex Buquoy had hoped for.

With reinforcements converging on the base, the colonel ordered the other MAF units into action against the remaining caches. Buquoy continued to fight for five hours, facing the SLDF 'Mech regiments, holding the Spheroids' attention long enough to make good their mission. With the principal SLDF forces focused on Camp Torrance, the Canopians were able to destroy the other depots and escape. Only a company of Buquoy's Bandits made it off-world, the colonel among them, but the mission was a success. An additional twenty-five Canopians were captured by the FWLM and interned on Oriente until the end of the war.

Following hot on the heels of Vakarel, the attack on Meadowvale was a shock to the SLDF. The loss of supplies was a major blow (though not a fatal one) but not as much as Buquoy's audacity in taking the war into the Free Worlds and striking at multiple worlds. He'd made it clear that the theater of operations was not just the Magistracy itself and that the SLDF would need to look to its own defenses. Marik called a temporary cessation of hostilities while she reorganized supply routes and convoy escorts for all shipments. All supply caches would be strongly garrisoned (an increasingly thorny issue as VII Corps pushed deeper into Canopus) but a slow and steady approach to the campaign was far preferable than being crippled by the flyweight MAF.

The MAF used the lull to rebuild and rearm. Some units like the Second Light Horse had been brutalized (they'd not expected to run into the First Marik Militia on Granera) and needed to be brought back to full operational strength.

HONORS OF WAR

The SLDF took many prisoners of war during the Magistracy campaign, most of whom were sent to internment camps in the Free Worlds League on worlds such as Oriente, Irian and even Atreus. While some of these camps were prison-like, those were reserved for MAF prisoners who had proved particularly troublesome. Most of the facilities were more like barracks (and indeed a number were) with the prisoners granted a small stipend and given access to sport and leisure facilities, education and even small-scale manufacturing equipment. The POWs were monitored and rosters taken on a weekly basis, but otherwise allowed their freedom; hundreds of light-years from home and without the identification papers that would allow them interstellar travel, there was little need to keep them locked up. Indeed, many MAF officers found themselves the guests of honor at soirees organized by the local nobility and military.

Looking back on the camps after the conclusion of hostilities, it became clear that the openness was part of a psychological operation set in motion by the Captain-General and orchestrated by the NIA. The humane treatment of MAF prisoners served a dual purpose—it demonstrated to the Canopians the benefits of life in the Star League (particularly on the core worlds) and the League's willingness to treat them as equals. Many of the POWs returned home at the end of the war to become evangelists for membership in the Star League. It also served as a subtle reminder to the First Lord, the commanding general and the other members of the High Council that the carrot was often more effective than the stick.

—from *Glory and Unity: Tales of the Magistracy Campaign*, by Force Commander Tomas Gonzalez, Tamarind University Press, 2731

THE LONG GAME (2578-2581)

On 2 July 2578, after a six-month delay, the offensive against the Magistracy resumed. The advance was significantly more cautious than the initial assaults, with two brigades—six regiments of 'Mechs plus conventional troops—assigned to each world. In many regards this was overkill—most worlds only fielded a regiment or two of conventional troops—but the SLDF had no desire to repeat Restitution or Vakarel. Overconfidence was their greatest weakness, allowing them to become overstretched and thus vulnerable to the Canopian mobile defense. Marion Marik had no intention of making the same mistake twice.

RUSCHEGG, PAYVAND AND SCHEUERHECK (JULY-DECEMBER 2578)

Part of Marik's strategy was securing the supply lines of VII Corps, which included making it more difficult for Canopian forces to strike into the Free Worlds. Already most of the depots had been fortified and escorts assigned, but removing stepping stones between the MAF operations area and the Free Worlds League would play a significant role. The establishment of a buffer zone, while not able to fully block MAF raiders—they could still use uninhabited systems as stepping stones—did hamper their operations.

The three worlds of Payvand, Ruschegg and Scheuerheck were the most coreward worlds in the Magistracy and had originally been members of the Free Worlds before their seduction by Kossandra's Magistracy. SLDF troops spearheaded the landings on each, but these were bolstered by Marik Auxiliaries, who saw their capture as a restoration of lost territory.

Only on heavily-industrialized Payvand was there significant resistance to the occupation, with troops forced to take control of the PayMax Industriplex and the city of New Barcelona in a series of bitter street clashes, a notable exception to the participant's adherence to the Ares Conventions. Despite this, Marik attempted to remain true to her ideals and refused to sanction the use of 'Mech troops in urban areas, due to the risk to infrastructure and the civilian population. Instead, responsibility for the operation was placed on infantry regiments, who were forced to fight insurgents for control of buildings and streets and also stage riot control operations. By late November, the world was mostly pacified, but guerilla action would rumble on until the 2580s.

Having defected from the Free Worlds, the leaders of the three newly captured worlds feared reprisals by the Free Worlds contingent of the SLDF task force, particularly with the Captain-General commanding. When troops escorted them aboard the Captain-General's flagship, the FWLS *Albert Marik*, orbiting Scheuerheck they were visibly shaken, expecting to be thrown out of the nearest airlock. Instead, the Captain-General offered them tea ... and a place back in the Free Worlds. She revealed that her father had been disappointed that they'd forsaken the Free Worlds in favor of the Centrellas during the 2550s but that he'd accepted it. After all, free will was a central part of Free Worlds culture (though the

right to worlds to self-determination would not be fully enshrined until the precedent-setting case of *Camlann vs. Free Worlds* over a century later). In truth, the Third Andurien War and then efforts to forge the Star League had occupied the diminutive Albert, and he'd not considered the effort to recover the worlds worthwhile. Marion, however, was here and had no doubts that the First Lord would grant the Free Worlds suzerainty over its former possessions (after the war, thirteen Canopian worlds were transferred to the Free Worlds) but they could voluntarily rejoin the League and immediately gain the benefits of Star League membership. She made it clear that refusal would not result in any form of punishment, but in that case she would have to replace them with military governors. Motivated by self-interest, all three signed petitions for their worlds to be reincorporated into the Free Worlds League, ratified by the Free Worlds Parliament in early 2579 and rubber-stamped by the First Lord later in the year. The Free Worlds had made its first significant profits in the campaign, and Marik's allies in Parliament made political headway against those who had cautioned against Free Worlds League membership of the Star League.

ELEUSIS, OBRENOVAC AND BETHONOLOG (MARCH 2579-JANUARY 2580)

The MAF was suspiciously quiet in 2578 and Marik chose to continue her cautious consolidation, occupying Obrenovac in a short campaign from 19-25 March, Eleusis in a hard-fought series of clashes between April and September, and Bethonolog over Christmas and New Year. All three worlds were key trade hubs and controlling them (together with Restitution and Cranston captured two years earlier) secured the SLDF's right (anti-spinward) flank.

The Obrenovac operation was little more than a police action, with SLDF forces seizing government buildings and infrastructure with little opposition. They did, however, face a series of political protests with strikes and marches threatening to paralyze the capital. The opposition scored an own-goal at the end of April when they attempted to whip the crowds up into a frenzy to attack the SLDF garrison. The crowd turned on the ringleaders of the violence (a half-trained MIM operative and his cohorts) and handed them over to the SLDF. The garrison commander, Colonel Richard Adams of the Ninety-second Assault Infantry (attached to the Fifty-sixth Brigade), met with the leaders of the protests and assured them of their right to peaceful protest. Provided the disputes remained nonviolent and orderly, they had nothing to fear from the SLDF troops. For their part, the protestors agreed to a series of self-policing measures to ensure order. While the situation remained tense for several months, there were few problems between the population and the garrison, and by 2584 and the fall of Canopus, it was business as usual on Obrenovac.

Eleusis was a different matter entirely. The SLDF had expected more significant resistance from the MAF at this key jump route nexus, and the Canopians didn't disappoint. However, rather than two 'Mech regiments and half a dozen armor and infantry formations, Buquoy's shell game meant they encountered four

'Mech regiments (all three regiments of the Chasseurs à Cheval and Samuelson's Slaughterers) and eighteen armor and infantry units. Elements of the Chasseurs had stiffened the backbone of defenders earlier in the campaign, but the decision to concentrate on Eleusis was the first time they'd been able to function as a cohesive unit. Hitherto, the former anti-terrorist Chasseurs had been a sort of gamekeeper-turned-poacher, heading the covert strikes and harassment against SLDF garrisons. With more than eighteen months elapsed since the double-whammy of Vakarel and Meadowvale, the MAF needed a victory to bolster its own morale and to make clear to the SLDF the difficulty of the task that lay ahead.

The SLDF's difficulties began as soon as they arrived, finding the computer systems of both cargo waystations and the zenith recharge station sabotaged. Without these, the SLDF had no access to the logs of JumpShip and DropShip traffic and thus little information on to what to expect on-world. The presence of MAF troops in the system came to light three days into the operation, when as the DropShips were approaching the turn-over point in their planetary approach. Their transports, clustered around the jump points, suddenly found themselves under attack by squadrons of fighters launched from a carrier that had remained quiet and undetected a million kilometers farther out from the sun. No SLDF vessels were destroyed, but sixteen sustained severe damage to their jump sails and five suffered crippling drive damage before the picket WarShips and their fighter complements were able to drive off the raiders. Repairs would take weeks, stranding a number of units on Eleusis until they could be completed.

The victor in the ground campaign was never in serious doubt, but the planned two-week campaign turned into twenty-three weeks of cat and mouse. The MAF troops proved to be skilled fighters and inflicted proportionally more damage on the SLDF than they themselves suffered. However, the SLDF had little difficulty in making good its losses, whereas the MAF had few reserves and almost no manufacturing capability. Colonel Ann-Britt McMillan, heading the MAF operation, could potentially have held out until the end of the year but on 19 September she received orders from Colonel Buquoy, countersigned by the Magestrix, to pull her units back and regroup.

After the troubles on Eleusis, Bethonolog was a walk in the park. The SLDF troops made landfall on 3 December and began plans for assaults on the Canopian positions. They were surprised, therefore, to receive a communiqué from the local militia colonel stating his intention to resist the occupation ... but with the SLDF's permission, not until 26 December. He called on General Mancini to hold to the spirit of the season and to give the people of Bethonolog chance to enjoy Christmas, Hannukkah, Al Hijira and Moharram. She agreed, and went so far as to send the colonel a Christmas pudding. He reciprocated with a turkey and a bottle of local wine. The week-long clashes between the Fifty-ninth Brigade and the local forces over the New Year period were half-hearted, but honor was satisfied on both sides and on 9 January, the SLDF took control of the world.

GALLIS, ASPROPIRGOS, FANARDIR AND BORGAN'S RIFT (JANUARY 2580-OCTOBER 2581)

The bloody clash on Eleusis forced a revision of the SLDF timetable and only two worlds were seized in 2580—Gallis in January-February and Aspropirgos in September. The MAF contested both operations but withdrew after stinging the SLDF, before effective pursuit could be mounted. Much the same occurred on Fanadir in March 2581 and Borgan's Rift in September-October 2581. Both sides used the reduced pace of operations to refit and rearm, preparing for the next major invasion wave. The MAF wasn't idle during these two years, sending company-strength units on raiding missions, sometimes deep behind the lines. Though beaten off without difficulty by the garrisons, the spread of raids—from Cranston to Leyda in the Capellan Confederation—forced garrisons to remain alert and well-equipped, drawing resources away from the offensive arm of the SLDF operation.

REVERSALS (2582-2583)

The fall of Royal Foxx (March 2582) and Lindenmarle (July 2582) continued the anti-spinward push by the SLDF, with the Chasseurs à Cheval contesting both worlds but being forced to withdraw. Controlling those two worlds placed an effective lock on commercial traffic in the anti-spinward regions of the Magistracy and opened the door to the Magistracy's outback of under-populated—and often poorly-defended—colonies. The Canopians raided Eleusis and Payvand, but only on the latter did the two sides clash. At Eleusis, the substantial Canopian raiding party had hoped to wreak havoc among SLDF transports but instead encountered three SLDF naval squadrons. The MAF raiders escaped without loss, but only just.

Deciding it was time to turn the tables, in 2582 the SLDF adopted strategies that were hitherto the province of the MAF. They raided several Magistracy worlds, most notably Canopus, though only a brief WarShip clash occurred, the SLDF being more interested in getting updated stellar cartography information on the capital system. They also hit Lockton and Cate's Hold. They also did the unexpected; rather than continuing to nibble away at the fringes of the Magistracy, they mounted a long-range assault on designed to cripple the MAF war effort.

TETSKI (SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2582)

EDITORS NOTE: *Tetski was abandoned during the Canopus-Taurus war of the early Twenty-ninth Century after biological agents were released on Tetski and its vassal, the mining world of Adhara. Ironically, Adhara survived the plague while its parent world did not*

Heavily industrialized, the world of Tetski was on the rimward edge of the Magistracy, well away from the SLDF occupation zone. It was one of the few sites other than Canopus—which was in grave danger of being isolated—that had extensive BattleMech repair facilities. It was thus a world to which the battalions MAF were rotated, undergoing repairs and refit before being sent out

THURROCK

After the war, Marion Marik discussed the honey pot of Thurrock with the Magestrix and revealed that an NIA agent within the Magestrix' staff had allowed her to bait this trap more successfully than those of the Phony War. Three squadrons of SLDF WarShips—thirty in total—with twenty assault DropShips and more than a hundred fighters had lain in wait in the Claybrooke system while spotters hung in the dark at Thurrock's pirate points. When the MAF fleet arrived, the spotters jumped to Claybrooke with precise details of the location and composition of the invaders.

Thurrock was a turning point in the Magistracy campaign and is widely acknowledged as the point at which an SLDF victory was assured. With its numbers drastically reduced and only two WarShips left in service, the MAF would no longer be able to continue its mobile defense or any substantive raiding. The lack of military transport JumpShips effectively locked most of the MAF ground forces in place, allowing the SLDF to scale back many garrisons and to transfer troops to frontline service. Many Canopian worlds remained free, but only one mattered to Marion Marik and the SLDF: Canopus itself.

FAMILY MATTERS

Ian, son, you know I trust your judgment and ability, so bear with me a moment while I pose a question. What the hell were you thinking?

You were meant to secure Canopus and its government, not let the Magestrix screw you silly. It's hard to credit that bunch of slatterns and wastrels were once our own, even if they were that bitch Kossandra's deserters.

And yes, it's common knowledge here, so you can expect those scandal-mongers in Parliament will find out shortly. You can expect some fun out of that; since Papa secured primacy of the Marik name on the Star League Council they've felt somewhat disenfranchised. It may just be hot air, but you can expect them to jerk our chains at every opportunity. I'll try and carry out some damage control while I'm here but be prepared, my dear boy, and for god sakes leave Crystalla alone. I'll deal with that lightskirt when I'm back there, which should be by the 23rd.

—From the personal correspondence archive of Captain-General Marion Marik, 19 May 2584

to harass the invaders again. It was one of the few worlds other than Canopus to maintain a permanent garrison of line units and to have permanently assigned WarShips. Unfortunately, these defenses proved insufficient.

On 3 September, two battalions of the First Marik Militia arrived in system and began to harass orbital traffic. The Militia made landfall near the city of Sendai, site of a major refinery, and tore through the local garrison. The on-world BattleMech forces, the Third Light Horse Regiment of the Chasseurs à Cheval, moved to intercept the raiders. For once the odds would have been in the MAF's favor, if they had been able to pin down the Marik force. For five days the two forces sparred, drawing deeper and deeper into Tetski's northern wilderness. The Militia avoided decisive engagement, while Canopian WarShips prevented the FWLM DropShips from rendezvousing with their troops. On 10 September, however, the jaws of the trap swung shut.

Emerging at a pirate point only ten hours from the planet, two more Marik regiments and the Fifty-eighth Brigade jumped into the system and blasted past the picket ships. Both MAF corvettes were gutted by the SLDF and Marik WarShips. The Third Light Horse had suddenly become prey rather than hunter, and rather than be caught in the open, immediately broke off and raced back toward the capital, Tokhai. They made it just in time—the contrails of dropping SLDF 'Mechs began to appear just as the last of the Light Horse reached the city.

The SLDF had hoped to surround and destroy the MAF unit in open terrain, but were instead forced to mount a protracted siege against a foe that had a near-inexhaustible supply of food and equipment. It took three weeks, but eventually the SLDF forced their way into Tokhai and secured all the industrial, political and economic centers. The Light Horse refused to surrender, even when General Kossovich offered them generous terms. Instead they chose to fight to the last man, and casualties were high on both sides.

The loss of Tetski and the Third Light Horse sent shockwaves through the Magistracy. It was a body blow to Canopian economic and military infrastructure, and showed a more confident and daring SLDF that was prepared to use the MAF's own tactics against it. Adam Buquoy recognized the situation slipping away from the Magistracy, and knew that the MAF had to regain the initiative.

**AFARSIN, ADHERLWIN, MEGAREZ AND NOBEL
(MARCH-APRIL 2583)**

One of the most anti-spinward Canopian worlds, Afarsin had little strategic value but was seized by the SLDF in early April following a lightning campaign to secure Megarez. Both were agrarian worlds that served as little more than stepping stones for both sides. The MAF had billeted line units on Megarez prior to some of their raids, and SLDF units would spend several weeks identifying the camps and winking out the handful of defenders.

Adherlwin and Nobel were somewhat more notable as centers for mining and light industry, but their near-simultaneous occupation in the last week of April signified the encirclement of Canopus. All inhabited worlds within thirty light years of the capital were in SLDF hands, and while the border remained porous to JumpShip traffic, it was a grave psychological blow.

THURROCK (JULY 2583)

Buquoy realized that attacking so many worlds near-simultaneously (plus garrisoning the occupied territories) had stretched VII Corps significantly. Many of their units sat

on the end of tenuous supply chains—or were completely isolated in the case of the occupiers of Tetski—and while the anti-spinward district of the Magistracy was a solid mass of SLDF-occupied worlds, the spinward marches were a hodgepodge of MAF and SLDF control. A well-aimed blow at the supply lines running through these worlds would plunge the SLDF into chaos, and so he began planning the spiritual successor to the Meadowvale operation.

He targeted Thurrock, a world notionally in the Magistracy but also claimed by the Capellan Confederation during the Third Andurien War. The SLDF had established supply caches and repair facilities there, but only a weak garrison of one SLDF regiment and two battalions of auxiliary troops. It was an almost-ideal target and, marshalling his forces, he struck. Most of the MAF navy was employed in the operation, protecting two regiments of mercenaries (Kincani's Dragoons, veterans of Meadowvale, and Force Majoris) as well as the Second Canopian Grenadiers. Almost immediately the plan began to unravel.

Emerging at the nadir jump point, they found the system suspiciously devoid of shipping. The cargo stations, which the MAF marines boarded within thirty minutes of their arrival, were nearly empty and had only skeleton crews. It was an eerie situation. Had the SLDF abandoned the system? MIM analysis said not. DropShips carrying the assault force detached from their transports and began the three-day run in-system. They were only six hours out from the jump point when their predicament became clear: WarShips began to emerge at the jump points, disgorging a flotilla of assault DropShips before maneuvering to within a few kilometers of the near-immobile MAF transports, effectively preventing them from jumping away. The six MAF WarShips in the task force (two more remained at Canopus) immediately began to maneuver for position, engaging the SLDF vessels, but more and more WarShips began to arrive to release more DropShips and a swarm of fighters. The MAF vessels realized they were cut off and sought shelter near the outer planets of the system, only to find themselves chased down by swarms of fighters and assault DropShips. In a two-day running naval battle, almost the entire MAF navy was wiped out and three regiments of troops were taken prisoner.

ENDGAME (2583-2584)

The last months of 2583 saw a flurry of SLDF activity. A flood of reinforcements and the effective lockdown of the MAF gave VII Corps new impetus. Early Dawn, Lockton, Hastur, Zatharas and Krimari were occupied by the suddenly-buoyant SLDF, with Joyz and Brixtona seized in the first six weeks of 2584. In addition, VII Corps stepped up reconnaissance raids against Canopus and, in early March, a squadron of WarShips seized the nadir recharge station and established a permanent SLDF presence.

CANOPUS (MARCH-APRIL 2584)

The Magistracy could do little to dislodge the SLDF occupation, nor could they block the increasingly-aggressive WarShip patrols mounted though the system. The two remaining MAF WarShips played cat and mouse with their larger and more numerous SLDF cousins, seeking to preserve their independence and integrity against the need to evacuate the Magesrix and her family to the redoubt the MAF had prepared in the out-back. They could do little as the SLDF established first observation posts and later staging areas on Cybele and Inanna, Canopus IV's two moons. Marik herself arrived in-system on 29 March, the *Albert Marik* taking up a geostationary orbit above Delphi, the Magesrix's seat and *de facto* planetary capital. Most of the government structures were in Crimson which would, during the latter Star League, be recognized as the official capital. It was a clear statement of intent, designed to intimidate the Magesrix. Crystalla merely smiled and pointed out the "pretty new star" to her courtiers.

A complex mix of resource extraction, heavy industry and leisure concerns, the Canopian economy had thrived. Just over fifty years of development had made the world a rival to many in the Inner Sphere. Still largely unspoiled—the strip mining, pollution and climate of modern Canopus were products of the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Centuries—rolling hills and lush forests dominated the landscape. Urban centers dotted the world, but the largest cities—Delphi, Astarte and Crimson—were located on Salonika, the largest continent. It became an unwritten rule of the invasion that military actions would be limited to the Salonikan wilderness and that combat in and around urban centers would

THE WAR AT HOME: THE FREEBOOTER'S WAR

Canopus wasn't the only problem facing the Free Worlds during this period. As the war on Canopus began to draw down a new situation arose in the rimward districts near the Capellan border. The Confederation had been wary of the SLDF and FWLM build-up in the League's Andurien Province and had blocked SLDF efforts to establish a HQ on the prized world. With Canopus secured, but the heightened SLDF presence in the area remaining, many Capellan "patriots" began to suspect a conspiracy by the Star League to support the reclamation of Andurien. A poll on Shiro III suggested that support for such a move was strong, and that a formal petition could be submitted to the High Court on Terra.

In the wake of this, hardliners calling themselves Shepperton's Freebooters began to strike at Marik worlds in and around Andurien province, being careful to avoid anywhere there was an SLDF presence. Worlds from Hindmarsh to Leyda were targeted by the raiders, whose objective seemed to be disruption of the infrastructure and regional economy; an abject lesson of what sort of unrest the Free Worlds League might face were Andurien to be surrendered. NIA and HCID quickly identified the Freebooters as CCAF defectors and, with the Captain-General and her heir still engrossed with the Canopian campaign, the Marik Parliament called on the Confederation to deal with the renegades.

The efforts by the CCAF and Maskirovka were half-hearted; many Capellans felt that while extreme, the goal of the Freebooters was just, that the SLDF was about to betray Andurien to the Mariks. CCAF troops repeatedly arrived at worlds targeted by the Freebooters just too late, occasionally fighting brief skirmishes but doing little to stop the troubles. The Captain-General was incensed, and in 2587 sent a strongly worded communiqué to Ursula Liao. "I don't care that your cousin is married to my granddaughter [*Therese, Ian's daughter, married William Liao in 2573*]. Put a stop to this or the fifty regiments at my command may find themselves visiting the Forbidden City. Set your house in order before I have to do it for you."

Furious at being dressed down, Liao made it crystal clear to her military and intelligence chiefs that the Freebooters had to be stopped and soon, or it would be their heads on pikes in the palace courtyard. Their efforts redoubled, and for the first time solid progress was made in containing the threat: two assaults were anticipated and beaten back, with significant losses for the renegades though their base of operations remained a mystery. In March 2588, a joint HCID (now restyled

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the Star League Intelligence Corps) and Maskirovka operation managed to track a Freebooter vessel to Wisconsin. CCAF forces prepared to launch an assault on the world but Ian Marik, acting in his mother's place, had to approve the operation, insisted on FWLM participation. Until the 3050s, the attack on Wisconsin would be the only joint military action involving the FWLM and CCAF. The assault was also notable as the first battle in which Rhex Marik, Brion's daughter and another future Captain-General, would take part. Though only a junior officer in the First Free Worlds Guards, she would play a significant role in the outcome.

The initial landings on 19 March went well, but a series of communications breakdowns left both the FWLM and CCAF in difficult positions. Sheng's Chasseurs, the CCAF element of the force, threw themselves at the Freebooters with abandon, knowing it was time for death or glory. The Marik assaults were more measured, Colonel Richard Appleton being more concerned with seeing his people get out of the chaotic melee intact. By the late in the day, the Freebooters were a spent force, both light battalions reduced to scattered rem-

be avoided by both sides. In effect, the matter would be settled purely by the military forces with as little impact as possible on the civilian populace or the planet itself. This was in many ways a classic application of the now-officially suspended Ares Conventions.

The SLDF landings began on 3 April and took until the fifth to complete. Marik had deployed three brigades to the world, the Fifty-eighth, Sixtieth and Sixty-third, backed by three independent regiments and five Marik units. Facing them were six MAF and mercenary units—the Magestrix' Guard, the First and Third Canopian Fusiliers, the First Grenadiers, the Canopian Cuirassiers and The Red Hand. With just over a three to one numerical advantage, the SLDF had a significant advantage. It wasn't sufficient to make the campaign a foregone conclusion, particularly with the Canopian's home ground advantage.

The first clash took place late on the 5 April, with elements of the Third Fusiliers pressing the Third Marik Militia and the Thirty-fifth Royal CAAN Regiment. The Thirty-fifth took a particular beating before reinforcements drove the Canopians back. The CAAN regiment was moved into the reserve, to the disgust of its commanding officer. Elsewhere the MAF came off significantly less well—the First Grenadiers found themselves with their backs against the Thetis River and were systematically reduced by their opponents in the Fifty-eighth Brigade. Only two companies were able to force a crossing and were later absorbed into the Second Grenadiers to make good that unit's losses against the Sixtieth Brigade. The Thetis River was also the site of a spirited clash between the Red Hand mercenaries and the Fifth Marik Militia. The mercenaries exploited the narrow channels and unstable terrain of the delta to launch a series of hit-and-run attacks against the Free Worlds unit, using hovercraft to cross terrain impassable to heavier units. SLDF aerospace units

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eventually put paid to these tactics when squadrons of bomb-laden fighters orbiting overhead were called into action. The hovercraft couldn't escape the eagle-eyed hunters and retreated to safer terrain.

Though there was a tacit agreement not to involve civil infrastructure in the combat, the Captain-General declared one locale to be of too great a significance not to be included: the industrial facilities of Majesty Metals and Manufacturing, the sole 'Mech producer on Canopus. Leaving the facility in MAF hands would be an invitation to trouble, and during the night of 12-13 April the SLDF dislodged the MAF garrison and took charge of the complex. Over the days that followed, Buquoy's troops staged several attempts to retake the complex but their numerical disadvantage made success impossible. Eventually the Magistratrix called off the attacks, abandoning the facility to Marik.

Clashes escalated during the second half of April and by the twenty-seventh the MAF had been forced into a narrow ring around Delphi, surrounded on three sides by the SLDF and on the fourth by the Bay of Altay. A siege mentality set in among the Canopian population, and rumors began to circulate of rationing and a relief force just waiting to strike if only they could hold out until the summer. The SLDF had no intention of letting the false hope of a fictitious relief force buoy the defenders.

On 1 May, the both SLDF divisions and the Marik Auxiliaries pressed forward against the MAF defenders. Observers later described it as a meat grinder, with both sides taking horrendous casualties. The war of attrition might have lasted weeks and exacted a fearsome toll, but the actions of a single unit broke the deadlock. Having been forced into idleness, the Thirty-fifth Royal CAAN Regiment had made a detailed study of Delphi and its environs, particularly the golden beaches that proved so popular with tourists in later years. The Combined Armor, Air and Naval regiments were designed for water worlds, and were particularly adept at amphibious operations. As dawn rose on 2 May, the Thirty-fifth assaulted Delphi from the almost-undefended Bay of Altay side. Realizing they had SLDF troops in their rear areas, the MAF defense collapsed. By midday on 3 May the Canopian capital was in SLDF hands and the Magistratrix had surrendered to General Ian Marik. Adam Buquoy was not apprehended and was able to escape off-world, becoming a thorn in the SLDF's side for the next few years.

nants while the allied assault had lost four lances. The Freebooters hadn't stood a chance, but the aftermath of the encounter threatened to be almost as bloody.

Many of the prisoners called on the Free Worlds League to take them prisoner, rather than surrendering to the CCAF. House Liao had only a single punishment for deserters: beheading. The Capellan commander insisted that the prisoners, as Capellan citizens, be handed over. Appleton asserted that the crimes took place in the Free Worlds and the prisoners were captured in the Free Worlds and so League jurisdiction applied. Despite her low FWLM rank, Duchess Marik, only nineteen, was called on for her knowledge of Free Worlds League and Star League law. She pointed out that the prisoners feared for their lives and that the Free Worlds League would not be a soft option. Her presence and determination threw Sheng off balance, and Appleton was subsequently able to negotiate an equitable accord. The spoils and prisoners would be divided. Those in Free Worlds custody would spend the next two decades in prison. Those taken by the CCAF were hauled to Sian in chains, where they were executed in front of Ursula Liao on 19 August 2588.

MOPPING UP (2584-2588)

Marion Marik returned to Atreus before the final capture of Delphi, leaving her son Ian to conclude the operation and receive the Magistratrix' surrender. His relationship with Crystalla proved tempestuous—and if rumor is to be believed, the friendship that grew between them was more than platonic—but the transition of power went smoothly. The Magistratrix did, however, refuse to order the remaining Magistracy worlds to surrender (her lady-in-waiting Lasanna La Rue later reported her exact phrase to Duke Ian as "Darling, you wanted to take all my people away from me, so if they're being naughty then it's for you to deal with them. Do you want to give them a good spanking? Or me?") The remaining dozen worlds would need to be occupied and pacified. VII Corps' war wasn't yet over.

Most of the occupations went smoothly, following an almost *pro forma* pattern of token resistance then surrender. A few proved tougher nuts to crack, particularly Marantha (taken in 2584), Palladix (occupied in May 2586) and Cate's Hold. The latter was a supply and repair base for the MAF that continued to support the few remaining MAF vessels. An administrative oversight by an HCID clerk had spared the world an assault such as was employed on Tetski but in April 2587, almost three years after the fall of the capital, the base was finally captured after a two-week campaign.

Parliament recalled Ian Marik to Atreus on 15 January 2586 following the death of Reginald Marik, Marion's younger brother, in a raid on New Vandenberg. It seemed Parliament had suddenly decided that having a substantial number of the Marik hierarchy in war zones was detrimental to the Free Worlds and while they couldn't order the Captain-General home—she was operating under the authority of the Star League—they could secure the succession by bringing her son Ian, commander of the FWLM Auxiliary Corps, home. Marion's other sibling, Shannon, would later die in the last years of the Taurian campaign and her great-granddaughter, Rhean, would have close encounters during both the Freebooters War and with terrorists on Canopus.

The last world to fall was the new colony of Kossandra's Memory, established as a redoubt by the MAF and used by Buquoy as his base of operations from which to harass the SLDF. Marion Marik commanded the assault personally, leading three regiments against Buquoy's mismatched battalions. The Canopian colonel attempted to goad her into rash action, but Marik kept her cool and whittled down the Magistracy forces. The chief strategists of the eleven-year campaign finally met on a bloody ridge over 500 light-years from Terra, the Captain-General accepting the colonel's surrender with a firm handshake.

THE OUTWORLDS CAMPAIGN

All we ask is to be left alone.

—Confederate States of America President Jefferson Davis

A nation, regardless of its protestations, if it feels that its national existence is threatened and that it is losing a war, will turn to any weapon that it can use.

—US General Walter Bedell Smith

God demands that the righteous stand up against injustice perpetrated upon the innocent.

—Director-General Michael Cameron

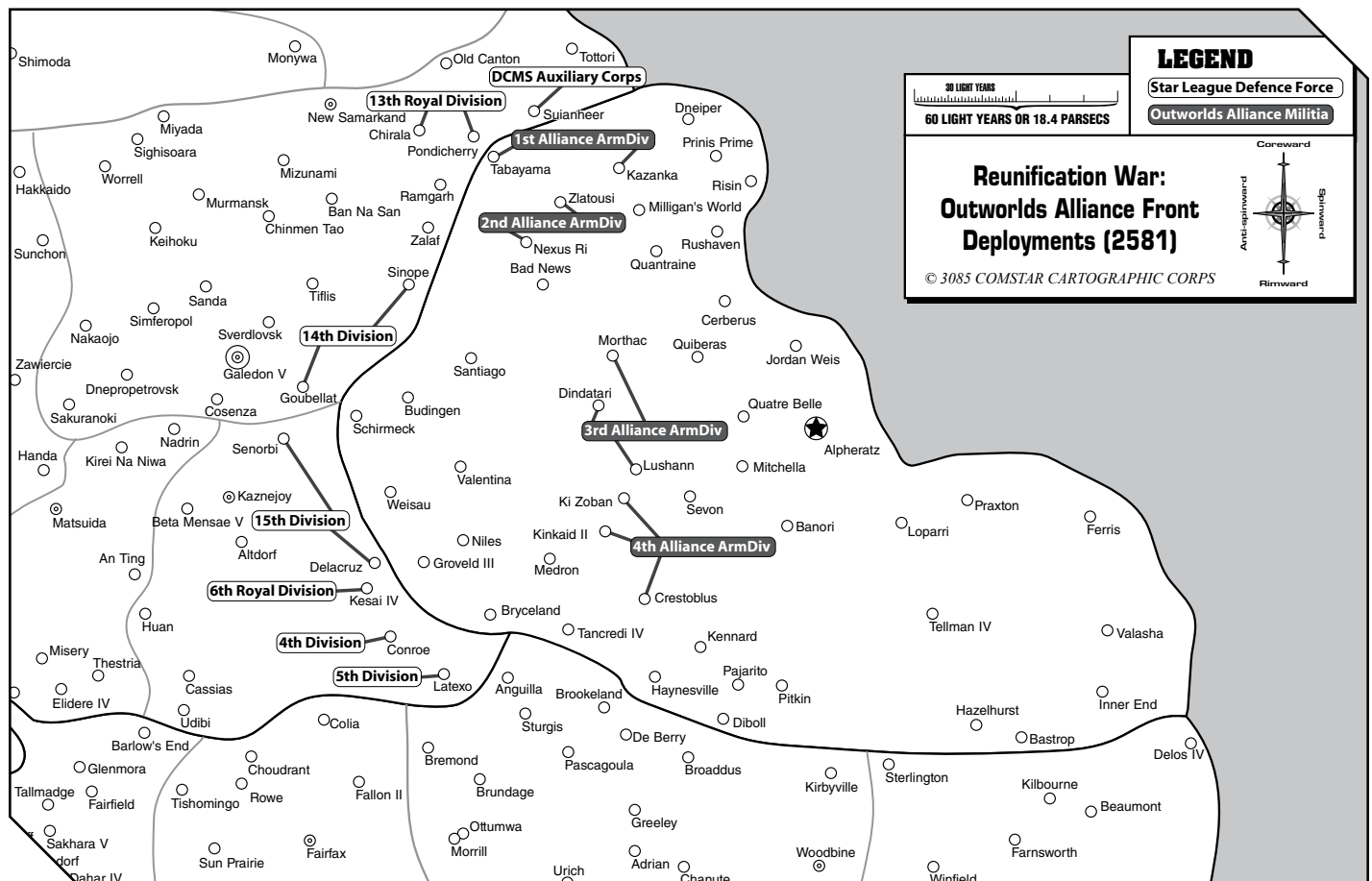
That the Star League's indomitable might would eventually turn towards the Outworlds Alliance, just as it had with the Taurian Concordat and the Magistracy of Canopus, was never in doubt. All knew it was simply a matter of time. The question looming over leaders in both the Alliance and the League was whether the pacifistic Outworlds Alliance could somehow preempt that inevitability and extract a cost the Star League was unable or unwilling to pay.

INEVITABLE HELL

For the people of the Outworlds Alliance, the Reunification War began when the first Star League troops set foot on their worlds in late 2572. The SLDF's mission to provide "mutual defense and

protection" against bands of outlaws and pirates in the region withstood no scrutiny; Directive 21 was nothing more than a diplomatic fabrication designed to justify the Star League's incursion into the Outworlds Alliance to uncover and destroy its nascent military.

Unfortunately for the Star League, and especially the Draconis Combine, Directive 21 turned into a political morass that briefly swayed popular support away from military action against the Periphery and gave pacifists even more examples of the still-forming SLDF's incompetence. Protests spread across both the Inner Sphere and the Periphery alike as news of the Santiago Massacre traveled from system to system. The greatest outcry against Star League expansion, of course, was in the Periphery, but First Lord Ian



SLDF TASK FORCE OUTWORLDS

Commander: General Amos Forlough

Constituent Units: SLDF II and V Corps; Draconis Combine Auxiliary Corps; SLDF Naval Task Force 82

Initial Force Strength:

BattleMech Regiments: 24

Armor Regiments: 22

Infantry Regiments: 29

Aerospace Regiments: 7 (not including naval aerospace assets)

WarShips: 31

SLDF II CORPS

Administrative HQ: Rigil Kentarus

Commander: General Amos Forlough

Force Strength: 9 BattleMech regiments, 9 armor regiments, 9 infantry regiments, 3 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Fourth Division, Fifth Division, Sixth Royal Division

Note: II Corps would later be redeployed to the Taurian front



SLDF V CORPS

Administrative HQ: Sirius

Commander: Major General Laszlo Hooker

Force Strength: 9 BattleMech regiments, 9 armor regiments, 9 infantry regiments, 3 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Thirteenth Royal Division, Fourteenth Division, Fifteenth Division

DRACONIS COMBINE AUXILIARY CORPS

Administrative HQ: Galedon

Commander: Sho-sho Masao Igushi

Force Strength: 6 BattleMech regiments, 4 armor regiments, 11 infantry regiments, 1 aerospace regiment

Constituent Units: Fourth Benjamin Regulars, Third Dieron Regulars, Fourth, Seventeenth, Nineteenth and Twenty-Fourth Galedon Regulars

OUTWORLDS ALLIANCE MILITIA

Commander: Chairman Welkens Nordd

Constituent Units: First Alliance BattleMech Regiment; First, Second, Third and Fourth Armored Divisions; various planetary militias

Initial Force Strength:

BattleMech Regiments: 1

Armor Regiments: 32

Infantry Regiments: 49

Aerospace Regiments: 4 (not including naval aerospace assets)

WarShips: 0

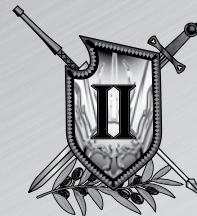
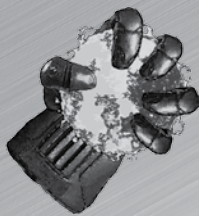
PITCAIRN LEGION

Commander: Colonel Elias Pitcairn

Initial Force Strength:

BattleMech Regiments: 3

Aerospace Regiments: 1



Cameron soon faced opposition on worlds throughout the League. Though neither strong nor coordinated enough to force a shift in policy, this opposition nonetheless required the First Lord and his Bureau of Star League Affairs to focus some of their attention away from the building war effort.

And that, combined with the overwhelming efforts the League was investing in the war against the Taurian Concordat, afforded the Outworlds Alliance the one critical resource it needed.

Time.

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

When Ian Cameron signed Directive 21, the Outworlds Alliance was a primarily agrarian nation with only the bare beginnings of a standing national defense force. Until the rise of piracy and brigandry that accompanied the formation of the Star League Defense Force (and the corresponding mass drawdowns of the member-states' militaries), the Alliance had no need for a standing military. The formative principles of the Alliance were self-reliance and disdain for the technologies of war. It posed no threat to its two neighbors, and had only expanded to the point in the previous quarter century that its outermost colonized worlds were within easy jump distance of the Combine's and Suns' border worlds—themselves mostly lightly populated.

For more than a century and a half each Alliance world had been responsible for its own defense, a matter typically left to the local constabulary, bolstered by a loose militia of able-bodied citizens who volunteered to step up in times of emergency. Those times were rare until the formation of the SLDF in 2571, when millions of suddenly-unemployed professional soldiers throughout the Inner Sphere were forced to find new avenues of employment. Every nation saw a sudden rise in pirate activity.

By mid 2572, new-Alliance President Grigori Avellar ordered the formation of the Alliance Militia. At first the Alliance Militia was armed primarily with tractors, WorkMechs and other industrial equipment modified to carry heavy weapons, but the Alliance had already embarked on a crash armament program—which included realigning his limited industry to manufacture armored vehicles as well as negotiations to purchase several companies of light BattleMechs to bolster capabilities.

Which, of course, led directly to Ian Cameron's Directive 21, designed to eliminate the Alliance's BattleMech "threat." The worlds of Bad News and Niles were occupied by SLDF forces in 2572, while the DCMS saw to Santiago.

GUNS AND DIPLOMATS

Avellar knew his Alliance could not hope to stand up against the mighty Star League military alone, but he also lacked viable options for diplomatic intercession or military assistance. Though allied in spirit, the other beleaguered Periphery nations were in no position to offer any help, and the propaganda originating from the six Star League member-states was anything but sympathetic.

Nonetheless Avellar soon found support. The very military drawdowns that led to his nation's problems also meant there

were many unemployed soldiers willing to sell their services, and the Outworlds Alliance proved particularly attractive to the most scrupulous of guns-for-hire.

Another unforeseen consequence of the cross-Sphere military drawdown and consolidation of the SLDF was that many long-time military industry giants—primarily those headquartered outside of the Terran Hegemony—were suddenly locked out of military procurement chains. While some remained profitable by fostering (or outright purchasing) contacts within the Star League's bureaucracy, many other Inner Sphere military manufacturers struggled with—or succumbed to—insolvency. Avellar was quick to take advantage of that situation, making under-the-table agreements with desperate armaments manufacturers who were willing to defy Star League bans against selling and shipping armaments to Periphery nations.

The people of the Alliance were well aware of the horrors of the League war against the Taurian Concordat, and knew that the Star League would sooner or later turn its attentions toward their Alliance. The majority nonetheless shunned the idea of military action and continued to advocate peaceable diplomacy. Local recruitment for the Militia was appallingly low, forcing Avellar to rely upon foreigners.

The President and his advisors knew that the intelligence agencies of the Star League would eventually discover their covert armaments program, though no one could have imagined that discovery would bring them into the most unlikely of alliances.

DAVION'S SCOURGES

Since the beginning of the Reunification War the Federated Suns had been locked in political battles with both the Capellan Confederation and the Draconis Combine. Both were taking advantage of the Federated Suns' political and economic weaknesses resulting from the its lengthy and costly civil war—concluded a decade earlier—as well as the current war against the Taurian Concordat, in which First Prince Alexander Davion's military had already suffered several humiliating defeats and significant losses in manpower and materiel.

On one side, the Capellan Confederation pushed for the repatriation of the world Chesterton (itself absorbed by the Federated Suns more than two centuries earlier and never actually possessed by the Capellan Confederation proper), a move Davion continued to block with little more than parliamentary procedure and guile. On the other side, Combine Coordinator Hehiro Kurita attempted to annex a number of Davion planets under the guise of placing garrison troops there, "relieving" the strain on the Davion military and allowing those AFFS troops to redeploy to the Taurian front; that the list of planets Kurita forwarded as possible options included some of the most bitterly-contested was lost on no one.

Unfortunately for Davion, First Lord Ian Cameron was under extreme pressure both at home and in the Council to bring a victorious end to the Taurian campaign, and Davion's influence with Cameron began to slip. His intelligence agencies already suspected that pirate activity on many Suns/Combine border worlds was being

incited by Kurita. In late 2578, they learned that several of their nation's military suppliers were illegally shipping arms outside of the Federation. Initially suspecting that Kurita was behind the plot, Davion's agents did indeed uncover evidence that Kurita was funding the pirates' arms acquisitions. But they also discovered Avellar's armaments program.

Rather than shut down Avellar's pipeline, Davion opted for a most unique alternative.

DAVION DIPLOMACY

At first, Davion halted all shipments bound for the Outworlds Alliance, but made no report to the Star League Council. He further sent word to Avellar that he would hold those shipments until he was assured that those arms would not be used against the Federated Suns or its citizens. That began several years of covert contact between the two leaders, ultimately leading to a secret meeting on Tancredi IV between Avellar and Lawrence Davion, Prince Alexander's youngest son, in March of 2579. There, the two initiated the most controversial alliance of the war.

Davion reopened the flow of weapons and materiel into the Alliance, using a long chain of shell companies to mask the origin and destination from prying eyes. Tancredi IV, a lightly populated world that had long wavered in allegiance between the Suns and the Alliance, continued to play a key role; now officially claimed by the Outworlds, it became the final destination for arms shipments before dispersal within the Alliance.

The two leaders continued their covert negotiations, via Lawrence Davion and Alliance Ambassador Amanda Sigur Consadine, for two more years. First Prince Alexander Davion blocked repeated Capellan and Combine political assaults. The SLDF continued its Taurian campaign and, in 2577, opened a second front against the Magistracy of Canopus. It was clear to both Avellar and Davion that they had to act decisively to ensure their own national interests were protected. So, even as the SLDF moved troops into position along the Alliance border, the two leaders—through their intermediaries—concluded their negotiations with a formal (if still secret) agreement.

Signed 5 June 2581 on New Avalon, the Tancredi Accord pledged twelve water-rich (if lightly populated and unindustrialized) Alliance worlds to the Federated Suns in exchange for covert military aid and pledging to support a fair peace solution for the Alliance within the Star League Council.

BUILDUP

When the SLDF began enforcing Directive 21 in 2572, conventional wisdom within the high command held that an invasion of the four Periphery realms would be complete within eighteen months and that the Star League member-states would be required to provide minimal additional auxiliary forces and logistical support.

Of course, that was long before the reality of the Reunification War became evident.

SLDF EFFORTS

The duty of enforcing Directive 21 initially fell to the SLDF's VI Corps, supported by a regiment of Kurita's Galedon Regulars. VI Corps also would have formed the bulk of the SLDF's Outworlds Alliance invasion force. But as the Taurian campaign quickly grew fierce and losses mounted seemingly exponentially, VI Corps was transferred to the Taurian front while II Corps assumed responsibility along the Combine-Outworlds border. With it came II Corps' new commanding general, Major General Amos Forlough, who assumed responsibility for Operation UNION HOLD—the Star League military campaign against the Outworlds Alliance.

He immediately scrapped the existing invasion plans. Using battle reports from the Taurian Front, combined with feedback his own logisticians gave him, he and his staff constructed an entirely new plan—one that required two full SLDF corps and a third auxiliary corps. Just as importantly, it required a logistical tail that the SLDF didn't yet possess—even on the Taurian Front.

THE SHADOW OF CHESTERTON

First Lord Ian Cameron was perhaps the ultimate politician (though like any skilled politician, he was often two-faced). How else could he have convinced his five most powerful rivals to join an interstellar alliance with himself at its head? But where he truly excelled was his ability to convince an opponent to support his side and make that opponent believe it had really been his own idea.

Those abilities made him Director-General of the Terran Hegemony, and later allowed him to become the First Lord of the Star League. When in the company, however, of other outstanding politicians—such as his fellow members of the Star League Council—those very abilities occasionally become his greatest liability.

Once the Free Worlds League ceded control of Andurien to the Capellans in 2556, leading to Chancellor Terrence Liao's support for the Star League, Liao laid claim to the worlds of the former Chesterton Trade Federation, which had been absorbed by the Federated Suns some two centuries earlier. Cameron promised Liao his support for the annexation of Chesterton "when the time was right."

For Terrence Liao's daughter Ursula, the time was right when it came to her support for the Reunification War. Needing the Confederation, Cameron argued in her favor, while at the same time privately promising First Prince Alexander Davion that the Liaos would never take Chesterton. Cameron's personal journals were clear on the matter: he, in fact, did *not* support what he considered Liao's "ludicrous and specious claims to Chesterton," and his maneuvers behind the scenes ensured that Davion continued to block furtherance of the question within the Council.

Cameron believed he could control both rival leaders, but failed to consider Davion's resolve or anger. Having taken control of his own nation through civil war, Davion himself was both a gifted politician and a talented strategist. Unsure of Cameron's true motives, Davion needed to put an end to Liao's attempts to grab Chesterton while also punishing Cameron.

The latter led directly to Davion's (mostly) covert economic, military and political support of the Outworlds Alliance during the Reunification War. As for the former, after six years of blocking Liao's attempts to annex Chesterton through Council directive, Davion brought the matter to a final head: Liao's Star League Council Resolution 081-39 was defeated 4-2. Davion, along with Steiner, Marik and even Kurita voted the resolution down, and immediately passed Resolution 081-42, preventing any nation from claiming by League resolution territory lost prior to the formation of the Star League. In a Cameron-like move, Davion had maneuvered Kurita into picking his side.

Publicly, Cameron raged. Privately, he was impressed.

—Dr. H.J. Farnsworth, *1001 Strange Twists of Fate During the Star League Era*, Express Publishing, 3010

The climactic Battle of Robsart in March of 2581 signaled the beginning of the end for the Taurian Concordat and allowed the SLDF to finally shift some of its focus to the Outworlds Alliance. Forlough had already been stockpiling supplies throughout the Draconis Combine, but with the destruction of the Taurian navy at Robsart, he could finally draw upon the SLDF's full support system. V Corps, which had been held in reserve should it be needed on either the Taurian or Canopian fronts, took up station along the Combine-Alliance border.

By mid-July Forlough had two SLDF corps, as well as a division of Combine troops, positioned to strike at the Outworlds Alliance. Forlough's own II Corps occupied a relatively narrow front between Latexo and Kesai IV; V Corps had responsibility for a broad front, running from Delacruz to Pondicherry; the Combine auxiliary division stood ready on Suianheer. Forlough positioned his troops wholly within the Draconis Combine to better focus his invasion efforts, and especially to give his own II Corps a small front from which they could strike quickly into the heart of the Outworlds Alliance. He was also constrained politically in these deployments, as any strikes from Federated Suns space would require the cooperation and participation of Davion's military. Neither Davion nor Kurita were willing share that responsibility—or glory—with each other.

ALLIANCE PREPARATIONS

Of course, Davion also had ulterior motives for keeping Forlough's troops from his worlds. Even as the SLDF High Command petitioned Davion for permission to stage its troops within Federated Suns territory, Davion and Avellar were concluding their negotiations with each other.

Thanks to the initial agreements reached on Tancredi IV, the Outworlds Alliance was able to outfit and field four armored divisions of its own, as well as four full BattleMech battalions—all of which were manned by a significant percentage of experienced foreign troops. Additionally, light and medium tank battalions were stationed on most Alliance worlds, giving local militias some additional measure of defense. The Alliance built surplus war stock, distributing that stock so that Alliance troops could have readily available fall-back positions.

The Alliance's most significant gain came in the eleventh hour as a direct result of the Tancredi Accord. Prince Davion provided the Alliance a weapon of unequalled potential—the Pitcairn Legion. Taking its name from commanding officer Colonel Elias Pitcairn, the Legion consisted of three full BattleMech regiments—its members and equipment recruited from the rolls of Davion's personal guard, and outfitted with full aerospace support.

Unfortunately, the Pitcairn Legion would not be available to Avellar until late 2581, leaving the defense of the Alliance solely to its own forces until then. Chairman Welkens Nordd, appointed by President Avellar as his military chief, deployed his four divisions to face the Star League threat, but focused his defense upon the Alliance's core. The First and Second Divisions took up station in the Alliance's coreward sector, defending Nexus Ri, Tabayama, Kanzaka, and the worlds spinward. The Third and Fourth Divisions defended

a line of worlds from Morthac to Crestobulus. Chairman Nordd also pulled what militia he could from worlds bordering the Federated Suns—each of which was eventually scheduled to be ceded to the Suns—and used those forces to help bolster the militias along the Combine frontier. He instructed each of his Militia chairmen to build what defensive works they could around their key cities and facilities.

It wasn't much, and neither Avellar nor Nordd believed their defensive perimeter could stop the Star League. But they hoped it would be enough to hold out for peace.

YEAR ONE: TENTATIVE STEPS

Major General Amos Forlough could be best described as a force of nature; he was outspoken, ruthless, tempestuous, and absolutely hated incompetence. He tirelessly rode his subordinate commanders to prepare their troops for battle, and especially emphasized that, as proven on the Taurian front, the "disorganized and untrained Periphery masses" could, in fact, cause the mighty SLDF trouble. To Forlough, complacency and ignorance were weapons that his troops would wield against themselves unless *everyone*, from the commanding general to the lowest private, maintained their vigilance.

Nevertheless, Forlough's battle plans were tempered by Star League experiences in the Taurian Concordat. A speedy campaign plan was replaced by caution and overwhelming force—or at least what the SLDF assumed would be overwhelming force. Forlough possessed a massive army at his fingertips; he had just about everything he had asked for except a WarShip fleet. The League's battle fleets were still deployed elsewhere in the Periphery hunting down rogue enemy WarShips. But since the Outworlds Alliance possessed not a single powerful capital ship, even Forlough didn't complain.

The Battle of Robsart in March 2581 broke the back of the Taurian navy, allowing the Star League to free up troops and supplies that would have been held in reserve on the Taurian front. The Star League Council approved the invasion of the Outworlds Alliance on 6 July 2581. Forlough received the order to launch Operation UNION HOLD three days later by courier.

FAIT ACCOMPLISHED

The SLDF's first official actions in the war against the Outworlds Alliance were simply to consolidate their holds over three worlds "peaceably occupied" almost nine years earlier when Directive 21 was enacted.

Two battalions—one BattleMech and one infantry—of SLDF VI Corps troops had landed on Bad News and Niles in November 2572 (24 November and 11 November, respectively) to enforce Directive 21. For the most part, the SLDF troops went about their tasks conscientiously, being careful to not alienate the peoples they would ultimately claim as their own. The Combine's Seventeenth Galedon Regulars—assigned to Santiago—cared little for the people of Santiago and their property, in the course sparking the Santiago Massacre and its aftermath.

Between 2572 and 2577, VI Corps rotated its troops on Bad News and Niles every year, a practice ended by Forlough, who strengthened the garrisons on each world by one battalion of infantry and reduced rotations to once every two years. By 2581, the SLDF garrisons knew their “adopted” worlds and peoples well, and within days converted their *de facto* control of the worlds to actual. The local militias, already cowed by the League troops, were easily disarmed. A full SLDF division moved onto each, readying for an eventual move deeper into the Alliance.

Niles remained relatively peaceable throughout the war, experiencing only occasional and isolated resistance attacks. Bad News did see action in the third year of the war.

SANTIAGO

On Santiago, the process was far more difficult. Since their arrival in 2572 the Combine’s high-handed and bullying tactics had turned the people against them. It was unsafe for Combine troopers to venture out of their compounds alone; sniper and terror bombing attacks against the Combine occupation forces were common in the first several years of occupation. These instigated bloody reprisals, which only escalated the tit-for-tat bodycount. It was common to see the Santiago Militia in a firefight with Galedon Regulars over an altercation that started when either a Santiago citizen or a Combine soldier insulted or spat on the other.

By the end of the 2570s, though, the constant battling had mostly ended, with the Combine having either crippled the resistance effort or driven its members into Santiago’s wide unpopulated regions. The rest of the Seventeenth Galedon arrived at the end of July 2581 to little public fanfare.

Starting in early September 2581, and lasting until well after the war, Chairman Nordd ensured covert drops of arms, supplies, and occasionally commandos to the Santiago resistance every several months. The Combine or SLDF, of course, intercepted many of these shipments, but just as many made their way through—including many on Combine ships hired through covert Davion agents.

The Santiago resistance managed to kill an estimated 900 Combine personnel, including three governors and one garrison commander, and wound more than 2,000 more. In response, the Combine executed—officially—some 1,200 “terrorists” and sent four times as many to off-world prisons (sources vary on these numbers; some investigations claim double the number were executed and more than 10,000 sent to Kurita gulags). Another 5,000 citizens were executed in the wake of General Forlough’s orders in November of 2581. Through it all, the citizens of Santiago continued to resist the Combine occupation, and just as importantly provided continued inspiration for resistance across the nation. The Alliance continued to support the Santiago resistance until well into the first decade of the Twenty-seventh Century.



FIRST STRIKES

The first actual attacks of the Outworlds front were carried out by General Forlough's own II Corps, under his direct supervision. The entirety of II Corps launched from its temporary homeworlds on Conroe, Kesai IV and Latexo and moved into the Outworlds Alliance. The majority took up position on Niles, though one brigade each targeted the border worlds of Bryceland and Groveld III.

BRYCELAND

Forlough's Fourteenth Brigade grounded on Bryceland on 26 July, surrounding the planetary capital of Golden Bay. Lieutenant General Kern Peleshenko announced his brigade's presence upon jumping into the system, and as his DropShips entered orbit, went so far as to announce his landing zones and orders of battle.

Planetary Defense Chairman Annemieke Friexa had seven companies of mixed light and medium armor, a regiment of 600 Bryceland infantry militiamen and another several hundred volunteers. Unable to hide her troop movements from the SLDF's reconnaissance flights, she lined up on her defensive lines and waited for the inevitable, keeping two companies of medium armor as her mobile reserve.

Peleshenko's troops made a few probing attacks the next day, gauging Friexa's defenses before making their full attack on the 28th. There was no question of the outcome; the SLDF forces had the city surrounded. Within ten minutes, four companies of 'Mechs were rampaging through the Alliance lines, and within thirty, most of the infantry had broken. That left the militia armor, which was picked apart by the SLDF 'Mechs and armor.

Bryceland's governor officially surrendered the planet a day later. General Peleshenko refit and rearmed his brigade, tasking his Fifty-sixth Regiment as planetary garrison.

GROVELD III

Like Bryceland, Groveld III was defended by two battalions of Alliance armor and a single regiment of militia infantrymen. And like Bryceland, it was attacked by a full brigade of SLDF troops. But unlike Bryceland, tiny mining camps were the norm for Groveld III, and Planetary Defense Chairman Samuel Steading used that to his advantage. He deployed his militia force into two demi-regiments, determined to fight a guerrilla campaign.

The SLDF's Fifteenth Brigade landed on 24 July on the Viking Flats. Their scouts only met Groveld's defenders twice in indecisive company-size engagements during the first week. It was another week before Chairman Steading's troops appeared again, in this case ambushing a light scouting 'Mech and armor company with a full battalion of armor on the St. Adrian Plains. Only two Star League 'Mechs escaped, but while the Groveld militia stole away unseen, SLDF Lieutenant General Nathan Sóbis knew where to look for his opponent. The hunt lasted another week, during which time each side lost a company of armor. The Second Groveld Armored Battalion died at the Tabatt Scar, taking a lance of 'Mechs and another company of armor with them.

That left the First Groveld Armored Battalion, which had yet to make a significant appearance. Since Sóbis' grounding the First Battalion, supported by several hundred militia infantry, went to ground and came out at various well-separated locations to make ambush attacks. Between the end of July and the end of August the militia pushed two dozen engagements, inflicting damage and casualties on the SLDF but themselves suffering losses. It took Sóbis' troops until the end of September to verify the destruction of all but a handful of militia armor—giving Chairman Steading the only victory he could have possibly claimed: tying up the SLDF troops for as long as possible.

HEADLINES FROM THE STARS

"WAR STRIKES HOME"

Alpheratz Free Press, 27 July 2581

"INVASION!"

Terra News Service, 29 July 2581

"STAR LEAGUE FLEXES MUSCLE"

Federated News, 30 July 2581

"TIME HAS COME FOR THE OUTWORLDS"

Luthien Press Interstellar, 31 July 2581

"CAMERON'S ILLEGAL WAR STRIKES PEACEFUL OUTWORLDS"

Pleiades Star News, 1 August 2581

"BLOODBATH IN THE ALLIANCE"

Atreus News, 3 August 2581

"IMMORAL, ILLEGAL AND IRREDEEMABLE"

Canopus Information Service, 4 August 2581

"CAMERON INVADES OUTWORLDS ALLIANCE"

Tharkad Press, 5 August 2581

"TODAY THE OUTWORLDS, TOMORROW APOLLO"

Rim News Agency, 8 August 2581

ACROSS A WIDE FRONT

Major General Laszlo Hooker's V Corps took a few additional days to jump off on their initial strikes, a fact that Forlough raged about in daily dispatches. Unconcerned with the additional distances involved in V Corps much larger front, Forlough looked only for results—which he began to receive in August 2581.

At the same time, the Combine auxiliary brigade—four regiments of Galedon Regulars, including the Seventeenth on Santiago—likewise received orders to move.

SCHIRMAK

The SLDF's Forty-fourth Brigade landed on Schirmack on 4 August to face little more than a perfunctory defensive line. With little in the way of industry and all-but-nonexistent logistical assistance, most of Schirmack's four companies of light armor were inoperable due to poor maintenance. The few operational tanks lined up outside Schirmack City along with a few hundred infantry inside hastily constructed defense works.

SLDF Lieutenant General Simone di Martino, unwilling to turn the obviously one-sided battle into a bloodbath, ordered her troops to use extreme discretion. Two companies of SLDF light 'Mechs advanced and flanked the Alliance works, disabling every tank and gun nest within minutes. A company of mechanized infantry followed to root out the last defenders and disarm the militia. Within an hour the operation was complete, with just eleven KIA (including one SLDF soldier) and 107 WIA (including fifteen SLDF soldiers).

The SLDF 156th Regiment took up position as the planetary garrison, but within weeks rearmed much of the militia, who returned to policing the planet. With the arrival of the first Star League supply ships in October, the world's good relationship with their Star League conquerors was cemented.

TABAYAMA

Chairman Nordd had positioned two of his First Division's armored battalions on Tabayama, reinforcing the light battalion already defending the world. Ordered to construct defensive works around the planet, the First Division troops ran afoul of both Tabayama's local governor and its population. Governor Hiroshi Bartusiak saw Nordd's additional troops as a threat to his dominance over the world, while the pacifistic farmers and miners believed that the presence of the troops would only encourage Star League aggression. Bartusiak also had a covert pro-Kurita agenda, one he believed would protect his world. In fact, it was his private communications with neighboring Combine governors and government officials that prompted the Kurita brigade commander, *Sho-sho* Masao Igushi, to request Tabayama as one of his targets.

When the Fourth Galedon Regulars reached Tabayama on 11 August, Chairman Elaine Perez, commanding the First Division detachments, was still battling with Governor Bartusiak for enough manpower and materials to bolster the world's defenses. Spread across the planet's population centers, Perez's troops were in no position to counter the Fourth Galedon or Governor Bartusiak's surrender of the world. After Bartusiak pointed out the presence of the First Division troops, and especially their grounded DropShips, Perez's troops suddenly lost their best option for support and survival.

Still, Perez found she had more support on Tabayama than she originally believed; after Bartusiak's surrender, citizens across the planet came out against Bartusiak and his allies. Protests erupted in most major communities and outside every Combine encampment. The resulting turmoil allowed Perez to regroup her troops—as well as militia and civilian supporters alike—and launch

a series of spoiling attacks. Perez knew her two battalions had little hope of inflicting serious damage to the full regiment of Galedon Regulars BattleMechs, but with her DropShips seized retreat was not an option.

Perez and her troops continued their strategy of raiding for two weeks, covered by the protests and strikes raging across Tabayama. After two failed assassination attempts on Governor Bartusiak, the Galedon Regulars turned vicious; just as on Santiago, they used live fire and mass BattleMech maneuvers to break up the protests. The planetary death toll tripled overnight. On 29 August a mass protest in Yamabad ended in 400 dead. Perez ordered her battalions to attack the city garrison two days later, leaving ten Kurita 'Mechs and twenty-seven Alliance tanks destroyed. That action left Perez in charge of the city, including its spaceport and cargo DropShips. The Fourth Galedon counterattacked thirty-six hours later with a battalion of 'Mechs. Over the course of the two hour battle, Perez collapsed her lines on the spaceport, ultimately withdrawing two companies of operational tanks and more than 2,000 citizens from the world.

Protests against Bartusiak continued through the end of the year, when he and his entire administration were replaced by a Combine governor. Bartusiak was murdered just two weeks later. The people of Tabayama continued to protest the Combine occupation off and on throughout the rest of the war, but the execution of 1,000 random citizens in December tempered the unrest, and by the end of 2583 the mass influx of Combine settlers began to turn the tide.

WEISAU

Weisau, like its two closest neighbors of Groveld and Schirmack, was horribly undefended. But unlike those other two worlds, it was primarily a mining world with a hostile and particularly stormy atmosphere. The militia could officially claim five companies of armor and 500 infantrymen, but what that didn't take into account were the tens of thousands of miners in more than a hundred locations, most of whom were more than willing to protect their claims with the copious explosives, tools and heavy vehicles at their disposal. On the other hand, as strip mining was the primary method of Weisau's residents, the battles for the planet would be fought on its surface.

SLDF Lieutenant General Clay Strombergs knew the battles for the mines would be both difficult and time-consuming, but time was on his side. Weisau depended on regular imports of food and he could easily sever those supply lines and starve out Weisau's defenders.

Strombergs' troops landed on 2 August and made lightning strikes against the four largest targets, each a transportation hub and spaceport. Two companies of 'Mechs dropped onto each target, supported by two infantry companies likewise dropped minutes later. The dropping 'Mechs and infantry squads were literally scattered to the wind, but enough dropped close to their targets that the spaceports and transfer stations were all captured within the first thirty minutes. Once those were secured, the rest of Strombergs' forces landed, taking the surrounding communities and facilities with few problems.

THE PITCAIRN QUESTION

The legend of the Pitcairn Legion is well known in the Federated Suns. Even the youngest schoolchildren know the story of how Colonel Pitcairn led three regiments of volunteer MechWarriors against the brutal General Amos Forlough and his Kurita allies, protecting the peace-minded peoples of the Outworlds Alliance. Eventually, they may even learn that Prince Alexander Davion raised the Pitcairn Legion to assist the Outworlds Alliance, which agreed to cede several worlds to the Federated Suns in exchange for Davion's support.

Those stories lead to a dichotomy. On one hand, the stories say volunteers from Davion's personal guard heeded their Prince's call to form a mercenary unit that would fight for the Outworlds Alliance. On the other hand, the stories say they were soldiers of the Federated Suns under orders from their Prince. A fine distinction, yes, but one that bears further scrutiny.

Legally, the matter is muddled. The members of Pitcairn's Legion were all members of the Armed Forces of the Federated Suns, but all either transferred to the reserve rolls or retired; Pitcairn himself retired, drawing a pension throughout the war. Likewise, all of their equipment came from AFFS sources, and was transferred into a special holding unit for accounting purposes. Even the supplies they "seized" from Federated Suns sources during the war were not listed as lost or stolen but were transferred to the same holding unit.

Throughout the war, both Pitcairn and his Prince alternately claimed the Legion was a part of the AFFS or an independent mercenary unit in the employ of the Outworlds Alliance. Which story they told depended entirely upon what best suited their situation. Whenever the Legion was about to engage in combat against SLDF or Kurita troops, they were an AFFS unit that had claimed the world in the name of Prince Davion and their Star League. Yet when Davion found himself under attack in the League Council, Pitcairn and his troops were deserters and outlaws, though they were still citizens of the Federated Suns—and thus could only be punished for their "crimes" by Davion's courts.

Were their actions during the war, their many attacks upon SLDF and DCMS forces, legal? Could Prince Davion have been charged with treason? Who was responsible for leaking classified SLDF intelligence—such as [General Amos] Forlough's timetables and orders of battle for the Sevon assault, and who should have been punished? These were all questions voiced by SLDF generals and Star League Council members, questions that Ian Cameron and Alexander Davion both ensured would never have to be answered officially.

—Samil Cavanaugh-Reese, *Davion's Might: Military-Political Maneuvers of the Davion Princes*, New Avalon Press, 3052

General Strombergs pursued a two-pronged strategy for neutralizing the world's remaining defenders. He choked off the flow of food and other supplies across the planet, but promised amnesty to any defenders that turned in their weapons. His troops took up positions to respond to any hold-out target.

The waiting game began. Half a dozen smaller mining communities folded within two weeks, but when Weisau-Gorbbels Mining Cooperative—one of the largest groups on the world—agreed in early-September to Star League oversight in exchange for a lucrative contract, all hell seemed to break loose. For the next week dozens of mining concerns scrambled to get the same kind of deal, while just as many launched punitive raids against both the SLDF encampments as well as their former allies, forcing Strombergs' regiments to respond. With ally and foe already difficult enough to distinguish, and with the addition of severe weather to the mix, life on Weisau soon resembled the storms that dominated its atmosphere. The largest and most organized mining concerns used the chaos to launch more raids, securing supplies to help them hold out.

By October the worst was over. Over seventy communities and mining concerns were in Star League hands, and dozens more had been wiped out in the chaos—either destroyed in fighting or completely abandoned. More than thirty continued to hold out, and General Forlough was rapidly running out of patience when it came to pacifying the world.

General Strombergs launched three major assaults on 8 October, each aimed at completely destroying a particularly resilient opponent. By 10 October, each of those battles was over; both sides suffered casualties and serious damage, but while Strombergs' forces could easily recover, his opponents could not. Gorch Canyon and DiSalvo Mines were the worst scenes, both littered with the smashed bodies and destroyed equipment of their former defenders. Those sights would be re-created seventeen more times before the final holdouts capitulated or were wiped out.

Leftenant General Strombergs declared Weisau pacified on 17 November, though small groups continued to hold out until the end of the year. His own losses were moderate, but his three regiments would require several additional weeks to repair all of the equipment damage caused by the miners of Weisau.

DEEP STRIKE

Reports detailing the first six weeks of the Alliance invasion gave General Forlough hope that he and his forces could end the war quickly. He knew that the Outworlds Alliance possessed a far stronger defense force than any of his units had yet seen, but he also knew that if he continued to attack one world at a time, he would continue to draw the war out and his enemy would sooner or later get the drop on his troops.

Forlough prepared his II Corps for a deep strike at the Alliance homeworld of Alpheratz. He embarked his Fourth and Sixth Royal Divisions and pointed them toward Sevon—their first and only stop before Alpheratz. He fully expected to meet the Alliance's new defenders there, though the appearance of the Pitcairn Legion sent a shock through the entire II Corps.

SEVON

In the Twenty-sixth century, Sevon was a moderately populated world of farmers, ranchers and miners, with a slowly-growing industrial base focused primarily on food packaging and the processing of minerals and ores. In the spirit of the Ommiss that founded the Alliance all but the most necessary advanced technologies were shunned. The people of Sevon were dedicated to their way of life and their freedoms, which is why they reluctantly accepted the assignment of both Alliance armor and even BattleMechs to their defense. Planetary Defense Chairman Tobias Koot had charge of a militia including two battalions of armor and two regiments of volunteer infantry. Fourth Division's Chairman Khasan Parry led a mixed regiment of armor and infantry, supported by two companies of Alliance BattleMechs and even two squadrons of aerospace fighters.

General Forlough's intelligence analysts reported most of that information, which is why he was confident his Fourth and Sixth Divisions would have no difficulty in conquering Sevon before moving on to Alpheratz. In personal command of the operation, Forlough and his invasion force landed on Sevon on 3 October 2581 to the greatest surprise of the general's career.

Colonel Elias Pitcairn contacted Forlough as soon as the SLDF force landed and, in his full Davion Guards uniform, informed the general that Sevon was a Federated Suns protectorate and demanded that the SLDF leave immediately. A Federated Suns flag was even flying over Sevon's capital.

An enraged Forlough ordered his troops to attack.

Forlough had only a few companies of BattleMechs and infantry on the ground (dropped to secure his LZs), supported by a high combat air patrol (CAP). He never for once considered that Pitcairn, or the company of BattleMechs in Federated Suns colors facing his troops, was anything but a decoy. The picket line facing them suddenly turned into more than a regiment of mixed Pitcairn Legion BattleMechs and Alliance armor. Pitcairn's MechWarriors surrounded the SLDF advance and, in just thirty minutes of combat in and around the small hamlet of Camden Fields, halted the SLDF advance.

Meanwhile, Pitcairn's other two regiments attacked the Sixth Royal Division's LZ. Two of Pitcairn's fighter wings intercepted Forlough's CAP, while his remaining fighters teamed with the Alliance Fourth Division fighters to assault the SLDF LZ. Less than a quarter of the Sixth Royal tanks and 'Mechs had disembarked their DropShips when Pitcairn's assault struck, but those that had quickly formed a defensive perimeter around their LZ.

Pitcairn's combined force focused on destroying every 'Mech and tank that the Sixth Royal Division scrambled to unload from their DropShips. They advanced forward only enough to attack the LZ directly and, more importantly, to give recovery crews a safe enough margin to salvage what SLDF equipment it could.

Pitcairn fully expected a counterattack from the SLDF Fourth Division, which had grounded nearby. That attack came hours later than he'd planned, but when it did it was decisive—two full SLDF brigades advanced. Colonel Pitcairn, whose troops had been in battle for the bulk of the day and were dangerously low on ammunition, chose discretion over valor and ceded the field. Over the course of that day, his Legion had wrecked six of Forlough's DropShips and smashed more than two hundred total 'Mechs and tanks—leaving the mighty Sixth Royal Division in a shambles.

An incensed Forlough immediately placed a million Star League dollar bounty on Pitcairn's head and demanded, in dispatches to Commanding General Carlos Lee, that House Davion be punished for this "conspicuous damnable act of war." He also ordered the Fourth Division to embark on a search-and-destroy mission for Pitcairn and his "outlaws."

Pitcairn licked his wounds for a few days, recouping his losses with equipment salvaged from the Sixth Royal Division, before once again taking the offensive. He dispatched small 'Mech and armor detachments on reconnaissance raids and spoiling attacks across a wide expanse of territory to keep Forlough off balance. The Legion made its second major appearance on 7 October. Attacking from hidden positions within the western OberSevon roughlands, Pitcairn struck two SLDF columns searching the region's numerous mining co-ops and trading towns. Both columns turned and broke within an hour, leading to a running battle that ended at Big Tusk, where Forlough managed to drop two battalions of his own BattleMechs.

Over the course of the next three days both sides added units to the battle, which ultimately involved nearly their entire combat-ready forces on-planet. After the first two days it was clear that the battle was a stalemate, but Pitcairn and Forlough nonetheless continued for three more days, each attempting to gain an advantage over the other. On the morning of the 12th, both Forlough and Pitcairn received joint messages from First Lord Cameron and Prince Davion, ordering them to break off their attacks until the "question of Sevon could be determined" politically.

THE MAD GENERAL

The following entries are excerpts from General Amos Forlough's reports to Commanding General Carlos Lee as well as from his personal diaries and communications to his wife.

03OCT81: Am encountering strong resistance today. Intelligence estimates enemy strength between two to five BattleMech regiments, supported by two armor regiments and at least one aerospace regiment. Enemy claims to be a Davion force, and that Sevon is under Davion rule. I don't for once believe this idiocy. The enemy commander dressed as a Davion colonel, and painted three companies of 'Mechs in Davion colors. They fight integrated with Alliance forces, but display a significant higher quality of training and equipment.

04OCT81: House Davion's interference is a conspicuous damnable act of war, and should be immediately answered in kind. They prove time and again that they cannot stand up to the damned Taurians, so they try this? Elias Pitcairn is now a wanted man with a price on his head. His so-called allies will deliver his head on a platter, and his thugs won't be able to save him.

06OCT81: They run and hide like cowards. It's clear to me why Davion is so ineffectual against the Taurians.

07OCT81: The two decoy companies we put into sector 77-12 drew them out. Tenth Brigade will meet them soon.

10OCT81: Big Horn is a mess. Neither of us can seem to get the advantage for very long, but at least we are grinding them down. I cannot justify sending any more men into that cauldron unless we can somehow flank them without their scouts or fighters seeing. As long as they stay engaged, we'll run them down while I rotate battalions on and off the line.

12OCT81: A goddamn truce! Get these vultures off my back and let me do my damned job. I can keep them bottled there until they bash their heads into pulp. I'll wipe them off this cack-hole of a planet then.

14OCT81: Orders received and strenuously objected to! Our supposed allies have inflicted more than 5,000 casualties and 1 billion dollars in damage.

15OCT81: Kurita's Galedon Regulars are inbound and should arrive in about ten days. I don't like it, but they were the closest forces I have available. Besides, [V Corps Commander Major General] Hooker couldn't light a fire under his troops with a nuke.

27OCT81: Enemy redoubt surrounded. Currently reducing enemy redoubt.

29OCT81: Enemy retreated. Militia is disarmed. Sevon is under SLDF control. Fourth and Sixth Divisions undergoing repair and refit.

17NOV81: You're kidding me! Who the goddamn hell is running this war, an idiot and his twin moron? Orders strenuously objected to! This will put us at least six months behind schedule and probably extend the war by five years.

Under the flag of this imposed truce, Colonel Pitcairn contacted Forlough and attempted to convince him that they were, in reality, both allies in this war. A skeptical Forlough agreed that both forces would withdraw from the strategically unimportant Big Tusk area and return to their respective strongholds. Forlough did not believe Pitcairn's story, especially as he had commanded Alliance troops throughout their hostilities, but he needed time both to prepare his next move and to repair and refit his forces.

The uneasy truce lasted thirteen days, during which time the two forces occasionally traded fire and several times attempted to breach the other's lines with covert reconnaissance. The balance of power shifted significantly on the 26th, when three Galedon Regulars BattleMech regiments—the Nineteenth, Twenty-fourth and elements of the Seventeenth—landed to reinforce Forlough.

This was the inevitable that Pitcairn was expecting. He, his Legion and their Alliance allies had given the SLDF its first true defeats, but they could not hold out against Forlough, now reinforced by almost 300 additional Kurita BattleMechs. Forlough pressed a wide and deep attack against Semal, where both the Pitcairn Legion's and the Fourth Alliance Armored Division's HQs and DropShips were located. Forlough's advance easily surrounded the city, but the defenders held the assaults back for a day, by which time President Avellar had authorized the withdrawal of his Fourth Division troops.

Pitcairn's Legion fought a brilliant rearguard action against the relatively fresh Galedon Regulars, using the city's narrow streets, coupled with select artillery and air strikes, to bottle up their opponents. Pitcairn's final DropShips launched at 23:12 local time on the 28th, leaving Sevon in Forlough's hands.

The general had little difficulty crushing the last remnants of the Sevon Militia. The Sevon system, however, remained contested throughout the remainder of the war, and the planet itself never fully capitulated to Forlough or the SLDF. Alliance Militia Chairman Nordd regularly dispatched fighter and DropShip squadrons to the system, ensuring they would interfere with Star League shipping and troop movements. Likewise, shipments of food and raw materials destined for Star League hands on the world itself often disappeared, as did citizens who willingly worked with League interests.

MEDRON

While Forlough plunged deeply into the heart of the Outworlds Alliance with his Fourth and Sixth Royal Divisions, the Fifth Division was left behind to guard the II Corps region. Major General Angelo Rucker, commanding Fifth Division, used this time to consolidate but as soon as Forlough was forced to halt operations on Sevon he ordered Rucker into action. Rucker dispatched his Thirteenth Brigade, under the command of Lieutenant General Remy Mallet, to secure Medron—a primarily agricultural world, but one with a strong industrial base.

Mallet's heavy assault brigade began landing on 28 October, and immediately met an enemy commander determined to hold out as long as possible. Chairman Kerron Raty, prior to emigrating

to the Outworlds Alliance to become a farmer, spent a decade of his life as a tank commander within the Kurita military. He organized the world's militia to quickly respond to pirate activity. He was also a loud advocate for strengthening the Alliance border against a Star League invasion. In return, he received more support from Nordd than any other border world militia commander.

Raty personally organized four battalions of fast armor, each consisting of about twenty actual fast light and medium tanks along with another thirty vehicles converted to carry additional armor and heavy weapons. He also ensured that the two regiments of infantry had enough vehicles to carry their entire complements, and even standardized their weapons so that everyone could utilize the same ammunition stores.

Chairman Raty did not pursue a direct military campaign against Mallet, instead preferring hit-and-run tactics. He used militia scouts and civilian reports to pinpoint the location of Mallet's forces, and then his superior mobility to strike at isolated and small SLDF formations. Over the course of two weeks, Raty's armored marauders lost a battalion of their own while inflicting upon Mallet similar number of 'Mechs and tanks losses.

Then on 16 November, Raty scored a significant coup, taking control of an SLDF supply cache. He secured thousands of tons of weapons, ammunition and armor, thousands of small arms, and two million rounds of rifle and pistol ammunition. He immediately used that to arm an additional regiment of volunteers to defend the cities of Axel and New Tallahassee, building significant defenses within each of those key industrial cities.

General Mallet responded, scattering Raty's marauders from her cache and ordering a massed assault on Axel. Her infantry attempted to clear the cramped streets and buildings of Alliance defenders so that League tanks and 'Mechs could advanced unopposed, but they were overwhelmed by Raty's rapid redeployments. After two days of battle Raty's militia held Mallet's advance at Axel's industrial center; General Mallet, unwilling to level the city to destroy its militia defenders, withdrew to the city's edge. As it turned out, the militia victory was hollow; in rushing to defend the city, they'd lost seventy-five percent of their strength.

General Mallet made the mistake of sending a routine status report to Forlough, in it asking his recommendation for dealing with the Medron militia. She received his reply on 23 November

SUDDEN HALT

Forlough may have been surprised by the appearance of the Pitcairn Legion, and his II Corps may have been damaged by those "traitorous mercenaries," but the general was unmoved from his original plan—to strike at Alpheratz to bring the war to a rapid conclusion. He accepted that casualties were a necessary byproduct of war, and he felt that he lost face by calling in Kurita reinforcements, but he was a general who believed that "the timid lick their wounds, the bold press on and win!" The three regiments of Galedon Regulars were already a part of his plan; they were originally to stage a decoy attack Mitchellia before following the general to the Alliance capital.

Instead, the entire force was on Sevon. Strategically, Forlough could still accomplish the same outcome; he waited on Sevon for three more weeks while replacement troops and equipment arrived, and the single Nineteenth Galedon JumpShip that had not arrived yet finally showed. It had suffered damage during a misjump and remained in deep space until it could make repairs.

Forlough's staff indicated that, by 19 November, the entire task force would be ready to depart for their next targets. But on the 17th, Forlough received a message from his Commanding General that angered him even more than the ceasefire orders he'd received a month earlier.

The SLDF High Command ordered him to halt his advance and to transfer third of his JumpShip and WarShips to the Taurian Front. The war on the Alliance Front immediately ground to a halt.

DAVION MANEUVERING

Neither Forlough nor SLDF Commanding General Carlos Lee agreed with the order. They both heatedly argued against it, realizing that it would cripple the League's war against the Outworlds Alliance. First Lord Ian Cameron was resolute, however, ordering a full third of Forlough's fleet be transferred to the Taurian Front.

The reason? Publicly, it was to better support the SLDF's primary military operation. The war with the Taurian Concordat had already been waging for six years, with no end in sight. The addition of transports and WarShips to the front would allow the SLDF to better pressure the Taurians. The reality, of course, was much different and due solely to First Prince Alexander Davion.

The Armed Forces of the Federated Suns fleet had met the Taurian navy at Tentativa in a disastrous battle in 2578, leaving the Davion navy crippled. Three years later, the Federated Suns navy had still not recovered, a fact that severely hampered that nation's troops supporting the Taurian front. Davion's auxiliary corps could not keep up with the needs of the invasion.

This was a problem that had plagued Davion's troops for years, but Forlough's attack on Sevon—and his planned deep strike at Alpheratz—prompted the First Prince to action. He argued, both within the Star League Council chambers and without, that the Taurian Front was still the Star League's primary operation, and that without additional naval support there his auxiliary corps would be forced to withdraw. Amid a council whose members had long stood behind Cameron's war to the political and economic detriment of their own nations, the First Lord could not afford to lose Davion's support.

Cameron knew that Davion's demands were somehow keyed to the sudden appearance of the Pitcairn Legion, though he figured that it was some grand play to seize more Alliance territory for the Federated Suns. He needed Davion, though, so he caved.

General Forlough lost the ships he needed to strike at Alpheratz. It would be months before he could redeploy his remaining ships to support combat operations within the Outworlds Alliance.

RAGE UNLEASHED

Already angered by decisions out of his control that left his campaign dead in its tracks, Forlough completely lost his temper when he received Lieutenant General Remy Mallet's request for supplemental orders. His troops were bogging down on every world they were engaged on, and that was unacceptable. He needed to end the war as quickly as possible, and if he could no longer do that with a single, decisive military strike then he would do so by a decisive strike at the will of the Alliance's people.

He ordered General Mallet to decimate Medron's population, to execute one in ten citizens, punishing their resistance to the Star League's will. Mass executions began on Medron two days later, drawing out what little remained of the world's militia. Within hours the Medron Militia was destroyed; a week later, the remaining citizens of the world were digging mass graves for more than ten thousand of their murdered countrymen.

ONE ANGRY MAN

General Amos Forlough was well-known for his barely controlled temper and his intolerance of what he generally labeled incompetence long before he selected to lead the SLDF's Alliance Front. But as the campaign progressed slowly—far too slowly for his liking—he began to turn his famous anger toward his superiors and the Star League government. His men were doing their jobs but they were needlessly taking casualties and losing their lives because of what he considered stupid and unconscionable decisions made by politicians. Where he once saw the simple black-and-white of the matter—the Alliance was his enemy, while First Lord Cameron and the entire Star League was there to support him and his troops—he began to see enemies everywhere, especially within the political framework of the Star League. It was no surprise that he began to privately rage against Davion and even Cameron, who together blocked his ability to end the war quickly.

Unable to turn that rage directly upon these prime enemies of his he instead unleashed it upon his subordinates, who in turn channeled their own fears, angers and uncertainties into a rage directed at the people of the Outworlds Alliance. These innocents were the only victims that they could unleash these pent-up frustrations upon, and following the lead of their commanding general, the soldiers of the Star League did so violently and indiscriminately.

Under General Forlough's orders, tens of thousands of noncombatants were executed to make a point—those who dared to stand up to the will of General Amos Forlough would die. And following the general's lead, his troops laid waste to hundreds of cities, towns and villages, depriving tens of thousands more of the simple necessities of life such as shelter and food.

The Ares Conventions had been suspended. The political will of the entire Star League was that the Periphery be brought under the aegis of the League. Actions such as these, when perpetrated by the Usurper's agents just two centuries later would be categorized as war crimes and punished with death, were little more than historical footnotes at the outset of the Star League era. As with everything in Amos Forlough's life, he was a product of his generation.

—Dr. Ezri Jakobi, *Biographical Encyclopedia of the Star League Generals*, Geneva Publishing, 2988

TANCREDI'S IMPORTANCE

Tancredi IV may have been a footnote on most interstellar maps in 2575, but a decade later it was the planet that saved the Outworlds Alliance.

In 2579, unknown to any of its residents, it hosted a series of secret negotiations between representatives from the Outworlds Alliance and the Federated Suns that would eventually lead to the Tancredi Accords—a covert political and military alliance between those two governments. The Federated Suns would supply the political and military muscle that the Alliance required to fight the naked aggression displayed by both the Star League and the Draconis Combine during the Reunification War.

Tancredi continued to play an critical role in that alliance, serving as the transfer point between the two nations, seeing millions of tons of military hardware flowing from the Federated Suns into the Alliance until a Star League invasion force forced the two nations to move their operations to a different world.

Today, the historic Transfer Point can be visited. Just three driving hours from Granite Peak, in Tancredi's picturesque Grey Mountains, the historic site has been carefully preserved, with recordings, memorabilia and weapons from the period on display. Two period DropShips erected on the site will bring you back to a different era, while the displays contained within will fascinate any Reunification War buff. Our library contains the largest collection of Reunification War-era publications, with private research viewings are available upon request.

—*Tancredi's Historic Transfer Point* brochure, Transfer Point Museum, 3055

Tancredi IV: A sparsely populated minor agricultural world along the Federated Suns-Outworlds Alliance border at the outset of the Reunification War. It played host to an initial meeting between Alliance representative Amanda Considine and Federated Suns representative Lawrence Davion in 2579. Federated Suns agents covertly smuggled weapons and supplies to the Outworlds Alliance through Tancredi IV until the SLDF took possession of the world in 2582. World ceded to the Federated Suns in 2585.

—*Encyclopedia of the Reunification War, Abridged*, Sandhurst Institute Press, 3040

Suns frontier and outside of the presumed invasion corridors, President Avellar and Chairman Nordd had diverted resources away from them.

The soldiers, tankers and MechWarriors of the Sixth Royal Division easily scattered and eliminated the militias of these two worlds within days in battles that left the Sixth frustrated but in command of the worlds.

TANCREDI IV

Since the beginning of the war, Forlough and his intelligence analysts had heard rumors that Tancredi IV was somehow a key to the Alliance's defense efforts. Still unsure how such a minor world could be so important, Forlough transferred both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth

Satisfied with the quick resolution of matters on Medron, Forlough published standing orders to all of his commands: decimate the populations until mass resistance is halted, and punish all future resistance by death. Medron was the worst world hit by these executions, but SLDF and Draconis Combine commanders on nearly every world occupied used these orders to eliminate resistance leaders and their supporters.

While Forlough's orders quieted resistance on the worlds already occupied, they roused determination and anti-League hatred in the rest of the Outworlds Alliance. Outrage at the wanton murder of tens of thousands of their countrymen led ten times as many free citizens to militia recruiting officers. The groundswell of public support and outrage that Avellar needed five years earlier finally developed.

YEAR TWO: MOVE AND COUNTER

Left with huge gaps within his interstellar transportation network, not to mention his naval escort fleet, General Forlough suspended offensive operations. While that gave his engaged forces time to consolidate their holdings, repair and refit, the hot-tempered general nonetheless raged.

Unfortunately for his subordinates, he turned that rage on them. Where he previously gave those with a history of accomplishments some latitude when they failed to immediately meet his expectations, he now dealt with any perceived incompetence harshly. He couldn't afford anything less; to him, every extra day the war continued rang up an even higher toll in men and machines, and any extra death was inexcusable.

While Forlough's anger transformed his SLDF front into one guided by fear and retribution, the Alliance used the time it gained for what good it could. Additional supply runs from the Federated Suns brought much-needed equipment to the Alliance's rapidly swelling ranks, while a slew of advisors provided President Avellar and his military an experience base with which to train their growing military.

The brief respite ended in late January 2582. The civilized war was replaced with unbridled vengeance.

II CORPS GOES HUNTING

For II Corps' livid commander, the more than three months of reallocating and repositioning JumpShips to make up for those ships lost to the Taurian Front were interminable. While he did have enough transports to pursue limited combat operations, Forlough chose to wait until he could stage multiple invasions. He believed in the efficacy of lightning strikes. While he did not possess a fleet of transports large enough to take him directly to Alphertatz, it was more than capable of supporting him in strong local drives.

Thus, Forlough's strategy changed to one designed to keep his enemy off-guard as well as consolidate his holdings, primarily utilizing II Corps. He also needed to rebuild confidence within II Corps. The order to attack was given 6 January 2582.

KENNARD AND PITKIN

To the worlds of Kennard and Pitkin Forlough dispatched the Sixth Royal Division. Bloodied by the Pitcairn Legion four months earlier, the Sixth's troops were eager to reap vengeance upon the Alliance. Instead, they grounded on agricultural worlds defended by little more than bare battalions of irregular infantry, supported by what could generously be called a light armored battalion. As these worlds were located along the Federated

Brigades to the world, leaving command of the invasion to Major General Angelo Rucker. What they found when they landed in January was very much what they expected—a planet home to a few thousand scattered farmers and ranchers, with no standing defense, that had been traded back and forth between the Outworlds Alliance and Federated Suns half a dozen times since its founding.

Rucker nonetheless ordered a systematic search of the world. After a month of searches, Rucker was about to give up when three military DropShips lifted off from a remote region, using three squadrons of heavy fighters to break through a hastily formed SLDF blockade. The ships rendezvoused at a pirate point with a JumpShip and left the system two days later.

Rucker's recon flights eventually located the unknown DropShips' hidden base, really a convenient landing zone in a remote mountain range. There, SLDF analysts found evidence that dozens of different DropShips had likely been using it as a transfer point for 'Mechs, heavy tanks, and cargo vehicles of all sorts. No amount of interrogations, or threats of violence against Tancredi's citizens ever turned up conclusive evidence of who operated from this point, though every finger within the SLDF intelligence circles pointed at House Davion.

HELL'S HORSEMEN UNLEASHED

While Forlough pressed II Corps onward, he redeployed V Corps further rimward to better support the eventual drive into the Alliance's interior. He was also less than impressed by V Corps' commander, Major General Hooker, and didn't believe he or his corps was ready to support such a mobile advance. So while V Corps contracted its lines rimward, the DCMS auxiliary brigade expanded its lines, assuming responsibility for the world Bad News—though the reality of the situation was that the Combine slowly moved garrison units from its own interior to take over Combine-held Alliance worlds, freeing up those regiments to pursue the war.

VALENTINA

After making a rapid move to reinforce General Forlough on Sevon, the Seventeenth and Twenty-fourth Galedon Regulars were tasked with securing Valentina. As with so many other worlds along the Alliance-Combine frontier, Valentina possessed only a basic militia. The world's people knew that the Star League would eventually attack, and likewise recognized their president had abandoned them. They voted by referendum in November of 2581 to surrender their arms and capitulate should League forces attack.

When the Galedon Regulars landed instead of Star League troops, the people of Valentina rose up as one to oppose their would-be Combine overlords. The Santiago Massacre was still very much an open wound for Valentinians, and stories of continued Combine executions fueled those hatreds.

The battle for Valentina, such as it was, lasted just two hours, after which the militia was wiped out and the world's three main cities were in Combine hands. The resistance movement, however, continued for months afterward. Combine troops carried out Forlough's standing orders to the letter, summarily rounding up one in ten citizens and shooting them in front of their fellow Valentinians. They destroyed every house, garage and barn that they thought might house a resistance cell or bomb-making lab, and brutally punished any violation of strict curfew and group assembly laws. Nevertheless, the people of Valentina continued to resist, tying up valuable troops that Forlough could have used elsewhere.

HAYNESVILLE

Unhappy with Forlough's relegation of his corps to a support role, Major General Laszlo Hooker demanded to play a serious role in the war. His complaints to Forlough fell on deaf ears, though his communications to General Carlos Lee, a friend he'd served with in the Hegemony Armed Forces, brought his corps an assignment—one well out of their area of responsibility and that was expected to provide little resistance. Forlough resented Hooker for going over his head, but was under direct orders from General Lee to "put Hooker's corps into the battle."

REVERBERATIONS OF HAYNESVILLE

The Battle of Haynesville, while minor compared to some of the grand engagements fought during the Reunification War, set the tenor of the rest of the war against the Outworlds Alliance and raised spirits throughout the Periphery.

First and foremost, it was the first resounding defeat suffered by the Star League. When news of the actual *surrender* of a Star League brigade—a Royal brigade—spread across the Outworlds Alliance, the collective cheer seemed to reverberate throughout known space. The spirits of not only the people of the Alliance, but seemingly *every* Periphery denizen, were lifted. The Star League *could* be beat. Its best soldiers were *not* invincible. Where news of atrocities committed by SLDF troops prompted common Alliance citizens to volunteer for the militia so that they would not be caught unprepared, news of the victory on Haynesville convinced them that they did, in fact, have a chance of ending this war on their terms.

Periphery soldiers on the front lines in the Magistracy of Canopus and the Taurian Concordat likewise redoubled their efforts against the Star League invaders. If the Outworlds Alliance could defeat the mighty SLDF, so could they.

Conversely, news of the Thirty-seventh Royal Brigade's surrender sent ripples throughout the Star League Defense Force. The fact that an elite *Royal* unit was somehow bested by a bunch of farmers and merchants was disheartening to soldiers of all ranks. At the same time, few believed that they could ever fall victim to the same circumstances—that they could ever surrender to an inferior opponent.

No, it was the vicious way that Forlough dealt with the officers and men of the Thirty-seventh Royal Brigade that caused most to pause. That their commanding general would be willing to execute a senior officer, imprison scores more—all of whom would have faced similar fates had they failed to comply with Lieutenant General Sexton's orders—and sack several others showed them their general's true colors. Stories of his anger were legendary, but this was the most public demonstration of that.

No one was safe from General Forlough's anger. As the war dragged on, more and more stories of his tirades spread across the Alliance Front. And that caused his troops to simultaneously tread more cautiously and attack more recklessly.

—Dr. H.J. Farnsworth, *1001 Strange Twists of Fate During the Star League Era*, Express Publishing, 3010

SAME STORY, DIFFERENT PAGE

The Boss just spent the past half hour screaming at Zibler and his division commanders, and I think he recorded—and erased—three or four tri-vid messages for General Lee that weren't much better. If all we had to fight were the Outworlders, or even the thrice-damned Davions, we'd be alright. The Boss is right. We should just line up all of the politicians and kick them out of the airlock. If it weren't for them and their kind, this whole damn war would be over. To Hell with Clauswitz.

We lost the Galedon Regulars. They're running off on some operation of their own, though we could all hear it in their voices—they wanted to come with us. They don't yet know what their orders are, but at least they had the decency to tell the Boss to his face. Though I doubt that [*Sho-sho Masao*] Igushi would have done the same. Hell, knowing [Forlough's] temper, I wouldn't have wanted to.

But that's it for us. At least for now. We can't do a damned thing. The supplies we've got will keep us going for about a month, more if we ration them. And the Boss still hasn't decided if he wants to let everyone push hard for the next month. Problem is, all of our [supply] contracts were with Combine agents, and Kurita just pulled that rug out from under us. So unless we want to have three or four hundred light years worth of a supply chain to deal with, we need to find other sources now.

Actually, a few potential suppliers did contact [Lieutenant] General [Franc] Gaultier a few days ago [note: Gaultier was General Forlough's chief logistician], but they were Davion firms. I swear we were about to replace another vid screen when the Boss heard that. "F... Davion, F... Kurita, F... them all!" was all he said. He went for a run then, and we didn't see him for probably two hours.

He's not wrong. But what can we do?

—Major David Ardwright-Platt, *Personal Journal*, 17 July 2582

General Forlough also sacked the commander, assistant commander and operations officer of the Thirteenth Royal Division, as well as Major General Laszlo Hooker and his assistant corps commander—two officers he'd long been looking to remove. Ironically, Hooker was transferred by General Carlos Lee to SLDF headquarters on Terra, serving as the High Command's Operations Director—in effect, taking charge of developing the SLDF's strategies and tactics.

BUDINGEN

Originally meant to be a part of Forlough's consolidations during the first quarter of 2582, the assault on Budingén had to wait until July when the Combine's Fourth Benjamin Regulars could be moved up to the front. No longer able to trust Hooker's V Corps, Forlough put his faith in Kurita's officers, who had yet to fail him.

Tai-sa Elliot Keita dropped with his first wave of MechWarriors on the water-rich mining world, its primary continent deep in the throes of its stormy autumn months which would lead into a long and brutal winter. Within hours Keita and his MechWarriors ran

Lieutenant General Thomas Sexton led the SLDF Thirty-seventh Royal Brigade to Haynesville, landing on 7 February. The League troops rapidly secured the world, pleasing even Forlough. A series of militia attacks on 14 and 15 February brought the SLDF advance to a grinding halt, though. Employing anti-'Mech infantry tactics, the militia crippled dozens of BattleMechs and tanks and forced General Sexton to redeploy infantry to support every attack and garrison force he had in the field.

That took more than a week, during which time the Haynesville Militia scored a number of critical successes. None were more impressive than the assault at the Braszós water purification plant, where a battalion of Haynesville infantry, under the command of former AFFS Captain Joshua March, surrounded and defeated a full SLDF mixed 'Mech and armor company.

Captain March was responsible for each of the militia's successes. One of the many Davion advisors dispatched into the Alliance, he'd spent the previous four months diligently training the militia in tactics to counter the SLDF. For two weeks, using no heavier weapons than mortars, missile launchers and demolition charges, March and the militia prevented Sexton from exerting his control over the world. Even when the general twice massed his troops to march through and level one of Haynesville's cities, March's troops managed to disrupt the operation and focus the SLDF's attention on them rather than the world's civilians.

Captain March could not hold out indefinitely, but he also didn't have to. Two battalions of Colonel Pitcairn's MechWarriors landed on 3 March, under the command of Major Heather Moses. The two Davion officers launched multiple attacks against SLDF positions with mixed provisional units—oftentimes sporting little more than cosmetic repairs to cover up serious damage—to simulate a much larger force. March and Moses succeeded in their ruse. By 27 March, Lieutenant General Sexton's brigade was low on supplies and reinforcements had yet to arrive; a defeated Sexton felt he and his brigade had sustained too much damage to hold out against such superior numbers. He requested a parley with March, and on 29 March agreed to surrender his brigade to the Pitcairn Legion.

The SLDF troops, under the watchful eyes of two companies of Moses' 'Mechs and a battalion of March's militia, built for themselves a makeshift POW camp while the rest of Haynesville's defenders quickly began loading the SLDF 'Mechs, tanks and arms on the SLDF DropShips. Two days later, the Thirty-ninth Royal Brigade jumped into the system and six days later—three hours before grounding—watched the Thirty-seventh's DropShip squadron burn away from the world, accompanied by three Pitcairn DropShips.

As far as anyone could tell, every member of March's militia escaped, along with the Pitcairn Legion and two regiments of state-of-the-art Star League military equipment. Lieutenant General Juan Ernesto Sosa was left speechless when he landed; thousands of Thirty-seventh Royal Brigade soldiers—chief among them their commander—wandered around their makeshift POW camp, wondering what had happened. When he saw Sexton's report, General Forlough immediately travelled to Haynesville himself. He, too, was left speechless.

The world was in SLDF hands, but Forlough nonetheless ordered the world's population decimated and its largest city razed. He could not let this defeat go unpunished. He also charged with cowardice and dereliction of duty every Thirty-seventh Brigade officer of the rank of captain or higher, stripping them of rank and imprisoning them; General Sexton himself was convicted of cowardice under fire and executed by hanging on the first anniversary of his surrender.

headlong into Colonel Samantha Milton-Jones and her second Pitcairn Legion. Keita attempted three spoiling attacks against Milton-Jones' Legionnaires, but each time they faded into the storms, only to reemerge to keep the pressure on the Benjamin Regulars.

Unable to identify the Legion's base of operations, Keita turned his Regulars against Budingen's populace. His troops leveled Saratoga, Montezuma and Brenda, leaving scores dead and hundreds without shelter from the fall storms. Milton-Jones caught up with the Regulars in Ruby Valley, pinning two Kurita battalions with just her single first battalion—supported by several companies of light armor and mechanized infantry—while the rest of her Legionnaires struck at the Regulars' base camp. Each side wreaked havoc upon the other, but by the end of the battle the Regulars' camp was in shambles—including two DropShips with heavy damage—and Ruby Valley was in flames.

The Benjamin Regulars pulled back and moved their entire force to New Jordan, the planet's capital, carving an enclave for themselves in the city's center and ejecting hundreds of citizens from their homes and businesses. The Legionnaires were hastily constructing shelters in Minneola that could house the thousands of refugees the Combine attacks had displaced. Milton-Jones left the planet before she and her Legionnaires were trapped there for the winter, departing at the beginning of September, scarcely five weeks after the Combine troops arrived.

Trapped by the heavy snows within New Jordan, *Tai-sa* Keita's MechWarriors rode out the long winter.

DAVION TAKES THE INITIATIVE

Alexander Davion saw the excesses of the SLDF and Combine forces and recognized that their war crimes would only continue and grow in scope. He was also keenly aware that General Forlough had eschewed his original battle plan for one that seemed to be cutting his nation's shared border with the Outworlds Alliance.

Davion mobilized the Draconis March, ordering his troops to occupy a line of worlds from Diboll to Inner End—all worlds that Avellar had pledged to cede to Davion at war's end. He dispatched his son, Lawrence, to meet with Ambassador Considine on Hazelhurst; the two came to an agreement allowing Davion to garrison the worlds just one day before the occupation forces reached the first of the worlds.

From March through May, Davion forces took up station on Bastrop, Diboll, Hazelhurst, Inner End, and Pajarito, with the First Prince officially declaring them Federated Suns protectorates to the Star League Council.

General Forlough was livid. He wasn't the only Star League general who argued that Davion's troops should be focused on ending the war on the Taurian Front rather than interfering in military matters that were not their concern, but he was the most vocal. First Lord Ian Cameron heard their protests, but ruled the matter closed. What was done was done; the Alliance had lost five more worlds.

THE DRAGON RESPONDS

Amos Forlough and his kindred within the SLDF were not the only ones angered by Davion's maneuvers. Coordinator Hehiro Kurita considered this an affront to his honor, one that could not go answered by anything less than action in kind.

Recalling the regiments of Galedon Regulars that were to make a coordinated strike at Ki Zaban alongside Forlough's troops, Kurita directed his troops to capture worlds along the Alliance's coreward frontier. The Combine's leader did more than that, though. He denuded the caches that had kept the entire Alliance Front supplied, reclaiming the materiel his nation had pledged to the war effort.

When word of Kurita's orders reached Forlough the general allegedly upended his desk and smashed his computer before submitting his resignation to General Lee and First Lord Cameron—neither of whom accepted it. The general had cause for his anger, as Kurita had not only stripped him of a significant percentage of his striking power but had also left his entire front without the ability to support further significant combat operations for months. Once again, the politicians stopped him just as he was ready to strike a major blow against a minor nation that by all rights should have fallen to him a year earlier.

But where the political reality of the situation was lost on General Forlough, General Carlos Lee was keenly aware of his First Lord's need to keep both Davion and Kurita happy. And though that meant he and his logisticians would have to work overtime to provide Forlough the supplies he would need to resume the invasion, at least more Alliance worlds would fall.

KAZANKA, NEXUS RI AND ZLATOUSI

Three regiments of the Galedon Regulars—the Fourth, the Nineteenth and the Twenty-fourth, BattleMech regiments all—under the command of *Sho-sho* Masao Igushi targeted the worlds of Nexus Ri, Kazanka and Zlatousi, respectively, in September of 2582. The Third Dieron Regulars stood by as reserve on Bad News, ready to reinforce any of their brethren that needed it, while each assaulting regiment was backed up by paired regiments of armor and infantry.

Facing them were the Outworlds Alliance First and Second Divisions, as well local militias with armor and heavy infantry support—greater since the mass executions ordered during the invasion of Medron. Each of these militias was further supported by Davion-trained military advisors, who whipped the untrained Alliance militias into well-trained, if not veteran, units.

The two sides met on their respective worlds in the second week of September. In each case, the Alliance defenses were both deeper and stronger than Igushi and his regimental commanders expected. The only 'Mechs in the battles, save a handful of old, light Alliance BattleMechs assigned to each world, were in the hands of the veteran Galedon Regulars. *Sho-sho* Igushi nonetheless ordered one battalion each from the Third Dieron to make best time possible to the three worlds.

Igushi's MechWarriors made some quick gains on each world, but faced with twice their numbers of tanks and infantry. The battles rapidly degenerated into a conventional war. Superior numbers of Alliance tanks and infantry surrounded the Combine 'Mechs and largely prevented them from breaking out to target the civilian population. Meanwhile, the far more mobile and flexible Combine BattleMechs made daily gains. This was the kind of war that both sides had sought from the beginning, and that they were content to pursue. Weekly supply shipments kept the Combine MechWarriors fighting through the rest of the year, by which time the Alliance armored brigades had each been whittled down to mere ghosts of their former selves.

The Second Division pulled off of Nexus Ri on 12 January 2583, and the combined First and Second Divisions left Zlatousi on 27 January. Only the First Division lasted until 18 February, when they pulled off of Kazanka.

YEAR THREE: BRIDLED SAVAGERY

For the second time in as many years, General Amos Forlough found his strategic vision for the Outworlds Alliance front wholly disrupted by the backroom political maneuvers of the Star League Council, with Alexander Davion and Heiro Kurita waging a battle against each other. Instead of piercing deeply into the heart of the Outworlds Alliance in late 2582 as he had planned to do, and striking at Alpheratz by the beginning of 2583, he was no closer to his goal than he had been a year earlier. His troops, while ready to strike, stood immobile, waiting for the SLDF logisticians to provide enough supplies to resume the attack.

Kurita's troops had met the enemy and defeated him, finally engaging in the kind of warfare they had expected and demanded. The price for these victories, however, was not insignificant; the DCMS troops burned through a supply reserve in just three months that was meant to keep the entire front operational for half a year. Kurita's battered and broken 'Mechs, tanks and fighters were replaced with new ones, often fresh off of the factory lines, while damaged equipment was routed to SLDF depots for repair and refurbishment.

Meanwhile, the Alliance spent the latter half of 2582 building and training their military, focusing the Alliance Militia on the core worlds. Most significantly, the Alliance Militia grew by two BattleMech regiments—the Pitkin Lancers and the Santiago Carabiniers—thanks to Star League equipment captured primarily on Haynesville. Those two regiments, in addition to the First Alliance BattleMech Regiment (Light) and the three regiments of the Pitcairn Legion, represented a significant force. Together with the Alliance's four Armored Divisions, damaged as they were, the Alliance could claim some thirty-five regiments of frontline troops. By some estimates, that was a force sixty-eighty percent the size of the army they faced.

Thus began 2583 on the Alliance Front.

CONTINUED MANEUVERS POLITIC...

Prince Alexander Davion's attentions were understandably split during the Reunification War, but he never turned away from the Outworlds Front for very long. First Lord Cameron accepted his occupation of five Outworlds Alliance worlds without question, despite the continued presence of the Pitcairn Legion within Alliance borders. But as 2582 came to a close Davion's advisors indicated that General Forlough would soon have the logistical support he needed to resume his invasion in earnest. Hoping to further confuse the general and keep Kurita off-balance, he ordered his military to occupy both Crestoblus and Kinkaid II.

Davion troops reached the two worlds in January; as on worlds like Bastrop and Pajarito, the governor and militia of Crestoblus readily accepted the "occupation," fearing what would happen should Star League or Kurita troops land. On Kinkaid II, however, the matter was not so easily resolved. It was not a part of Davion's original agreement with Avellar, and Governor Jim Seong objected to the presence of any foreign troops.

While the Kinkaid Militia lined up to face the Third Crucis Lancers, Major General Gabriela Davion-Hart ordered her troops to subdue—not destroy—the militia. Four hours and five demands for surrender later, the planetary capital was in Davion-Hart's hands. It was still some weeks before Governor Seong officially capitulated, and only after President Avellar ordered the governor to do so.

Davion, of course, received a scathing communiqué from the president, but that was soon forgotten. Likewise, both Coordinator Kurita and General Forlough were outraged and demanded that Davion withdraw from the worlds. Both also demanded that Davion be officially censured and forced to evacuate those worlds, as well as every other Alliance world his troops had occupied. On two separate occasions DCMS transports bound for Forlough's advance headquarters on Sevon were denied permission to land on Kinkaid II, angering both the general and the Coordinator.

Davion informed them that the Star League constitution guaranteed the right of any signatory's planetary governor to refuse landing rights to another's military forces, just as a Combine official could prevent one of Davion's military ships from landing on his planet. Any violation of this right was an act of war.

Kurita and Forlough nevertheless continued to demand justice in the Star League Council. As he had done so many times before, Davion ignored the rhetoric.

...AND MILITARY

As a result of House Kurita's assault there were very few ongoing operations that lasted into the new year. Combine troops were still deeply involved in operations on Kazanka, Nexus Ri and Zlatousi, but those would be concluded by February.

On Budingon, Colonel Samantha Milton-Jones returned to the fight in February to discover the Fourth Benjamin Regulars had managed to free themselves from the ice and snow during an early thaw and strike directly at the world's people. Dozens of towns

and villages were burned to the ground. Hundreds were dead and many thousands of cattle were destroyed. Already disheartened by their homeworld's long winter months, the people of Bundingen broke after the Combine attacks. Milton-Jones, feeling she had let Bundingen's citizens down, assaulted the Kurita headquarters in New Jordan as well as Benjamin Regulars' new base outside the city. Her efforts destroyed both targets and inflicted serious damage on a Regulars battalion but, seeing little chance at unseating the Regulars without a larger force at her disposal, she withdrew.

General Forlough was still dealing with the aftermath of the Haynesville debacle. He had replaced most of the Thirty-seventh Royal Brigade's officers, but completely reequipping the brigade with BattleMechs, tanks and fighters was proving difficult. The Thirty-seventh was transferred to Bryceland, where it remained until the end of the war.

KI ZOBAN

Meanwhile, a now-fully supplied Forlough once again prepared to deliver strikes deep into the Alliance core. He massed his II Corps on Sevon, with V Corps between Valentina and Niles. Under the command of Major General Victoria Zibler, former commander of the Second Royal Brigade, V Corps was eager to make a showing for itself. Forlough assigned Zibler to take Ki Ziban.

Otherwise unremarkable, and with the weakest militia of any Alliance core world, Ki Ziban had one critical strategic value—it was within the same striking distance of Alpheratz as Sevon, which would soon play a critical role in Forlough's continued strategy.

The Fortieth Brigade landed on 30 January 2583, and found the majority of the militia—seven companies of armor, three regiments of infantry and a handful of converted WorkMechs—dug in around the world's capital, Mikanda. The Fortieth rolled over the militia in four hours despite their opponents' advanced Davion tactics. The militia was scattered to the wind. Five days later, the last of the militia was killed or detained. By the end of the month, the Fortieth Brigade reported greater than ninety-five percent strength and the rest of V Corps began to mass on Ki Ziban. For the first time in a long time, Forlough had nothing bad to say about V Corps.

PITCAIRN'S RAIDS

President Avellar and Chairman Nordd had long pushed Colonel Pitcairn to strike deep into League-held territory, but likewise agreed that his Legionnaires needed to be ready to respond to the strike that Forlough had long hoped to make at Alpheratz. With the addition of two BattleMech regiments to the Alliance Militia, however, Colonel Pitcairn finally agreed that it was time to unleash his Legion and attempt to spoil General Forlough's plans.

Pitcairn tasked two regiments to bring the fight to the invaders in early 2583.

For his first target Pitcairn selected Kennard, personally leading his first regiment to the world on 24 January and giving the Sixth Royal Division's Eighteenth Brigade the fight it was looking for. The Legionnaires landed unmolested, masquerading as a regu-

lar supply shipment. They revealed themselves when they struck Lieutenant General Daishin Minxia's garrison within Kennard's capital of Clayton. That began a two-week rampage across the planet, with Pitcairn striking at every major SLDF outpost while Minxia attempted to pin down Pitcairn's nimble MechWarriors. The Legionnaires pulled off of Kennard at the end of February, having bloodied and embarrassed the Eighteenth.

Colonel Samantha Milton-Jones, after finding Budingen untenable, led her second regiment to Bad News, landing on March 13. V Corps had turned the world over to elements of the Third Dieron Regulars, who proceeded to terrorize the world. Facing just a single BattleMech battalion, albeit one supported by two regiments each of armor and infantry, Milton-Jones focused her regiment's energies on the Dieron Regulars. Within twenty-four hours, though, she faced counterattack by a hodge-podge of Kurita 'Mechs and armor, all being refit within the makeshift depot established there. Surprised but unfazed, Milton-Jones' MechWarriors struck down every Combine counterattack. Over the course of three weeks she ravaged the depot, all but destroyed the Third Regulars' battalion, and inflicted heavy damage on the Kurita armor. And, having been alerted to the arrival of a Combine WarShip in system, she pulled off the world four days before reinforcements arrived from Nexus Ri.

Pitcairn briefly contemplated a spoiling attack at Ki Ziban, but upon learning that V Corps was in the process of moving two full divisions there, thought better of the plan. He reformed the Legion and waited for Forlough's next move.

CERBERUS AND THE BABY KILLERS

Pitcairn and his allies didn't have to wait long. Forlough struck deep at the key Alliance world of Cerberus with his Fourth and Fifth Divisions in March. While this wasn't the deep strike he'd hoped to make two years earlier, Cerberus was nonetheless a world important to Avellar. It was the most industrialized world in the Alliance, and served as a regional capital. Chairman Nordd had placed two full BattleMech battalions of the newly formed Alliance Grenadiers there, supported by a regiment of armor. Meanwhile, Planetary Defense Chairman Ulrich Sadova had recruited five volunteer infantry regiments and an additional three armor regiments, all equipped with arms manufactured by Cerberus' industry.

The Star League troops struck fast and hard at militia positions, making the kind of lightning assault they had long trained for. Alliance doctrine dictated that BattleMech formations were to be kept as a mobile reserve while armor and infantry held an enemy force in place—strategies that failed against 'Mechs, highly mobile infantry and armor dropped directly on Alliance positions. Sadova's 'Mechs made their first appearance on the second day of the invasion, but by then they were far too late. Forlough had already delivered a fatal blow to Cerberus' militia, and rapidly picked apart its BattleMech garrison.

Sadova's troops, though battered and broken, reformed and resolved to battle Forlough as best as they could for as long as they could. As the last of Cerberus' Militia tried to put up a valiant defense against Forlough, the general directed his troops to lay

waste to the world's infrastructure. II Corps laid waste to every city, town and village, and especially every factory. If the Alliance would continue to resist, he would destroy their ability to do so.

BABY KILLERS UNLEASHED

While II Corps advanced on Cerberus, V Corps prepared for its own campaign. Though Forlough utilized the majority of his task force's available transport to make his strike at Cerberus, Major General Zibler had enough to pursue a limited strategy. She dispatched V Corps on a seek-and-destroy mission that saw regiments and brigades leapfrog between nearly a dozen worlds over the course of the next eight months. Each strike focused on damaging the world's population and industrial centers first and the militia second; capturing the world was not even a concern.

Lushann would be the first target, as much because of its strong industry and powerful militia as its close vicinity to both Sevon and Ki Zoban. Throughout March, Zibler transported the entire Fifteenth Division to the world, tasking it with destroying the Pitkin Lancers BattleMech regiment—its MechWarriors piloting the BattleMechs they had stolen from the Thirty-seventh Royal Brigade—and the Alliance Third Division, both entrenched on the world.

Meanwhile, the rest of Zibler's V Corps began their leapfrog campaign, jumping to the Didatari, Morthac and Quiberas systems during April and May, each time spending a week or two setting the torch to cities and destroying what militia forces they encountered before moving on to the next world. In June, Forlough himself joined the campaign at the head of the Tenth Brigade, striking Quatre Belle and Mitchella. Even news of the assassination of General Amalthia Kinkaid, his counterpart on the Taurian Front, left him unfazed as he continued to lead these attacks. By late June, the press in both the Outworlds Alliance and the Federated Suns were calling Forlough and his troops, who had wiped out hundreds of cities and towns, "the Baby Killers." The Alliance Militia desperately attempted to intercept Forlough, but always remained one step behind him.

BATTLE FOR LUSHANN

With Cerberus occupied, President Avellar could not afford to lose Lushann's industrial output. He ordered Pitcairn there with orders to hold the world at all costs. The world's defenders staunchly held the cities of Sanbornton and Rotta from the Fifteenth Division, but were losing the battle elsewhere. Pitcairn finally arrived in late April, taking the fight directly to the Fifteenth. In response, Zibler likewise directly engaged the Davion mercenaries with the intent of holding them in place. While Zibler kept the Legionnaires pinned down for the next two months, Forlough continued his campaign to destroy the Alliance's will and ability to resist.

DAY OF VENGEANCE

In late July Forlough and his "Baby Killers" took a brief respite on Sevon to refit, rearm and rotate troops before moving on to Banori and Loparri in August.

In July, however, Chairman Nordd received the piece of intelligence that he needed to put an end to Forlough's rampage through the Alliance: the general's operational timetable. Unfortunately, the Pitcairn Legion was the one weapon he had that could possibly blunt Forlough, and they were still heavily engaged on Lushann. He ordered the Fourth Division to Lushann to relieve the Pitcairn Legion, which extracted itself from the battle at the end of the month and immediately made way to Tellman IV. To assist Pitcairn, Nordd dispatched the Santiago Carabiniers and two regiments of Alliance infantry, which up to that point he had held in reserve on Alpheratz itself. Nordd was taking a huge gamble, having denuded the Alliance homeworld of its most powerful defenders, but he needed to check Forlough's maneuvers before the entire Alliance fell.

When the Pitcairn Legion pulled off of Lushann, Forlough must have suspected something. He reinforced his attacks upon both Banori and Loparri, expecting eventually to encounter the Davion colonel. What he didn't expect, however, was to fall directly into an Alliance ambush, which he and elements from three V Corps brigades—the Fortieth, Forty-third and Forty-fifth—did in September.

As they had done so many times before, V Corps scouts arrived surreptitiously on the icy mining world of Tellman IV about a week ahead of Forlough's main force. They located a suitable landing zone and prepared it for the general's assault, never realizing that Pitcairn's own scouts had them under surveillance the entire time. While Forlough's pathfinders prepared for their general's landing, Pitcairn surreptitiously moved his entire force into position.

Forlough's DropShips landed the morning of 17 September, sending out a heavy scout detachment while the rest of the force began setting up a temporary encampment. That's when Pitcairn attacked, taking the Star League troops by surprise. Within twenty minutes the SLDF scout 'Mechs were smoking hulks and Pitcairn's MechWarriors were battling amid the Star League landing zone, attempting to destroy 'Mechs and tanks alike before their crews could bring them into the battle.

As SLDF MechWarriors and tank crews tried in vain to reach their vehicles, frantic DropShip crews were firing blindly at anything that moved—and some things that weren't moving. Several ships lifted off amid the chaos, including Forlough's own command DropShip, damaging friend and foe alike with their drive plumes and adding blowing smoke and debris to the melee.

Three years of pent-up Alliance anger and frustration released in a veritable firestorm. The cry "Cerberus Lives!" was audible above the din of battle. The battle lasted until well after nightfall, when Forlough ordered a general retreat from Tellman IV. The ultimate cost, already too high for the general after the first hour, was more than two hundred Star League BattleMechs, a similar number of armored vehicles, and four DropShips lost, along with perhaps two thousand men—eight hundred captured and placed in Alliance POW camps. In one day, an already weakened V Corps had lost a third of its combat force.

The lighter, but no less significant, Alliance toll was more than one hundred BattleMechs destroyed, and nearly another hundred heavily damaged. Pitcairn could salvage some Star League equipment from the battlefield, which would help recoup losses, but neither side would recover quickly from this “Day of Vengeance” on Tellman IV.

KURITA'S OVEREAGER APPETITE

As Forlough pursued his campaign of devastation against the Alliance's core worlds Coordinator Hehiro Kurita pressured *Sho-sho* Igushi to push even farther into the Alliance's interior. Igushi's Galedon Regulars had beaten the Alliance's First and Second Divisions once already; Kurita demanded that he do so again.

Igushi's troops had recouped their losses on Nexus Ri, Kazanka and Zlatousi, though they continued to operate with bare supply caches; the very shortages they caused Forlough a year earlier were now affecting them. Cut off from the SLDF supply chain, Igushi's troops had to survive with what they could seize locally, supplemented by a weak trickle coming from the Combine's interior.

The Fourth, Nineteenth and Twenty-fourth Galedon Regulars BattleMech regiments launched from their bases on Valentina, Kazanka and Zlatousi in the fourth week of July 2583, leaving the Seventeenth Regulars behind in garrison. The three regiments were bound for the worlds of Prinis Prime, Quantraine and Milligan's World, where they would once again face the Alliance First and Second Armored Divisions. On Milligan's World and Quantraine they faced worlds that possessed militias strong with armor and infantry regiments, each trained by experienced Davion advisors.

The Alliance defenders dug in deep, preventing the Kurita invaders from using their superior mobility to dislodge them. And when the Combine MechWarriors attempted to lay waste to the worlds' cities, anti-Mech infantry crippled their advance elements while the Alliance armor rapidly redeployed to blunt the Combine attacks.

August gave way to September and October. Igushi's Galedon Regulars made some progress, but the *sho-sho* had to beg, borrow and steal the few replacement MechWarriors and 'Mechs he could get his hands on. He simply could not get the reinforcements and supplies his Regulars needed fast enough. Igushi pulled the three regiments back in early November, reporting to General Forlough and his Coordinator that his reconnaissance raids on the three worlds had been a complete success and had inflicted heavy damage upon the First and Second Divisions.

An angered Coordinator Hehiro Kurita banished Igushi to the Combine's far coreward reaches, advancing in his place *Sho-sho* Rimas Nelsson, a rising star from the Rasalhague District. Kurita gave Nelsson no logistical support, damning the Combine's further war-time contributions to consolidating its hold over worlds already conquered and occasional shows of force.

YEAR FOUR: SLOW GRIND

Action on worlds like Cerberus, Lushann and Tellman IV inflicted a heavy toll upon attacker and defender alike in 2583. Both the Alliance Front and the Taurian Front were eerily quiet, though for very different reasons. While Forlough's troops licked their wounds, League forces on the Taurian Front simply held their ground, awaiting orders from a new commander.

The ever-critical Forlough sent General Lee and the First Lord his thoughts on the subject even as he plotted a summer campaign to strike at the heart of the Alliance. Perhaps these communications, in conjunction with the increasing criticism of Forlough from both Kurita and Davion, prompted Cameron and Lee to transfer Forlough to the Taurian Front. Or perhaps Forlough was the only warfighting general left in the SLDF that had the heart—and guts—to bring an end to the Taurian morass.

BORDERLESS HOPE

During the Reunification War, interstellar aid agencies truly began to come into their own. The many thousands of tiny charities that tended to the needs and woes of the underprivileged and refugees of the Age of War gave rise to more than a hundred major interstellar organizations within the first half-century of the Star League era.

For the first time, Humanity was united under a single government. Interstellar transport and communications had advanced significantly since Humanity's first steps into space, and just as Terra's global economy formed some seven centuries prior, a true interstellar economy formed, encompassing the nations of the Star League and eventually the Periphery as well.

The Reunification War itself was the final catalyst required for the rise of the first IAOs. Humanity was at war with each other on a level unlike ever before, and the interstellar media ensured that visions of the horrors from the front lines were broadcast into every home in the Inner Sphere. Suddenly, the collective consciences of trillions of Star League citizens (“liberal guilt” as some have labeled it) prompted many to take action to prevent whatever kind of suffering that they most identified with. There were yet no truly international charitable organizations that could act on a truly interstellar scope.

Numerous IAOs, birthed from the merging of smaller, similar-minded charities within each of the Star League states, quickly rose to claim the charitable contributions of trillions, followed shortly thereafter by dozens more IAOs formed by various personalities and special interests. Between 2575 and 2585, fifty different interstellar agencies claiming to have offices in two or more nations or on worlds more than two hundred light years apart registered with the Bureau of Star League Affairs on Terra, claiming foci as diverse as providing emergency shelter and aid, providing veterans benefits, and protecting endangered species on remote worlds.

It was House Davion that formed the very first IAO focused on providing aid and comfort to citizens of the Periphery displaced by war. There is little doubt that Borderless Hope was formed solely as a political measure designed to embarrass Star League First Lord Ian Cameron and his military commanders along the Outworlds Front; in fact, it succeeded in doing just that when SLDF General Amos Forlough refused to allow aid expeditions to land on three different worlds during 2583 and '84, and especially when Forlough's troops fired upon and killed two dozen aid workers on Lushann in September of 2583.

—Adept VI Tau Reack Pueghi, *History of Modern Non-Governmental Organizations*, ComStar Institute, 3059

Whatever the reasons, General Forlough officially handed over command of the Alliance campaign to Major General Franklin Barnex on 30 June 2584, departing for the Taurian front the next day. Barnex, recently transferred from the SLDF headquarters on Terra, was a careful strategist who preferred a more civilized approach to warfare—almost exactly Forlough's opposite. He immediately repealed standing orders that indiscriminately targeted Alliance civilians and even began to allow interstellar aid agencies access to occupied Alliance worlds.

Barnex further addressed problems with his "allies" in both Houses Davion and Kurita. He began to allow Kurita's troops access to the SLDF supply lines that Forlough had cut off two years earlier, in exchange demanding that the Combine warriors abide by the letter of his new policies. He also allowed Alexander Davion to place garrison forces on Haynesville and Tancredi, freeing up his own forces to focus on other problems; by the end of the year, as General Forlough began to siphon elements of his trusted II Corps from the Alliance Front, Barnex allowed Davion to further occupy Kennard and Pitkin. An enraged Hehiro Kurita finally put a stop to that when Davion attempted to annex Bryceland and Medron—worlds clearly within Kurita's area of responsibility.

NEGOTIATION

Within weeks it was clear that Major General Barnex was the antithesis of Amos Forlough. Their policies were at complete odds, with Barnex trying to build a base of support within the Outworlds Alliance rather than conquer it. To some he was simply trying to cover himself lest another defeat like Haynesville or Tellman destroy his career. To others he seemed a weakling, though any who defied him soon learned how powerful an enemy he could be. Five brigade and divisions commanders, still operating under the same thought processes engendered by Forlough, found their careers cut short when they defied Barnex's policies. Likewise, Barnex had half a dozen Kurita commanders and governors removed from their positions.

On the other hand, he rewarded excellence when he saw it and did not advocate simply giving up the fight. The campaign on Lushann, smoldering for the past seven months, briefly relit after the general's visit. Likewise, a simple nod and a brief increase in supply allocations was enough to encourage *Sho-sho* Nelsson to have another go at Quantraine.

It was clear that both sides were exhausted. It was also clear that any true push on Alpheratz would be at least as costly as the entire war had been to this point. The Alliance, once a pacifistic nation of isolated farmers and miners, had become united against the Star League and had built up a strong military—due as much to House Davion's apparent interference as to General Forlough's bloodthirsty policies.

By the end of 2584, three worlds were still heatedly contested: Quantraine, Lushann and Cerberus (the latter due to the arrival of the Pitcairn Legion in August). II Corps was pulling out of the

Alliance for the Taurian Front, and the SLDF was beginning to focus more and more resources on the Rim Worlds Republic. The Alliance's will remained strong, though Forlough's campaign of destruction was having far more an effect upon its strength than Avellar or his advisors were willing to acknowledge.

YEAR FIVE: PEACE IN OUR TIME

The first inklings of a possible peace proposal on the Alliance Front came in February of 2585, when Alexander Davion suggested to Ian Cameron that Avellar might be willing to come to the negotiation table if given a fair proposal. Likewise, Davion's son communicated a few potential options to President Grigori Avellar, opening the door for Avellar to bring peace to his exhausted nation.

Davion brokered between the two for months before they sent emissaries to Cerberus in June. Their flag of truce brought an end to the back-and-forth battles between Pitcairn and Zibler, and the delegates sat down to discuss true peace terms that both sides could find acceptable.

Avellar's number one term was that his people and his nation be granted the same freedom as any other Star League member-state, while his second demand was that General Forlough and his chief subordinates be tried for crimes of war and genocide on Alpheratz. The League negotiators, of course, could not assent, but it was a start.

By the end of July the two negotiation teams had finally come to an agreement, each acknowledging that both sides could likely continue fighting for years and that the cost of conquering Alpheratz would be far in excess of any paid to date, but that the Star League would ultimately conquer the world and with it the Outworlds Alliance. The Outworlds Alliance would retain its autonomy, but would report as a protectorate under the direction of the Periphery Policy Council on Terra. The Star League would also provide economic and technological assistance to repair and rebuild the nation its troops laid waste to. In return, the Alliance ceded claim to twenty-three systems to the Star League, nine to House Davion (per Avellar's original agreement with Davion) and fourteen to House Kurita (several of which the two Houses would continue to vie for over the course of the next five centuries).

The Treaty of Cerberus was signed by President Grigori Avellar and Major General Franklin Barnex, representing First Lord Ian Cameron, on 25 July 2585. Its provisions would officially become binding on 1 August, bringing an end to the Star League's campaign against the Outworlds Alliance.

More than twelve million men and women lost their lives in the conflict. The majority were civilians killed by General Amos Forlough's troops as they rampaged indiscriminately through communities across the Alliance. Property damage was calculated in the high billions of Star League dollars, not accounting for the trillions spent on the war itself.

But it was over. Finally.

THE RIM WORLDS CAMPAIGN

Whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall also reap.

—Paul's letters to the Galatians 6:7, *King James Bible*

It's a police action. Kick a few Republican keisters, put Gregory back on his throne and then home in time for strudel, ja?

—"Archon Viola Steiner-Dinesen" (as mimicked by comedian Anit Yef)

Casualties many; percentage of dead not known; combat efficiency—we are winning.

—Colonel David M. Shoup, Tarawa, 1943

The Star League did not anticipate fighting a campaign in the Rim Worlds Republic and gave little thought to the need to outfit and dispatch a fourth task force. With two thirds of the SLDF sent to the Taurian Concordat and the remainder committed to the Outworlds Alliance and Magistracy of Canopus there simply weren't enough bodies. The Republic was, thankfully, pro-Hegemony (and by association pro-Star League) and so wasn't an appreciable threat. The Star League hadn't, however, reckoned with internal politics and personal ambition.

While the traditional view of the situation in the Rim Worlds places the blame squarely on Gregory Amaris, the Star League itself was far from innocent. The Republic had long maintained ties with the Terran Hegemony and Ian Cameron and the Diplomatic Corps were lulled by the positive diplomatic noises coming from Apollo. That Amaris misrepresented and mishandled the situation is without question, but the truth is that the Star League wanted to hear that a Periphery state wished to join the Star League voluntarily. Only when Amaris pushed things so far that dissent became insurrection did the Star League notice. Some critics pointed out that sending SLDF troops—even a training cadre—into the Republic may have triggered the collapse of Amaris' house of cards.

DESCENT INTO MADNESS (2571-2580)

The rule of House Amaris over the Rim Worlds Republic centered on political maneuvering and scheming. The era of coups and fratricidal conflicts seemed long in the past. Unlike many of the Periphery nations who had distanced themselves from the Inner Sphere, the Republic had exploited the tensions between the Lyran Commonwealth and Draconis Combine for its own advantage, serving as neutral broker, facilitator and in some cases co-conspirator in the overt and covert clashes. The Amaris' ties to the Camerons—they remained dual-nationals, with citizenship and holdings in the Hegemony, though few members of the family returned "home" and their estates were instead managed by stewards—placed them in a difficult position when the Star League was born. Gregory Amaris was no less a schemer than his predecessors and he saw the personal benefits of joining the League. His people, however, had little desire to give up their independence. Protests against Amaris' overtures to the Star League grew, centered in the Rift Republican Army (RRA).

EFRIMAL LONG

The RRA had long since ceased to be an operational military and had become instead a sort of veteran's association—a society through which those of like mind could provide mutual support. Their recent history hadn't been overly political or militant, but in April 2573 extremist members of the RRA whipped the population of Eleazor on Apollo into a frenzy over taxation imposed by Amaris and prompted a mass riot. The Eighth Amaris Dragoons moved to suppress the troubles, but as they did several hundred men and women dressed in RRA uniforms attacked the Efrimal Long barracks, headquarters of the Eighth and the site of a maximum security prison housing dissidents. The small Dragoon garrison and the regimental command staff were quickly overrun and executed.

Using communications gear captured from the Dragoons the RRA force jammed communications across Apollo and broadcast their demands. In addition to the ending of Amaris' imprisoning of his political rivals, RRA commander Colonel Janisssa DeCoe called for all foreign troops to be withdrawn from the Republic and that the Rim Worlds' sovereignty be respected. Amaris reacted with predictable brutality, sending the Fifth Amaris Fusiliers and the Republican Guard into the city to restore order.

Favorites of Amaris, both units were well-equipped and had significant BattleMech contingents. They expected to have little trouble retaking Efrimal Long and bringing the rebel force to justice but were quickly disabused of the notion when the RRA troops proved adept at anti-Mech actions, crippling several light 'Mechs before being driven off. This setback further angered Amaris who, rather than capturing the facility and its occupiers, ordered the site razed by artillery and air strikes. Almost a third of the RRA force died in the assault, and many others were slain by the encircling loyalist formations.

In the aftermath Amaris passed the Universal Act of Loyalty, requiring all citizens of the Republic to swear an oath of loyalty to the Amaris family and, by extension, the Star League. Those who refused were branded traitors, their property confiscated and their civil rights suspended. It was high-handed and grossly unpopular, but large portions of the Republic swore the oath. There were notable dissenters, the best known of which were the population of Somerset, who were starved into submission by a naval blockade in 2574.

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SLDF TASK FORCE MAILED FIST

Commander: General Nathan Isaacson

Constituent Units: SLDF IV Corps, SLDF VI Corps, SLDF VIII (Provisional) Corps, Lyran Auxiliary Corps, Second Draconis Auxiliary Brigade, Second Marik Auxiliary Corps

Initial Force Strength:

BattleMech Regiments: 27 (31 regiments after the addition of the Second Draconis Auxiliary Corps in 2584)

Armor regiments: 17

Infantry regiments: 18

Aerospace regiments: 9

Warships: 32

THE SLDF IV CORPS

(Redeployed from the Taurian Front in 2581)

Administrative Center: Formalhaut

Commander: Major General Amar Lagat

Force Strength: 7 BattleMech regiments, 4 armor regiments, 4 infantry regiments, 5 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Eleventh Royal Division

THE SLDF VI CORPS

(Redeployed from the Taurian Front in 2581)

Administrative Center: Asta

Commander: Major General Erin Sho

Force Strength: 7 BattleMech regiments, 7 armor regiments, 6 infantry regiments, 4 aerospace regiments

Constituent Units: Sixteenth Division, Seventeenth Royal Division, Eighteenth Division

THE SLDF VIII (PROVISIONAL) CORPS (deployed 2590)

Administrative Center: Terra

Commander: Major General Bruno Rutherford

Force Strength: 4 BattleMech regiments, 6 infantry regiments, 6 armor regiments

Constituent Units: Thirty-first Armor Division, Thirty-second Division

LYRAN AUXILIARY CORPS

Commander: Archon Viola Steiner-Dinesen

Force Strength: 3 BattleMech regiments

Constituent Units: Fourth Royal Guard Regiment, Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers, Tamar Tigers

SECOND DRACONIS AUXILIARY BRIGADE

(added 2584)

Commander: *Tai-sho* Harry Fujimora

Force Strength: 4 BattleMech regiments

Constituent Units: Second Sword of Light, Seventh Sword of Light, Fourth Prosperina Hussars, First Arkab Legion

SECOND MARIK AUXILIARY CORPS

Commander: General Duke Narinder Selaj

Force Strength: 6 BattleMech regiments

Constituent Units: Second Marik Militia, Sixth Marik Militia, First Fusiliers of Oriente Brigade, Second Fusiliers of Oriente Brigade, Second Regular Hussars, Second Defenders of Andurien



THE RIM WORLDS ARMY

Administrative Center: Apollo

Commander: First Consul Gregory Amaris

Constituent Units: Household troops, Amaris Dragoons, Amaris Fusiliers, Amaris Legionaires

Initial Force Strength: 25 combined-arms regiments

Loyalist units: 15

Rebel units: 9

Disputed units: 1

Warships: 9



Though widely seen as a political own-goal, Gregory realized the move was divisive, but with the Star League turning its gaze toward the other Periphery states, saw the oath as a means of convincing Ian Cameron that the SLDF would not need to interfere in Rim Worlds affairs. His motives were selfish—he didn't want his own power diluted—but he was able to spin the news as a necessary evil to forestall an even worse situation for the Republic. For a short while it did restore calm.

THE MANCHESTER DIRECTIVE

By January 2575 the Star League was heading toward war with the Periphery states and, as a last ditch effort to forestall conflict, the High Council issued the Pollux Proclamation. With one exception the leaders of the Periphery states rejected the document, the odd man out being Gregory Amaris. He knew refusal to do so would return the Republic to the same position it had been in after Efrimal Long: a potential target for the SLDF. Had he restricted his pronouncements to this political gambit he might have weathered the storm—people had already accepted the oath—but he chose to add his own twist.

Alongside his endorsement of the Pollux Proclamation he issued the Manchester Directive, outlawing the Rift Republican Army. While radicals had been behind Efrimal Long most of the RRA were respectable ex-servicemen. Membership in the society was considered an honor. In declaring the society illegal he alienated massive swaths of the population. That anger turned to dismay as Amaris troops moved to suppress RRA groups and to seize their property and members.

Amaris had already stirred up the population with high-handed taxes and property seizures as part of his economic plan to make the Republic a rival to the Inner Sphere houses. Complaints about the taxation strategy were dismissed by the First Consul as “not seeing the big picture” and people who refused to cooperate with the land seizures were described as unpatriotic. However, his favoring of foreign workers and companies over domestic industries struck at the heart of the Republican population and, combined with the Manchester Directive, brought the situation to boil. Across the Republic Amaris’ orders began to be ignored, causing increasing chaos. The Republic was a powder keg.

THE SPARK

On 23 April 2575 workers at the Diplass BattleMech facility on Apollo went on strike. They refused to cooperate with the government until legal reforms were enacted that ensured their wages and rights to employment ahead of those “Star League foreigners” who had been imported to fill many technical and leadership roles. Amaris declared the strike at a vital military-industrial facility the act of traitors and insurgents and ordered troops from the Fourth Amaris Dragoons to move against the facility. Expecting little resistance, the Dragoon detachment sent to the facility was quickly overpowered.

Sending in the Fourth played into the strikers’ hands. Many of them were RRA members and welcomed conflict with Amaris—and, citing the government’s willingness to use force against unarmed strikers, declared Amaris had betrayed his office and lost the moral

authority to rule. The government, they said, was corrupt. It had lost its mandate and so they, the workers of Diplass, would form a new government of the people, the Rim Provisional Government. Amaris responded predictably. He declared Apollo under martial law and dispatched the Seventh Amaris Legionnaires to retake Diplass. A short, brutal assault would be all it took to crush the conspirators and restore order. But Amaris had miscalculated: upon arriving at the plant, the Legionnaires refused his orders. Colonel Katherine Dormax declared her support for the provisional government. A second unit, the Eighth Amaris Fusiliers, was sent to bring the Seventh Legionnaires to heel but they too sided with the rebels.

Realizing that half the Rim Worlds troops on Apollo had sided with the rebels—only the Republican Guard remained unswervingly loyal, while the Fourth remained uncommitted and thus a threat to his position—Amaris fled the capital, retreating to his island estates. He continued to issue directives, but with the provisional government in control of the the capital and starport, Amaris’ authority extended no further than the waters around his estate.

News of the provisional government on Apollo sent shockwaves across the Republic. Many worlds similarly refused Amaris’ authority and declared themselves aligned with the Provisional Government—or even independent. Other worlds held to the authority of the First Consul and found themselves in opposition to their neighbors. The Republic’s military found itself polarized: some units remained loyal while others sided with the Provisional authorities. Many split. Conflict between the factions was inevitable and, by July 2575, a state of civil war existed in the Republic.

Prior to the seizure of the starport Amaris had dispatched a courier to Terra requesting military intervention in the Republic. The call could not have come at a worse time—the SLDF was committed to operations in the other Periphery states and had no troops free. Shandra Noruff-Cameron is alleged to have said “let him stew in his own juices for a while.” She might have let the situation alone, had it not been for the fate of the SLDF troops on Apollo.

When the Amaris government collapsed the SLDF cadre was in Camp Cameron in Rhodes province. In their two years there they’d built a good relationship with the local population, but suddenly found themselves surrounded by hostile forces. Natives who had yesterday traded food and indulged in friendly banter were suddenly cold and suspicious. RRA agitators had been at work, and while not openly hostile to the SLDF forces, the people were encouraged to take a stand against the “invaders.”

Major Bruce Langmuir, commanding the SLDF detachment, appreciated the predicament, particularly after the RRA’s seizure of the starport (and with it the SLDF DropShips). The fortified base had plentiful supplies, but time and numbers were against them. They were, however, the largest ‘Mech force on Apollo, fielding forty BattleMechs, and so the rebel forces did not launch an immediate assault. Instead, the RRA isolated Camp Cameron and began an encirclement that lasted almost three years. Water was the key to the siege and the RRA cut off the camp. Unfortunately for the provisional government, SLDF engineers attached to the cadre were able to drill wells to pump water from the local aquifers.

It became a waiting game, with both sides raiding the other and seeking to exploit weaknesses. The RPG forces shelled the compound repeatedly. The SLDF identified the batteries and launched devastating counter-battery fire and raids. It was a game in which one side had numbers and fervor and the other technology and discipline. Langmuir knew that Amaris had sent couriers to Terra. If the SLDF held out long enough help would arrive.

The end of the siege came suddenly and unexpectedly in April 2578. Under cover of one of the many storms that ravaged Rhodes, RRA commandoes slipped into Camp Cameron and crippled the sensor net surrounding the complex. As repairs begab Major Langmuir was assassinated and the RRA began a new assault. Effectively blind and leaderless, the cadre was overrun. Of the twenty-eight surviving MechWarriors, nineteen died in the battle. Katherine Dormax, who commanded the besiegers, declared the survivors prisoners of war but, before she could take them into custody, extremists in the RRA militia attached to her force executed the SLDF survivors and mutilating the corpses.

The action divided the RPG against itself—though she opposed Amaris, Dormax could not sanction such brutality among allied troops—and when news of the massacre reached Terra in late 2578, the First Lord and commanding general knew the Republic couldn't be ignored any more.

FALSE STARTS (2579-81)

In 2579 the only SLDF troops available to aid the Rim Worlds Republic were the two Reserve Corps at Terra (which General Lee was unwilling to deploy) and several still-forming divisions comprised of new inductees to the Star League military. To deal with the situation, a provisional VIII Corps was cobbled together and dispatched to the Rim Worlds border. It lacked backbone and so was bolstered by six FWLM regiments, two of which had gained experience on the Magistracy front. A small LCAF detachment was similarly included in the task force, but with the Lyran Commonwealth having a long border with the Republic and no SLDF troops available for garrison duties, the scale of this detachment was kept small in favor of the Commonwealth's ability to defend its own territory. The initial planning assumed VIII Corps and the Lyran and Free Worlds auxiliaries (thirteen 'Mech regiments) would comprise the assault force. Its goals were limited to restoring order on Apollo and reseating Gregory Amaris on his throne. By modern standards it was a sizeable army, but in Age of War terms it was lightweight and ill-suited to the task at hand.

As firsthand reports of the situation in the Republic began to filter into the SLDF command post on New Caledonia the scale of the task facing Operation Mailed Fist became apparent. General Isaacson urgently requested additional reinforcements. The commanding general and First Lord were faced with a series of difficult choices; the Taurian front was in danger of bogging down and the Rim World offensive looked stillborn. It was a time for gambles and so, rather than reinforcing the Taurian front, Lee withdrew the bloodied IV and VI Corps, dispatching them to Trell I. During the three-month journey across the Inner Sphere both corps reorga-

nized, amalgamating formations to create complete operational regiments. In the process each reduced their formations from six to four operational divisions, all understrength, particularly in armor and infantry. Both corps were veterans: IV Corps had staged a series of bloody assaults in the Pleiades Cluster before suffering horrific losses to bio-terrorism on Brussett. VI Corps had only slightly less experience but was, thankfully, in better shape. Their addition brought the SLDF total to eighteen 'Mech regiments, twenty-seven in total with the Marik and Lyran. Four DCMS regiments would join the force in 2584.

THE RIM WORLDS ARMY LOYALTIES

Household Troops

Republican Guard (CO: Colonel Richard Amaris) (L)
Tartan Brigade (CO: Colonel Angus Graham) (L)

Amaris Dragoons

First Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Silvio Cana) (D)
Second Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Nial Farrell) (R)
Third Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Ada Sidhu) (L)
Fourth Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Charlse Svennsen)(L)
Fifth Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Zoey Rane) (L)
Sixth Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Tomas Renaud) (R)
Seventh Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Samuel Macao) (L)
Eighth Amaris Dragoons (CO: Colonel Jose-Antonio Zarate)(L)

Amaris Fusiliers

First Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Joann Munoz) (L)
Second Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Gianluca Cannillo) (L)
Third Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Miglena Schaeffer) (R)
Fourth Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Anastasia Mitsov) (R)
Fifth Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Ivy Hassan)(L)
Sixth Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel William MacKenzie) (R)
Seventh Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Sola Okanwe) (L)
Eighth Amaris Fusiliers (CO: Colonel Dean Shields)(R)

Amaris Legionnaires

First Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Ma Weiwei) (L)
Second Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Edvard Kuiper) (L)
Third Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Zulqarnain Ramannavar) (R)
Fourth Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Samuel Baraou) (L)
Fifth Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Franchetta Wong)(R)
Sixth Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Rob Huijboom) (L)
Seventh Amaris Legionnaires (CO: Colonel Katherine Dormax)(R)

(L) denotes units loyal to Amaris

(R) denotes units rebelling against Amaris

(D) denotes units of disputed loyalty

CASE APOLLO

The initial SLDF plan was simple—the liberation of Apollo and Amaris and the reestablishment of the legitimate Republican government. Named Case Apollo, it called for a task force to push forward from its advance bases on Trell I and New Caledonia, seizing the worlds between there and Apollo to form a bridge of stars. No more than six worlds needed to be taken—seven including Apollo itself—and the fighting was expected to take no more than two years, with another three years to pacify the rest of the Republic.

The Star League Defense Force Intelligence Command (SLDF-IC) had identified Republican troop concentrations in the region—four regiments in the worlds around Apollo and another four on Apollo itself—which should pose few problems for the focused fire of the task force. The loyalty of these troops was a different matter. Some had thrown their lot in with the RPG or else had gone rogue, while others were loyal to Amaris and thus notionally allied with the SLDF. While the SLDF was optimistic about the number of “loyalist” units, there was no telling how any of these friendly units would react to the SLDF and so they would be forced to treat all with suspicion. The horrors experienced in the Taurian campaign gave IV and VI Corps good reason to be wary.

PERSISTENCE, TREELINE, STAR'S END AND BLACK EARTH (MAY-DECEMBER 2581)

The initial assaults, targeting Persistence, Treeline and Star's End were deliberately provocative, aimed at known Republican troop concentrations so as to better judge the performance of the opposing troops. According to SLDF-IC, two of the Republican units were loyalists (a battalion each of the Fifth Amaris Fusiliers on Star's End and Persistence; the third battalion was on Steelton) while the Eighth Dragoons on Treeline (known today as Winfield) were aligned with the RPG.

The landings on Treeline on 9 May went better than on the other two worlds; the Amaris troops didn't contest the SLDF landings at Felsonville and VI Corps' Sixteenth Division was able to take charge of the planet's administrative and communications hubs. However, the Eighth refused to surrender, and as the Sixteenth began to expand its sphere of influence they were attacked by Republican raiders who, despite being outnumbered, used knowledge of the terrain to ambush the SLDF force. Though lacking 'Mechs the Eighth had significant light tank forces and were able to strike and withdraw before the Sixteenth could react. The planned three week campaign became three months before the world was considered secure, and even then it would be almost Christmas, seven months after the landing, that the last Republican forces were rounded up.

Persistence was a much harsher world than the Eden-like Treeline. Habitation was only made possible by desalination plants. It would not be until the mid-Twenty-seventh century that the world would be able to support a large population. Control of these plants was thus vital to both defender and occupier, and became the focus of three months of clashes between the SLDF and the Republicans who, not having received orders to the contrary,

resisted the SLDF. Signs of the impending trouble appeared during the landings, with Republican fighters harassing the inbound DropShips and surface-to-air batteries at the Danderson City starport pounding the initial wave. It took a ground assault by VI Corps' Seventeenth Division to clear the way for follow-up landings. The Republicans only surrendered once the last water plant was in SLDF hands. Losses in the campaign were biased against the SLDF, who had sought to minimize the loss of life among their notional allies. The Fusiliers had no such compunction.

The asteroid belts of Star's End were newly colonized by the Republic—the official population was less than five thousand, though that number would swell considerably after the war when refugees from Amaris' persecution took refuge in the system—with significant strategic value, hence the Republican garrison. The SLDF task force assigned to the system met no resistance. In fact, there was no sign of the Rim Worlds unit ... or the colonies. Without detailed charts the SLDF fleet spent the next fourteen months surveying the system, identifying the mining facilities (most of which had been shut down to minimize detection) and securing the Amaris garrison. The loss of life was low compared to other worlds, but the work was hard and tedious. Three months after their arrival Star's End was judged sufficiently safe for the establishment of an SLDF fleet base (which promptly became the biggest client of the system's mining operations and eventually, in the Star League era, the site of a maintenance and manufacturing yard) and the establishment of a supply depot on the sole habitable world, Novo Cressidas.

The fourth assault, launched in early September, was against Black Earth. It marked the first operation of the Lyrans Expeditionary Force, whose goal was to secure the flank of the drive on Apollo. Expecting an easy assault against what the LIC told them was a lightly defended world, the Lyrans corps instead faced stiff aerospace resistance. The Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers took significant damage before the Republicans were beaten back and the world conquered.

MAIN STREET, CANAL AND BUENA (OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2581)

The SLDF had expected some counterattacks by the Rim Worlds forces along the border with the Lyrans Commonwealth and, as news of the SLDF strikes began to filter through the shattered Republic, the expected reprisals began in late October. The first few strikes were against Main Street and Buena, small company-sized raiding forces staging fast assaults and then withdrawing when faced with robust LCAF defenses. They caused little damage and disruption. A third strike against Canal in early December was similarly driven off, though the merchant vessel *Gristwood Weir* sustained damage when the LCAF pursuers mistook it for the raiders' JumpShip.

ALARION (DECEMBER 2581)

More worrying to the SLDF, and Archon Viola in particular, was a deep strike on 19 December against Alarion. Three jumps from the border, the industrial world had been considered safe from Rim Worlds raiders, but a battalion of the Fourth Amaris Fusiliers, based

on New India and Urjala, successfully eluded both the LCAF and SLDF border patrols and Alarion's orbital defenses. The unit's DropShip grounded at the capital Craiova, where the emergence of the Fusilier 'Mechs caught the port staff—who had expected a shipment of ore from Carlisle—completely by surprise. The Fusiliers were able to wreak significant damage to the port facility before the defenders could react, retreating to their DropShip before the LCAF troops could cut them off. There followed an eight-day running battle as the Republican vessel fled to the JumpShip waiting for them at the nadir jump point.

In addition to being costly and disruptive to the local economy, the strike against Alarion demonstrated that the Republican military was more determined and cohesive than intelligence had suggested. Fearing more such raids, Archon Steiner-Dinesen insisted that the SLDF operational plan be reviewed. She called on the SLDF to broaden its approach to the Republic, focusing not just on liberating Apollo but on bringing all of the Republican forces to heel. It must, she insisted, deal with all of the Republic, from Helbrent to Taran's World, not just the cluster of worlds around the Dark Nebula. General Isaacson was not inclined to agree, but the Archon threatened to remove her troops from the task force and—more significantly for the SLDF—to direct the financial and logistical support provided by the Commonwealth to Lyran units along the border.

Faced with spreading his too-small force over a much larger area or having the operation cancelled entirely, General Isaacson opted to heed the Archon's suggestions. He did so under protest to Commanding General Lee, stating that the operation would now likely take a dozen years, require another corps of troops and, if "that woman" (Steiner-Dinesen) interfered again, he might just leave her to stew. Additional forces were eventually forthcoming in the form of the four regiments of the Draconis Combine Auxiliary Corps, assigned to the task force in 2584, but the relationship between the general and Archon remained frosty until the tragedy of Apollo in 2595.

ISLAND HOPPING (2582-2590)

The new SLDF operation was significantly more measured than the initial strategy, focusing on reducing RWA troop concentrations and safeguarding the Lyran Commonwealth. Each of the Republic's three provinces would receive equal attention which, due to size disparities, meant Finmark and Timbuktu would be pacified first, allowing the task force to focus on Apollo Province and the Rim Provisional Government.

A battle group comprised of the SLDF IV Corps and the Second Marik Auxiliaries, commanded by Duke Selaj, would focus on Timbuktu Province (and be bolstered by the Combine Auxiliaries in 2584). A second group comprised of the SLDF VI Corps under Isaacson's authority would operate in Apollo Province while a third, formed from the VIII (provisional) SLDF Corps and the Lyran Auxiliary Corps and commanded by Archon Viola would suppress Finmark Province.

The need to relocate forces (and the distance involved) hampered the initial operations, particularly as Steiner-Dinesen and Selaj argued over the disposition of supplies and transports. It was July before the two battlegroups were in place and, as Battlegroup Apollo consolidated its hold on Star's End, Treeline and Persistence, troops from the other groups struck at Bucklands and Helbrent.

HELBRENT TO NIGHTWISH (JULY 2582–NOVEMBER 2584)

The landings on Helbrent by IV Corps (in effect the Eleventh Royal Division) gave the task force cause for optimism. The heavy armor of the Sixth Amaris Legionnaires chose to oppose the landings and was trounced by the SLDF force. The world was secured within three days of the landings, though a new problem arose—the Fourth had not deployed its infantry detachments. Holding the territory they'd seized proved a challenge until the infantry brigade arrived six weeks later.

Bucklands was almost the opposite. The VIII Corps met little opposition to its landings but faced an uphill struggle in neutralizing the Second Fusiliers. The light armor of the RWA unit proved adept at escaping the Star League patrols and striking back at weak points in the SLDF positions. The tenacity of the defenders came as a shock to the infantry-dominated VII Corps, who often found themselves on the retreat despite their numerical advantage. It soon became clear that rather than a disorganized rabble, they were facing troops determined to protect their homes from foreign aggression, with even "loyalist" units like the Second opposing the SLDF troops. It would take seven months to pacify Bucklands, a pattern that repeated itself on numerous worlds.

The slow progress of the SLDF was initially based on the need to focus on troop concentrations, both to secure the worlds and to prevent attacks against the Lyran Commonwealth. The tenacious defense by the RWA units—rebel and loyalist alike—was often bolstered by militias drawn from the general population. These groups were initially dismissed as disorganized rabble but the effectiveness of the irregulars soon began to tell against the Inner Sphere troops.

DISHONORS OF WAR: IRREGULAR TACTICS

There's something to be said for a guy defending his home: he's got every incentive to hit you where it hurts, and as often as he can. On paper we outclassed the Rim Rats in every way, but did that put them off? Not in the slightest. They just got sneakier and nastier. They had nothing to lose, so it became a matter of determination. They tried to convince us the price of taking the Republic was too high. We tried to break their spirit and convince them that survival was preferable to victory.

Anyone will tell you that heavy armor should be used defensively but the Rats threw expectations in our faces. Getting flanked by a ten-ton hoverscout is one thing—damned gnat—but a fifty-ton assault tank with a large-bore cannon smarts a darned sight more. They attacked 'Mechs with infantry, took vehicles into woodlands and gave up defensible positions in order to lure us into preplanned killing fields. All the stuff you're not meant to do. Hurt us? Damned right they did, and with a bit more time and effort they'd have had us running away like a load of the Elsie's did.

They're cold arrogant bastards, but I think the Drac tactics were the most suited: hit the enemy hard and first and don't take no shit. But no, we were good little drones and pressed on with the territorial conquest our masters wanted, trying to play nice against a foe who wanted to—and frequently did—slit our throats.

—Force Commander Ariadne Phillips, Second Marik Militia (letter to her sister Lucy, 31 December 2591)

BUSTING BUNKERS

Bunkers became a staple of RWA and RRA insurgents during the Rim Worlds Campaign. On one hand there were small dugouts, often in the space under innocuous buildings, in which snipers and saboteurs could lurk. SLDF infantry on building-clearing operations had to become adept at identifying and dealing with such structures, though in the early years of the war the naive troopers frequently fell victim to them.

On a larger scale were weapons emplacements, again frequently situated beneath existing structures but also built into hillsides and other concealed locations. Once the abrogation of the Ares Conventions became clear the RWA became increasingly cynical about the placement of their weapons—sites beneath schools, hospitals and other structures the SLDF would hesitate to attack were particular favorites.

The uppermost tier of bunkers were more like subterranean villages—bases from which groups of insurgents could operate, attacking from concealment behind SLDF lines. Many troopers took to calling the Republican insurgents “Rim Rats” for their subterranean abodes. Many SLDF formations spent considerable effort analyzing aerial photography to locate such facilities. Dealing with them was another matter.

Some could be attacked by traditional means—heavy weapons—though most SLDF formations (a notable exception being the Combine detachment) attempted to minimize collateral damage. Other complexes required scouring by SLDF infantry, winking out each and every RWA trooper while facing pit traps, murder holes and deadfalls. The largest bunkers could only be dealt with by support weapons—artillery and air power. In the most extreme cases orbital bombardment was used; few structures could withstand tungsten kinetic-kill spears dropped from 200 kilometers up or capital laser batteries.

—*Tools of the Trade: the Reunification War*, Atrius Military press, 3030

On Medelin in April 2583 the Eighteenth Division (part of VI Corps) faced off against the First Amaris Legionnaires, making good progress initially and then bogging down in the wooded hills. The ‘Mechs of the Eighteenth gave them greater mobility than the armor of the Legionnaires, but local knowledge allowed the RWA troops to lure the invaders into preplanned killing zones. Bunkers and tunnel complexes had been dug into the hill-sides and the SLDF troops frequently found themselves assailed from the flanks and rear by concealed gun emplacements and anti-Mech infantry. Their losses spiraled and the conflict eventually came down to bitter close-quarter fighting by the division’s infantry, clearing bunkers one by one, an operation that took until February 2584.

On Urjala, the inbound SLDF troops (three regiments of the Second Marik Auxiliaries) smashed elements of the Fourth Amaris Fusiliers—the force that had raided Alarion—before running into the same problem as on Helbrent: holding the terrain. As 2583 progressed, the Marik troops saw their grip on the world slipping away and only the arrival of reinforcements (part of the Free Worlds League garrison on Bolan) secured the world.

The Sixteenth Mechanized Infantry (VI Corps) expected an easy ride on Kikuyu; analysis indicated that the First Dragoons had collapsed into internecine conflict as rebels and loyalists vied for control. The SLDF would mop up. In reality the arrival of the SLDF division persuaded the RWA troops to put aside their differences and to focus on the common enemy. The fight for Kikuyu turned into a bloody ten-month slog that lasted until January 2585. Casualty estimates placed SLDF losses at a little over 8,000 (of whom 2,500 were fatalities) while the Rim Worlds losses were around 30,000 casualties, of whom more than 20,000 were irregulars.

Nightwish, attacked on 16 June 2584, marked the first operational deployment of the newly arrived DCMS contingent of Battlegroup Timbuktu. Garrisoned by the Second Amaris Dragoons, it was expected to be a tough fight, something the Combine troops relished. The Combine corps would let nothing stand in their way. Victory was all that mattered. The result of their single-minded determination was carnage. With the Ares Conventions suspended, the Combine troops had few compunctions about shelling civilian settlements to drive off concealed RWA troops and of torturing prisoners to extract information about their bases and numbers. News of the atrocities percolated through the Republic and soon all of the SLDF were being tarred with the same brush, regarded as the barbarians many in the Inner Sphere had accused the Peripheries of being. Duke Selaj confronted *Tai-sho* Fujimora about his troops’ attitude and actions but was told in no uncertain terms. “You wanted the world. You got the world. Our methods are efficient and save troops and resources.” The DCMS lost forty-two men on Nightwish, only seven of whom were MechWarriors. The RWA lost over 10,000, mostly among the partisan groups.

ARLINA TO VIBORG (DECEMBER 2584—SEPTEMBER 2588)

Republican resistance stiffened after the atrocities on Nightwish. RWA units of all stripes and the civilian population intensified their opposition to the invaders. The slow progress and high casualties began to sap the morale of the SLDF troops, particularly among the Lyran troops. Desertions rose considerably after 2585. While dissatisfaction spanned the SLDF task force, for the LCAF there was the additional temptation of return-

ing home; the Commonwealth was only a jump or two away and if they could disguise themselves long enough to secure passage on one of the civilian vessels supplying the SLDF, they would be home free.

General Isaacson and Archon Steiner-Dinesen had little choice but to deal with the matter harshly; military police patrols were stepped up and civil shipping subject to inspection by the SLDF-IC and LIC. Any deserters rounded up were dealt with harshly, stripped of their rank and position and sentenced to hard labor in the logistics camps. They found that the backbreaking work of moving crates of food and ammunition was as harsh and soul-destroying as life on the front line, but unlike the Republican enemy, the stigma of being assigned to a penal battalion could never be escaped. The rate of outright desertions slowed but the SLDF would have problems with troops going absent without leave (a less severe infraction in the SLDF code, distinguished from desertion by the trooper remaining in uniform and thus not abandoning his unit) for the duration of the campaign.

After 2585 the focus on RWA formations was less pronounced than previously, with worlds of strategic value becoming the principal objectives. The absence of line units didn’t necessarily make the conquests any easier; the civil populations of Arlina, Fjernet and Huesta put up significant resistance, requiring six-month campaigns to bring an end to the insurrections. On Derf and Milvano, civil unrest persisted for over a year after the occupation of the planetary capitals.

The stand-up fights on Finmark and New India were almost a relief to the SLDF. The Fifth Dragoons and the last remnants of the Fourth Fusiliers sold themselves dearly but did so without the tricks and treachery the SLDF saw on so many worlds.

The battle for Austerlitz, named for the battle in 1805 where Napoleon smashed the combined Austrian and Russian forces, bore little resemblance to its illustrious forebear. Rather than a grand tactical victory, it turned into a brutal slugging match. Heavy elements of the Sixth Dragoons pinned the larger SLDF force (VIII Corps' Thirty-first Armor Division) and then slashed at the division's slow-moving infantry regiments with light tanks. Air power and fast 'Mech companies were able to counter these tactics to a degree but by the time the three-week battle ended on 2 December 2587, exactly 782 years after the original battle, the SLDF's losses were significant and the unit was temporarily withdrawn for refitting.

NEWTOWN SHOALS: SHARKS AMONG MINNOWS (JANUARY 2588)

The small RWA fleet was known to the SLDF but save for one encounter (in which a lone Republican corvette was crippled and boarded at Finmark in 2586) had made itself scarce. The SLDF was wary of these vessels (two destroyers and six remaining corvettes) and ensured all of its invasion forces were escorted by capital ships, but by 2588 the threat was largely dismissed.

Admiral Hakim Wbika (who would later lead a coup against Gregory Amaris) used this to deadly effect. Realizing that alone his ships were easy prey for the SLDF he gathered the fleet in stealth and waited for an opportunity to pounce. Two weeks after the Sixteenth Division landed on Newtown Square the subjugation of the local militias was proceeding apace. The principal obstacle to the offensive was a reinforced bunker complex in the Ard Ri Mountains, difficult to attack from the ground and well protected by anti-air guns. The decision was made to use orbital bombardment against the complex and the divisions' escorts—the cruiser *Rapacious* and the frigate *Alacrity*—moved into assault orbits.

Tipped off by agents on-world, Wbika launched his small fleet at the SLDF transport fleet gathered at Newtown Square's zenith jump point. In a sixty-minute engagement the eight small WarShips destroyed nineteen SLDF JumpShips and twenty-four DropShips. Two regiments of infantry waiting on the transports perished, making Newtown Square the most costly "undefended" world taken by the SLDF.

The SLDF escorts heard what was happening to their charges as they approached firing positions against the Ard Ri complex. Accelerating to maximum speed as soon as they'd fired on the bunkers, the two WarShips sped toward the interlopers. Maintaining a punishing acceleration, the *Rapacious* and *Alacrity* would arrive before the RWA vessels could recharge and jump away so Wbika maneuvered his vessels into the Newtown Shoals, the comet cloud orbiting in the distant reaches of the system. He hoped to avoid the larger and more skilled hunters long enough for his vessels to recharge and escape. He reckoned without the fury of the SLDF navy; the two WarShips and their attendant attack DropShips went after the RWA vessels mercilessly. Both RWA destroyers and two corvettes were destroyed outright and three were crippled. Only one managed to escape. Wbika's escape pod was picked up by DropShips from *Rapacious* and the admiral was lucky to escape a lynching. Eventually he was sent to an internment camp on Tharkad where he languished until the repatriation of POWs at war's end. Some in the SLDF had wanted the admiral tried for war crimes, but General Isaacson knew that to do so would open the SLDF (and the DCMS corps in particular) to similar charges.

TIMBUKTU (JULY 2588)

The capital of Timbuktu Province fell to the SLDF on 29 July after a four week campaign. The Seventh Dragoons faced off against the Eleventh Royal Division and the Draconis Auxiliary Brigade. The elite Royals and the brutal Combine troops made short work of the initial RWA defenses but after a week of fighting Colonel Samuel Macao withdrew his troops to the rugged Hades continent, where mining complexes provided pre-built defensive positions for his troops.

The Seventh could have staged a protracted guerilla campaign but the colonel became increasingly angered by the harsh treatment of the population at the hands of the Combine troops and launched a series of rash attacks that badly damaged his force. On Hades the SLDF had few worries about a civilian population and pounded the mining complexes mercilessly. After nineteen days of bombardment Macao surrendered what remained of his force.

ILLIUM TO BARCELONA (MARCH 2589–AUGUST 2591)

The personal fief of the Amaris family, Illium was guarded by the Tartan Brigade, part of Amaris' household troops. The regiment, descended from Marik refugees, initially resisted the SLDF landings in March 2589 but faced with bitter street battles in the capital, Troy, chose instead to surrender to preserve the ornate "topless towers" of the city. Colonel Graham received considerable praise for his pragmatism and was later decorated by Amaris himself. The colonel disappeared in 2599, presumably a victim of the Wbika coup.

Gwynedd, on the coreward border of the Republic, was almost the mirror of Illium. An initially-friendly reception in April 2590 quickly soured and turned into a bitter conflict. In 2575 the world had fallen under the sway of a local baron, Daffyd Ap Brendan, who had orchestrated

TURNABOUT

Robbie Republic whines about atrocities on Nightwish and Marisura but they forget that they were the ones who started it. You don't see the SLDF planting culvert bombs like the RWA did on Medelin or killing their own like on Winter [where, in 2587, RRA activists bombed a food center they accused of aiding the SLDF—Ed]. And let's not forget the whore-bitch Gallene [Alice Gallene seduced more than a dozen SLDF troopers on Milvano, luring them to torture and murder at the hands of her Republican associates—Ed]. We're bigger and harder than you, so you kick us we'll hit you back twice as hard.

—Corporal Alphonse Riggetti, Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers (private diary entry for 11 July 2588)

CIVILIAN BELLIGERENTS

"No defenders? Like hell. Ten million of the suckers—every man, woman and child on the godforsaken world. We learnt that the hard way on Bucklands. The kid asking for sweets? Scouting your position. The woman selling fruit? A poisoner. The whore trading favors? A cutthroat. The farmer in the field? A gunman waiting to pounce."

—Private Damien Schilling, Thirty-first Light Infantry

On some worlds the SLDF faced line units who fought in a traditional manner, but the in most cases they were backed by irregular troops ranging from professional RRA insurgents to farmers with proverbial pitchforks. The number of opponents facing a task force often didn't reflect the reality of the situation. On paper, a regiment of a few thousand RWA line troops faced off against a couple hundred enemy 'Mechs and maybe ten thousand armor and infantry, a decidedly lopsided equation. Schilling's assessment of entire populations fighting the SLDF is overstating the situation (in most cases) but on many worlds substantial numbers of civilians did join *ad hoc* militias and either attempted to fight alongside the line units (in which case they were often brutalized) or fight a guerilla campaign. The SLDF quickly learned that a rifle was just as deadly in the hands of a schoolmaster as an infantryman—bullets cared little about rank and status and a pretty girl was a more effective assassin than a grizzled veteran.

Defeating such foes was almost impossible—with no central command they couldn't be forced to surrender. Their spirit could be broken, sure, but that often required harsh methods the SLDF preferred to avoid. Some, like the DCMS, were less squeamish and took to regarding everyone as a potential belligerent. Other SLDF units found themselves slipping into more brutal tactics as they faced civilian-perpetrated atrocities and the cycle of violence threatened to spiral out of control.

The only true victory could come by convincing the Republicans of the benefits of joining the Star League, to lay down their arms and take up their plows. Unlike Canopus, however, where the Mariks had established a "good neighbors" policy from the outset, the SLDF in the Rim Worlds were playing catch-up, trying to retrofit a public relations policy on populations who had been beaten and bloodied. It was an uphill struggle.

—*Lies My Father Told Me*, Sally-Anne Hawkins, Robinson Press, 2601

the assassination of the Fourth Legionnaire's commanders and their replacement with his cronies. Though professing his loyalty to the Amaris family and unwillingness to fight the SLDF troops (the Sixteenth Royals again, freed from Illium by the surrender of the Tartan Brigade), Brendan was facing a rebellious population. The arrival of the SLDF turned divisiveness into outright conflict when both the Legionnaires and civil population fractured into different camps. The Sixteenth would spend eleven months in a peacekeeping role, separating the factions and restoring order.

With the pacification of Luanda and Slewis the campaigns in Timbuktu and Finmark provinces came to a close. Slewis posed few problems for the Marik troops assigned to seize it in May 2590—the leaders of the agrarian world simply acknowledged the new arrivals and carried on their farming and logging operations. Casualties in the campaign were from hunting accidents among bored troopers. In contrast, the Lyran troops who landed on Luanda in July 2590 struggled to bring order to a population that had collapsed into civil war in 2573. Amaris had been unable to take action before his own troubles isolated him on Apollo, and the result was a fratricidal conflict in which tens of thousands died. The SLDF arrived to pick up the pieces but found themselves unwelcome and attacked by all three factions. It was only through a mix of decisive action against the rebel militias and delicate diplomacy by Archon Viola Steiner-Dinesen that a fragile peace was established.

BARCELONA (APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2591)

When the Lyran and Marik corps landed on Barcelona in April 2591 they found the world held by the Fifth Amaris Legionnaires, commanded by Franchetta Wong, a distant cousin of First Consul Amaris. Wong initially tried to advance herself as a representative of the ruling family but the triumvirate leading the SLDF assault—Archon Viola, Duke Selaj and General Margaret Beck of the Thirty-first Armor Division—dismissed her claims. The Marik duke advocated using Colonel Wong as a figurehead to stabilize the world, but the Archon refused to countenance the charade, believing it would open a political can of worms.

With her claims rejected, Wong turned against the invaders and began a skilled campaign that stretched the Star League contingent despite their advantages in numbers and equipment. By early June, however, the Legionnaires were on the defensive, backed into the rugged terrain of the northern Norn continent. It seemed their days were numbered and it was only a matter of time before the legion was crushed by the massed SLDF force.

Fate, however, intervened.

THE GAMES OF MICE (2591-2592)

Like the Free Worlds League, the Lyran Commonwealth had a representative legislative body. Unlike the League's Parliament, the Estates General was an advisory body. Executive power rested with the Archon. Self interest and the Archon's authority kept them in line, but Viola Dinesen had been absent for almost ten years, leaving the management of the government in the hands of the inexperienced Archon-Designate, her son Kevin. The decade-long, fruitless war against the Rim Worlds sapped the Commonwealth's resources—particularly food—which led to increasing unrest among the population from the mid 2580s. The Estates General played upon this unrest in its deliberations and the "advice" put before the Archon-Designate. The result was a somewhat erratic domestic policy that was driven largely by foreign policy, in particular the Star League's need for tax revenues to prosecute the Reunification War.

The Estates General, and in particular the twenty-man steering committee, took exception to this meddling and a number began to move to distance the Commonwealth from the Star League. Matters escalated quickly, and in early 2591 a special session of the Estates General was convened to debate the Commonwealth's membership in the League. The session was due to begin on 13 March but the arriving representatives found

Tharkad in chaos, with intense LIC screening of entries and exits of the Triad and all departing DropShips; the Archon-Designate had disappeared, leaving the government rudderless.

Blame immediately fell on the dukes of Tamar and Skye, whose opposition to some of Kevin Dinesen's decisions was well known. The LIC took the unusual step of denying that their investigation included the dukes, but that only fanned the flames of suspicion. On 21 March an

unknown assailant opened fire on Duke Selvin Kelswa's limousine as it traveled between his residence and the Triad. No one was hurt in the incident—the assailant fled—but the Duke of Tamar decided discretion was the order of the day and returned to his homeworld. Aldo Lestrade, Duke of Skye, did likewise a few days later.

This left the Steering Committee of the Estates General as the *de facto* head of the Commonwealth and, on 25 March, they declared that, with great sadness and unwillingness, they would act as the leaders of the nation until either the Archon or the Archon-Designate reappeared to take charge. In the meantime, the debate and vote on the Commonwealth's membership of the Star League would continue as scheduled; the kidnapping of Kevin Dinesen would not be allowed to disrupt the government. Allowing it to do so, the steering committee said, would give the kidnappers what they wanted—chaos in the Commonwealth.

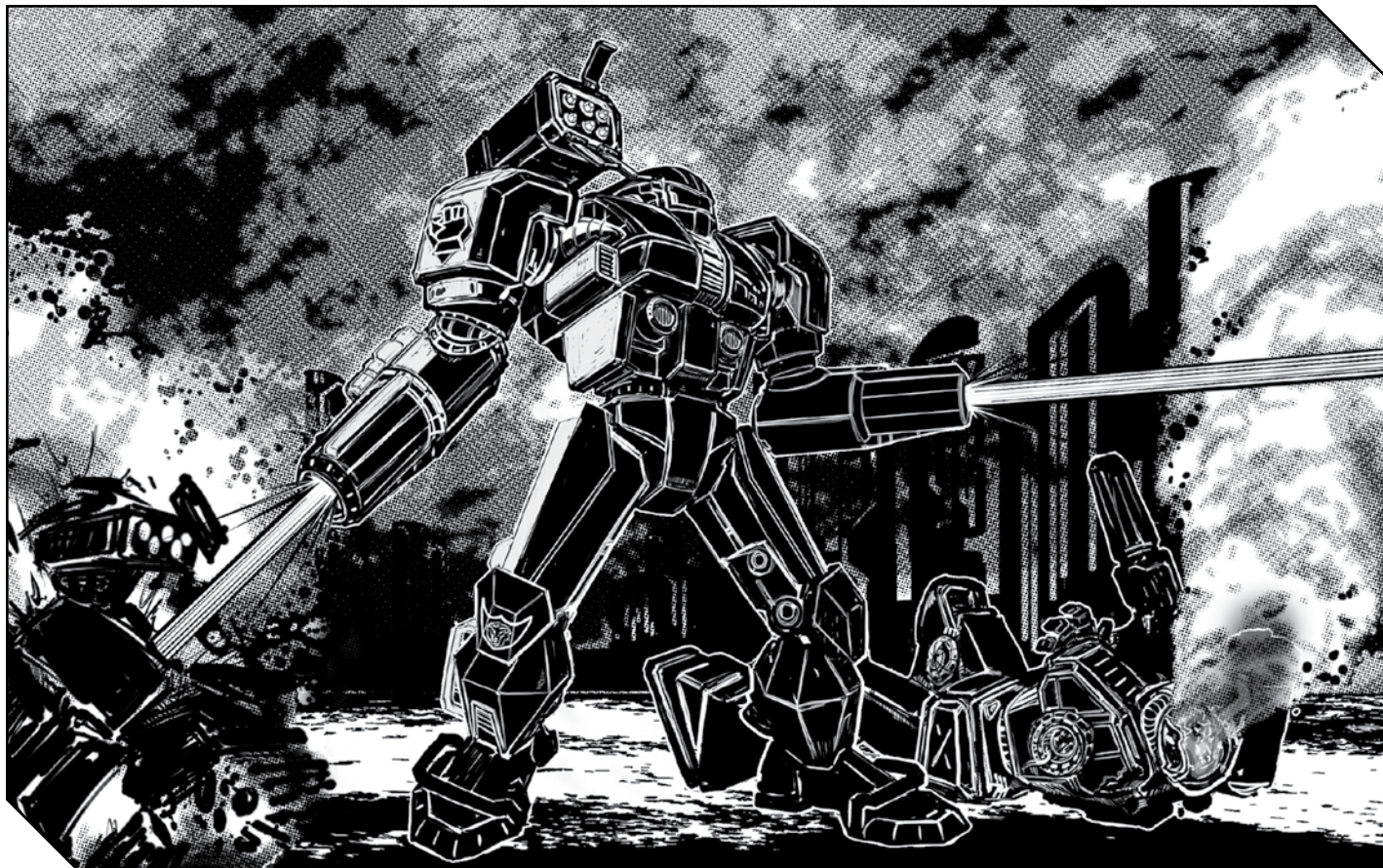
BARCELONA : THE DAY OF RAGE (19 JUNE 2591)

News of the Archon-Designate's disappearance sped to the Rim Worlds via SLDF courier JumpShips, but along with the official news travelled the rumors concerning the dukes of Skye and Tamar. No sooner had the vessels grounded on Barcelona than the rumors began to circulate. The official news traveled through bureaucratic channels whereas the rumors spread through the SLDF camp like wildfire. It was the assertions that Skye and Tamar had kidnapped her son that reached the Archon first.

Frustrated by her years in the Republic, and angered by the "facts" coming to her from Tharkad, Archon Viola snapped. She ordered her personal troops into action, seeking vengeance for the attack on her family. The combined cantonment of the Skye Ranges and Tamar Tigers were only ten kilometers from those of the Royal Guards, a distance the enraged Archon covered in minutes. Arriving at the Skye-Tamar camp, she destroyed the sentry 'Mechs and began rampaging through the camp.

Neither her escorts nor the Skye and Tamar troops were prepared for the Archon's violent actions and her initial rampage was unopposed. Despite their horror, the Royals moved to protect the Archon from the stiffening Skye and Tamar resistance. It was a horror that haunted the participants for decades—Lyran fighting Lyrans, with troops having to weigh their own lives and those of their comrades against that of the Archon. Many refused to use weapons—in fact many of the Skye and Tamar 'Mechs couldn't, being in the midst of maintenance and lacking ammunition—so much of the clash was a confused melee, in the midst of which the Archon's cockpit was crushed.

By the time Beck's SLDF troops arrived to separate the combatants 117 people had died. The best part of a battalion lay in ruins. Viola had survived the clash, but only barely; she spent the next month in a coma. She had severe trauma to her head and torso and had lost her left arm and, though she recovered from her other injuries, refused all offers of a prosthesis for the lost limb. Unsurprisingly, the Tamar Tigers and Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers petitioned for—and were granted—



MATTERS OF LEADERSHIP

A key factor in military success is good leadership . . . something neither side demonstrated on a strategic level.

Viola Steiner-Dinesen and Narinder Selaj hated each other with a passion, and Nathan Isaacson, notionally their superior, spent much of the campaign keeping the peace and assuaging the egos of his prima-donna field commanders. Ordinarily a commander of Isaacson's experience would have had few problems, but the son of a machinery salesman on New Earth would always be at a disadvantage with a head of state and a provincial lord who could (and in Viola's case did) use economic and political leverage to get what they wanted.

The Republic was in even worse position; Gregory Amaris was isolated on Apollo and couldn't issue orders, and even if he could his authority was badly compromised by the Manchester Directive. The Provisional Government found itself enmeshed in internecine squabbles—often fatal—as the members, now that they had power, argued about what to do with it. Had they been more coordinated Gregory could have been eliminated and their grip on the wider Republic solidified. Instead, most of the worlds and military formations lacked coordination and only on rare instances was effective action mounted. Even here self-interest prompted most formations to hunker down rather than use what little transport assets were available to aid neighboring worlds. Historians called it the “ostrich defense,” each unit being ignorant (often willfully so) of the larger picture. Had more widespread leadership been available for the RWA, the SLDF force would have suffered more than the bloody nose it did in the Rim Worlds campaign.

—*Divided They Fell: Leadership in War*, Sandhurst Abstracts, 2710

League as an occupying power and Archon Viola as a collaborator who was expanding the Hegemony's sphere of influence with her unjustified military actions in the Periphery. They had to save the Commonwealth from itself. The remaining members of the Steering Committee were tried and executed (by more conventional means than *Graf* Gram) and after an investigation of all the representatives, the Archon disbanded the Estates General. It would eventually reconvene in 2612. Kevin's evidence made clear the innocence of the dukes of Skye and Tamar, prompting a public apology and financial restitution by the Archon herself.

permission to withdraw from the SLDF task force, citing their unwillingness to fight for the Archon. For her part, Viola was filled with remorse at her actions, particularly after LIC and HCID investigators briefed her on the truth of the disappearance. Relations with Skye and Tamar would never completely recover. General Beck's troops completed the Barcelona occupation on 18 September.

By late October the Archon was fit to travel and she requested a leave of absence from the SLDF operation, wishing to return to Tharkad to deal with the crisis at home. General Isaacson granted permission and the Archon and the Fourth Royals immediately began preparations for a homecoming, though as this was not SLDF business she was not afforded the use of the SLDF's courier JumpShips and would instead require several months to return home. She arrived on 15 January 2592, in the nick of time as the vote on Lyran membership in the Star League was about to take place.

For ten months, the Steering Committee had pushed for secession. The intensity of their calls made some delegates suspicious. The Committee had been particularly unhelpful with the investigation into the disappearance of the Archon-Designate. The LIC found itself hamstrung, not recognizing the authority of the Steering Committee yet unable to operate without permission of the Archon-Designate (who was missing) or the Archon (who was in the Rim Worlds Republic). The representatives stalled for time, enmeshing the debates in bureaucratic details and trivialities and, on occasion, forcing a suspension in the debate by the simple expedient of not attending sessions. Eventually, as the Archon approached Tharkad, the filibuster tactics were dropped and the Estates General session allowed to proceed.

As the Steering Committee brought the chamber to order and marshaled the vote, Archon Viola's troops began landing around Government House and LIC agents, who had been operating in the building since receiving orders from the Archon the previous day, moved into action. The Steering Committee was placed under arrest, some surrendering calmly while others fled only to be apprehended by the LIC cordon. Key among those sought by the LIC and the troops of the Fourth Royal was the Speaker of the Assembly, *Graf* Henry Gram, who was initially allowed to escape only to be pursued by the agents. He fled to his offices in Government House where, concealed in a closet, was a very ill Kevin Dinesen.

Viola herself landed just before Gram was escorted from the building. Mounted in her 'Mech, she approached the ringleader of the attack on her family. His guards scattered but, defiant to the last, Gram refused to flee. The Archon crushed him beneath the foot of her *Warhammer*, a summary judgment on the conspiracy.

Kevin Dinesen was the key witness in the trials. He was able to link every member of the Steering Committee and several other members of government to the conspiracy, whose goal was a mix of self-aggrandizement and misguided patriotism. They saw the

LEONARD THE DEBAUCHED

While the drama of Kevin Steiner-Dinesen unfolded another tragedy took place. On 11 October, seventy-five-year-old Coordinator Hehiro Kurita tripped and fell down a flight of stairs, breaking his neck. Foul play was quickly eliminated and his son, Leonard, was elevated to his place. However, while Hehiro had great strength of character and insisted his retainers showed similar traits, Leonard was a wastrel. A staunch advocate of the Reunification War, Hehiro had played a significant role in the DCMS' campaign, serving as a conduit by which orders flowed to the DCMS which, while not yet bound by the samurai traits of the modern era, was prickly and wary of outsiders. His countersignature on the SLDF's operational orders assuaged any doubts the DCMS High Command had, satisfying their honor that correct protocols were being followed.

Leonard was nothing like his father. Leonard cared for one thing—Leonard—and celebrated his accession by going on a two-month bender. His predilection for women and drink threatened to cripple the government and only through the actions of his formidable grandmother, Siriwan McAllister-Kurita, did the Combine not collapse into chaos. Siriwan, however, lacked the authority to countersign the orders to the DCMS detachments with the SLDF and Leonard had no inclination to do so, leaving them crippled and directionless. Worse, he ordered other DCMS units to make provocative moves toward the Terran Hegemony. The District Warlords were left to pick up the pieces (the Auxiliary Corps were recalled in 2592) and

Leonard's rule would be a military and political disaster, the low point of which was his murder of Tanya Kerensky on Terra in 2604. Leonard's actions further gutted an SLDF task force in the Rim Worlds Republic, already reeling from the tragedy unleashed by Archon Viola. Though Steiner-Dinesen would eventually return the Fourth Royals to the fold, political games in the Commonwealth and Combine during 2591 cost Task Force Mailed Fist more than twenty-percent of its operational strength.

BITTER HARVESTS (2591-2596)

Despite the loss of six BattleMech regiments the campaign progressed. Here, Zertarum and Götterdämmerung were occupied in late 2591 and early 2592. Lackhove, Toland and Cryfder followed in 2593 and Anywhere, Bensinger and Battaraigi in 2594. Steelton, which fell to the SLDF in mid 2595, was the last world controlling the approaches to Apollo but General Isaacson opted to contain the loyalist forces on Taran's World (the Second Amaris Legionnaires) before assaulting the Rim Worlds' capital. As 2596 dawned the task force was poised to move against Apollo—a dozen years later than planned. Against the protests of Duke Selaj, Archon Steiner-Dinesen was placed in operational command of the landings on Apollo, with Selaj commanding the secondary task force and Isaacson himself commanding the naval elements. There were two objectives for the operation—the RPG government in Terra Prime and Gregory Amaris, who remained cooped up in his fortified compound almost two decades after the insurrection began. Steiner-Dinesen would command the Terra Prime operation while Selaj broke the siege around Amaris.

Both elements of the operation took place simultaneously on 21 March 2596, but while the Marik general quickly brushed aside the RRA forces opposing him the Archon faced a much tougher fight, clearing rings of gun emplacements and bunkers around the capital. There were times, however, when Selaj wished for the bloody stalemate Viola faced; Gregory Amaris was not the least thankful for his rescue, but instead berated the “insignificant Free Worlds lordling” for taking so long. Though Selaj's Principality of Regulus was richer and more populous than the Republic but to Amaris, the Marik commander was *only* a provincial leader, not a head of state like himself. Amaris decried the harsh conditions he'd been forced to endure (his house arrest had been better than most of his citizens and the SLDF task force). Though the Star League had eventually rescued him, Gregory felt betrayed by Ian Cameron and relations between the Amaris and Cameron clans cooled markedly. In the Amaris household the tale was later told that the brave Gregory put his neck on the line for Ian Cameron's dream of a Star League but was vilely abandoned and so the Camerons must, one day, be made to feel the same shame and dishonor as they'd inflicted on him. It has been suggested that the ultimate doom of the Star League, to be betrayed by Stefan Amaris, was set in motion on the day of Gregory's liberation.

Archon Viola's force made heavy going against the defenders of Terra Prime. The Seventh Amaris Legionnaires and the Eighth Amaris Dragoons exploited the bad weather of the monsoon season as a force-multiplier; the bad weather slowed movement of the SLDF task force and hampered attempts to use aerospace forces for reconnaissance and bombing missions. The fields around Terra Prime became a quagmire, sapping the strength and morale of the task force while the RRA units remained bottled up in the city, dry and well supplied. The addition of Marik's troops and the rescued Amaris loyalists tipped the odds in the SLDF's favor but Steiner-Dinesen needed a lure to persuade the rebels to leave the city.

On 24 March the Archon led two companies of the Fourth Royal Guard on a sweep around the city, having made sure RRA agents observing the task force knew of her participation. She hoped to lure the rebels into attacking her, at which point the three-fold jaws of the SLDF, FWLM and Amaris loyalists would close around them. The plan seemed to work, elements of both rebel units moving to engage the Archon's force, but it soon became clear that her troops were vastly outnumbered and no SLDF help was forthcoming; a communications glitch had delayed the springing of the trap. The Fourth Guards detachment was mauled and the Archon's 'Mech destroyed. SLDF reinforcements did finally arrive and pulled Viola and what remained of her command clear, but the opportunity to bring the campaign to a swift conclusion was lost and Steiner-Dinesen herself mortally wounded. The ailing Archon was evacuated back to Tharkad. She died of her injuries on 28 April, a day after returning home.

Resisting Gregory Amaris' calls to “bomb the rebels into atoms,” Isaacson took direct command of the operation. His conflicts with the Archon had lessened since the Day of Rage, but her recklessness—almost nihilism—had worried him and her fate wasn't unexpected. His more cautious approach wasn't going to bring Operation Mailed Fist to a sudden conclusion but it would minimize the loss of life on both sides. The five-month siege of Terra Prime was the last gasp of the rebellion and, on 3 September 2596, the provisional government surrendered.

KILLING THE DREAM

Despite Gregory's efforts—and those of the SLDF task force—the Rift Republican Army proved impossible to neutralize. Attempts to “cut off the head” of the organization failed because there was no senior leadership. The RRA was a loose society of Republican patriots, an ideal as much as an organization, and its loose form was in many regards the typical cell structure of insurgent groups. Only where members came to prominence—such as the Provisional Government on Apollo—were they vulnerable to traditional countermeasures. The organization would not die as long as the Republic endured.

After the Reunification War the organization regained some of its legitimacy but remained an obscure organization. On occasions it worked with the Amaris family—such as in the clashes with the Lyran Commonwealth in the Twenty-seventh century—and at others it opposed them. A modern analogy would be the Lyran Heimdall organization, though the less charitable might suggest the Combine's Black Dragons. It was Stefan Amaris' coup on Terra that finally broke the group; hardliners within the RRA supported his move, believing it demonstrated the power and strength of the Republic, but when it became clear that Amaris had abandoned his people many members of the RRA sided with the SLDF. The destruction of the Rim Worlds Republic at Kerensky's hands was the society's death knell, with many so disgusted at the Republic that they concealed their origins as its worlds were absorbed into the Lyran Commonwealth.

—*The Power Behind the Throne: Secret Societies of the Inner Sphere*, Lilly Shaw, Tamarind Free Press, 3065

DEPLOYMENT TABLES

The following tables list the movements and assignments made by each BattleMech unit involved in the Reunification War, where it fought and its status at the end of the battle. The table is divided into four sections, each describing movements along one of the four fronts—the Taurian Concordat Front, the Magistracy of Canopus Front, the Outworlds Alliance Front and the Rim Worlds Republic Front. All of the BattleMech units fielded by each of the militaries—including mercenary units—appear on this table (this includes the entire SLDF as well as each of the Periphery militaries, but only that portion of the AFFS, DCMS, FWLM and LCAF that played an active role in the war).

The movements shown on this table are based on approximate time frames. “Jump-Off” indicates the world to which the unit was assigned just prior to the start of hostilities on that particular front. The columns that follow indicate both worlds targeted in each year of the war as well as non-combat movements made, with non-combat movements indicated by the destination world in parentheses). Some units list the names of multiple worlds per

wave. Names that appear on different lines or are separated by a slash (“/”) indicate that the unit traveled to (or were stationed on) all of those worlds within that timeframe. Battle damage appears in [brackets]; [D] indicates the unit was effectively destroyed or disarmed (though many regained operational status after the war).

Note: The battle damage indicators on this table take into account complete losses (dead personnel and destroyed equipment) as well as “returnable” casualties (injured personnel and equipment that can be repaired). In most cases, after several weeks of rest and repairs, a unit that sustained moderate or even heavy losses could easily significantly reduce its effective battle damage level. Likewise, units shown as destroyed may not have been literally destroyed, merely reduced in strength to the point where they could no longer function as an independent command. Most were absorbed into other friendly units or “went underground” to fight a guerrilla campaign for the duration of the operation, though following the war only a handful of “destroyed” Periphery units were rebuilt and returned to active duty.

OUTWORLDS ALLIANCE FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2585)

Unit	Jump-Off	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
SLDF						
II Corps						
4th Division						
10th Brigade	Conroe	Niles/Sevon	Sevon	Cerberus/Quatre Belle/ Mitchella/Loparri	Transferred to Taurian Front	
11th Brigade	Conroe	Niles/Sevon	Sevon	Cerberus	Transferred to Taurian Front	
12th Brigade	Conroe	Niles/Sevon	Sevon	Cerberus	Transferred to Taurian Front	
5th Division						
13th Brigade	Latexo	Niles/Medron	Sevon	Cerberus	Cerberus	Transferred to Taurian Front
14th Brigade	Latexo	Bryceland	Tancredi IV/Sevon	Cerberus	Cerberus	Transferred to Taurian Front
15th Brigade	Latexo	Groveld III	Tancredi IV/Sevon	Cerberus	Cerberus	Transferred to Taurian Front
6th Royal Division						
16th Royal Brigade	Kesai IV	Niles/Sevon	Sevon	Tancredi IV/Haynesville	Transferred to Taurian Front	
17th Royal Brigade	Kesai IV	Niles/Sevon	Pitkin	Pitkin	Transferred to Taurian Front	
18th Royal Brigade	Kesai IV	Niles/Sevon	Kennard	Kennard	Transferred to Taurian Front	
V Corps						
13th Royal Division						
37th Royal Brigade	Pondicherry	Bad News	Haynesville	Bryceland	Bryceland	Bryceland
38th Royal Brigade	Chirala	Bad News	Medron	Ki Zolan/Morthac - Banori	Bryceland	Cerberus
39th Royal Brigade	Pondicherry	Bad News	Haynesville	Ki Zolan/Morthac - Banori	Groveld III	Cerberus
14th Division						
40th Brigade	Sinope	Bad News	Valentina	Ki Zolan/Tellman IV	Medron	Cerberus
41st Brigade	Sinope	Bad News	Valentina	Ki Zolan/Dindatari-Quiberas	Valentina	Valentina
42nd Brigade	Goubellat	Bad News	Valentina	Ki Zolan/Dindatari-Quiberas	Lushann	Lushann

OUTWORLDS ALLIANCE FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2585)

Unit	Jump-Off	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
V Corps (Continued)						
15th Division						
43rd Brigade	Delacruz	Wiesau	Medron	Ki Zolan/Lushann/Tellman IV	Lushann	Lushann
44th Brigade	Senorbi	Schirmack	Medron	Ki Zolan/Lushann	Lushann	Lushann
45th Brigade	Delacruz	Wiesau	Medron	Ki Zolan/Lushann/Tellman IV	Lushann	Lushann
DCMS Auxiliary Corps						
4th Benjamin Regulars			Budingen	Budingen	Budingen	Budingen
3rd Dieron Regulars			Bad News	Bad News	Bad News	Bad News
4th Galedon Regulars	Suianheer	Tabayama	Nexus Ri	Quantraine/Nexus Ri	Nexus Ri	Nexus Ri
17th Galedon Regulars	Santiago/Suianheer	Santiago/Sevron	Valentina	Tabayama	Tabayama	Tabayama
19th Galedon Regulars	Suianheer	Sevon	Kazanaka	Prinis Prime/Kazanka	Kazanaka	Kazanaka
24th Galedon Regulars	Suianheer	Sevon	Valentina - Zlatousi	Milligan's World - Zlatousi	Zlatousi	Zlatousi

Unit	Jump-Off	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
Outworlds Alliance Militia & Pitcairn Legion						
1st Alliance BattleMech Rgt						
Alliance Borderers				Alpheratz/Lushann	Lushann	Lushann
Alliance Grenadiers				Alpheratz/Cerberus	Cerberus	Cerberus
Pitkin Lancers			Alpheratz	Alpheratz/Lushann	Lushann	Lushann
Santiago Carabiniers			Alpheratz	Tellman IV	Cerberus	Cerberus
Alliance Armored Corps						
1st Alliance Armored Division	Tabayama/Kazanaka	Tabayama	Kazanaka	Prinis Prime/Milligan's World	Prinis Prime/Milligan's World	Prinis Prime/Milligan's World
2nd Alliance Armored Division	Nexus Ri/Zlatousi		Nexus Ri/Zlatousi	Quantraine	Quantrain/Cerberus	Quantrain/Cerberus
3rd Alliance Armored Division	Morthac/Dindatari/Lushann	Morthac/Dindatari/Lushann	Morthac/Dindatari/Lushann	Lushann	Lushann	Lushann
4th Alliance Armored Division	Ki Zolan/Kincaid II/Crestobius	Sevon	Ki Zolan	Ki Zolan/Lushann	Lushann	Lushann
Pitcairn Legion						
1st Pitcairn Legion	New Avalon	Sevon	Alpheratz	Kennard/Lushann/Tellman IV	Cerberus	Cerberus
2nd Pitcairn Legion	New Avalon	Sevon	Budingen	Budingen/Bad News/Tellman IV	Cerberus	Cerberus
3rd Pitcairn Legion	New Avalon	Sevon	Haynesville	Lushann/	Cerberus	Cerberus

TAURIAN CONCORDAT FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2585)

Unit	Jump-Off	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
SLDF									
I Corps									
1st Royal Division	Taygeta	Ridgebrook	Wrentham	—	Wrentham/Brusett	—	—	Victralla	Lindsay
2nd Division	Mandaree	Ridgebrook	—	Pleiades Cluster (Maia/Merope)	Flintoft/Diefenbaker	Diefenbaker	—	Victralla	Lindsay
3rd Division	Sanurcha	—	Wrentham	Pleiades Cluster (Maia/Electra)	Flintoft	—	—	Victralla	—
II Corps									
4th Division	Outworlds Front							(Victralla)	Hanseta
5th Division	Outworlds Front								
6th Royal Division	Outworlds Front							(Victralla)	Hanseta
III Corps									
7th Royal Division	Firgrove	—	(Mandaree)	—	Robsart	—	(Diefenbaker)	—	—
8th Division	Firgrove	—	(Mandaree)	—	Robsart	—	(Diefenbaker)	—	—
9th Division	Drienfontaine	Keuterville	Keuterville/ (Mandaree)	(Mandaree)	Robsart/Diefenbaker	Diefenbaker	—	—	—
IV Corps									
10th Division	Songgang	(Panpour)	(Sanurcha)	Pleiades Cluster [Maia]	Brusett	Carmichael	Carmichael	Carmichael	Carmichael
11th Royal Division	Songgang	—	(Anaheim/Sanurcha)	Pleiades Cluster [Merope]	Pleiades Cluster	Transferred to Rim Worlds Front			
12th Division	Enchi	Anaheim	(Anaheim/Sanurcha)	Pleiades Cluster [Electra]	Pleiades Cluster	Carmichael	Carmichael	Carmichael	Carmichael
VI Corps									
16th Division	June	Malagrotta/	Estuan	—	—	Transferred to Rim Worlds Front		Estuan	
17th Royal Division	June	Csomad	—	Lothair	—	Transferred to Rim Worlds Front			
18th Division	Agliana	Armington	—	—	Werfer	Werfer-Transferred to Rim Worlds Front			
XI Corps									
31st Division	Not Yet Formed					Hosham/Bromhead/ Rollis	—	Warren	Sartu
32nd Division	Not Yet Formed					Bromhead/Rollis	—	Warren	Sartu
Star Guard Corps									
22nd Royal Division	Terra								
23rd Division	Terra/Luthien/ Tharkad								
24th Division	Atreus/Sian/New Avalon								
1st Reserve Corps									
25th Division	Tharkad	—	(Anaheim/ Keuterville)	—	—	—	—	(Anaheim/ Keuterville/Warren)	—
26th Division	Luthien	—	(Csomad/ Malagrotta)	(Armington/Csomad/ Malagrotta)	—	—	—	—	*
27th Royal Division	Terra	—	(Firgrove)	—	—	(Brusett/Werfer)	—	—	(Brusett/Victralla/ Werfer)

TAURIAN CONCORDAT FRONT (2586–2596)

Unit	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594-2596
SLDF									
I Corps									
1st Royal Division	—	New Ganymede	New Vandenberg	—	Brockway	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
2nd Division	—	New Ganymede	New Vandenberg	—	Brockway	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
3rd Division	—	New Ganymede	New Vandenberg	—	Brockway	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
II Corps									
4th Division	Hanseta	MacLeod's Land	New Vandenberg	—	Desolate Plains	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
5th Division	Hanseta	MacLeod's Land	New Vandenberg	—	Desolate Plains	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
6th Royal Division	Hanseta	MacLeod's Land	New Vandenberg	—	Desolate Plains	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
III Corps									
7th Royal Division	—	Pinard	—	—	Midale	(Brockway)	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster
8th Division	—	Pinard	—	—	Midale	—	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster
9th Division	—	Pinard	—	—	Midale	(Desolate Plains)	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster
IV Corps									
10th Division	(Carmichael)	Hyalite	New Vandenberg	—	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
11th Royal Division									
12th Division	(Carmichael)	Hyalite	New Vandenberg	—	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
VI Corps									
16th Division									
17th Royal Division									
18th Division									
XI Corps									
31st Division	Sartu	Landmark	New Vandenberg	—	Brockway	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
32nd Division	Sartu	Landmark	New Vandenberg	—	Midale	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—
Star Guard Corps									
22nd Royal Division			Terra	—	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
23rd Division			Terra	—	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
24th Division			Terra	—	(New Vandenberg)	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
1st Reserve Corps									
25th Division	*	(Landmark/ MacLeod's Land/ Pinard)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
26th Division	(Hanseta/Sartu)	(Hanseta/Hyalite/ Sartu)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
27th Royal Division	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TAURIAN CONCORDAT FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2585)

Unit	Jump-Off	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
2nd Reserve Corps									
28th Division	Atreus	—	(Wrentham)	(Ridgebrook/ Wrentham)	—	(Ridgebrook/ Robsart/Wrentham)	—	—	—
29th Division	Sian	—	(Sanurcha)	—		(Flintoft)	—	—	—
30th Division	New Avalon	—	(Taygeta)	—	(Pleiades Cluster)	—	—	—	—
AFFS Auxiliary Corps									
1st Avalon Hussars	Naka Pabni				Wieppe	Wieppe		Caldwell	Mavegh
7th Avalon Hussars	Naka Pabni		Traussin		Wieppe	Wieppe		Wieppe	(Wieppe)
11th Avalon Hussars	Naka Pabni				Wieppe	Wieppe		Caldwell	Mavegh
20th Avalon Hussars	Naka Pabni		Traussin		Wieppe	Wieppe/Verdigreis	Verdigreis		Mavegh
33rd Avalon Hussars	Naka Pabni				Wieppe	Wieppe/Verdigreis	Verdigreis		(Verdigreis)
5th Syrtis Fusiliers	Panpour	Tentativa			Pierce	Pierce		Caldwell	Montour
7th Syrtis Fusiliers	Panpour		Cohagen		Pierce	Pierce		Caldwell	Montour
8th Syrtis Fusiliers	Panpour	Tentativa			Pierce	Pierce-Verdigreis	Verdigreis		Montour
9th Syrtis Fusiliers	Panpour	Tentativa			Pierce	Pierce		Pierce	(Pierce)
10th Syrtis Fusiliers	Panpour		Cohagen		Pierce	Pierce		Caldwell	(Caldwell)
Davion Brigade of Guards	New Avalon								

*Unit relinquished garrison duties to conventional AFFS occupation force

Unit	Jump-Off	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
Taurian Defense Force									
Taurian Guard Corps									
1st Taurian Guard	Taurus	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Diefenbaker/(Taurus)
1st Concordat Velites	Taurus	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Diefenbaker/(Taurus)
Calderon Red Hand	Taurus	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Diefenbaker/(Taurus)
5th Taurian Guard	Jamestown	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
17th Concordat Chasseurs	Ishtar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1st Hyades Special Services	Formed 2589	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Hyades Special Services	Formed 2590	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
129th Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2588	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
143rd Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2591	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Taurian 1st Corps									
9th Concordat Velites	MacLeod's Land	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Pleiades Hussars	New Vandenberg	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th Taurian Guard	Illiusin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
50th Concordat Chasseurs	New Ganymede	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
90th Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2581	—	—	—	Robsart [D]				
111th Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2586	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
122nd Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2587	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TAURIAN CONCORDAT FRONT (2586–2596)

Unit	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594-2596
2nd Reserve Corps									
28th Division	—	—	—	—	*	(Brockway/Desolate Plains/Midale)	—	—	—
29th Division	(Carmichael/Flintoft)	(Carmichael/Flintoft/ New Ganymede)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
30th Division	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
AFFS Auxiliary Corps									
1st Avalon Hussars	Mavegh	Cyrton	New Vandenberg	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—
7th Avalon Hussars	*	Cyrton	New Vandenberg	—	—	—	—	—	—
11th Avalon Hussars	Mavegh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20th Avalon Hussars	Mavegh	Cyrton	New Vandenberg	—	—	(Robsart)	—	—	—
33rd Avalon Hussars	*	Cyrton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th Syrtis Fusiliers	Montour	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7th Syrtis Fusiliers	Montour	Dumassas	New Vandenberg	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—
8th Syrtis Fusiliers	Montour	Dumassas	New Vandenberg	—	—	(Wrentham)	—	—	—
9th Syrtis Fusiliers	*	Dumassas	New Vandenberg	—	—	(Ridgebrook)	—	—	—
10th Syrtis Fusiliers	*	Dumassas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Davion Brigade of Guards				Illiusin/Renfield	New Avalon				
*Unit relinquished garrison duties to conventional AFFS occupation force									

Unit	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594-2596
Taurian Defense Force									
Taurian Guard Corps									
1st Taurian Guard	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
1st Concordat Velites	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
Calderon Red Hand	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
5th Taurian Guard	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
17th Concordat Chasseurs	—	—	New Vandenberg [D]						
1st Hyades Special Services	—	—	—	—	—	—	Cluster	—	—
2nd Hyades Special Services	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
129th Concordat Chasseurs	—	—	New Vandenberg [D]						
143rd Concordat Chasseurs	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hyades Cluster	—	—
Taurian 1st Corps									
9th Concordat Velites	—	MacLeod's Land [D]							
2nd Pleiades Hussars	—	—	New Vandenberg [D]						
4th Taurian Guard	—	—	—	Illiusin	—	—	—	—	—
50th Concordat Chasseurs	—	New Ganymede [D]							
90th Concordat Chasseurs									
111th Concordat Chasseurs	—	—	New Vandenberg [D]						
122nd Concordat Chasseurs	—	—	New Vandenberg [D]						

TAURIAN CONCORDAT FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2585)

Unit	Jump-Off	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585
Taurian 2nd Corps									
1st Concordat Chasseurs	Robsart	—	—	—	Robsart [D]				
3rd Pleiades Hussars	Horsham	—	—	—	—	Horsham [D]			
30th Concordat Chasseurs	Bromhead	—	—	—	—	Bromhead [D]			
Taurian 3rd Corps									
2nd Taurian Guard	Diefenbaker	—	—	—	Diefenbaker [D]				
1st Pleiades Hussars	Maia	—	—	Maia [D]					
4th Pleiades Hussars	Electra	—	—	Electra [D]					
5th Pleiades Hussars	Merope	—	—	Merope [D]					
69th Concordat Chasseurs	Flintoft	—	—	—	Flintoft [D]				
74th Concordat Chasseurs	Brockway	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
82nd Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2578	(Pleiades Cluster)		Pleiades Cluster [D]					
88th Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2579		(Pleiades Cluster)	Pleiades Cluster [D]					
Taurian 4th Corps									
6th Concordat Velites	Lothair	—	—	Lothair [D]					
8th Concordat Chasseurs	Warren	—	—	—	—	—	—	Warren [D]	
3rd Taurian Guard	Sartu	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Sartu
2nd Concordat Chasseurs	Hyalite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Taurian 5th Corps									
3rd Concordat Velites	Verdigreis	—	—	—	—	Verdigreis	Verdigreis [D]		
22nd Concordat Chasseurs	Dumassas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Taurian 8th Provisional Corps									
94th Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2584							(Taurus)	—
99th Concordat Chasseurs	Formed 2585								(Taurus)
Taurian Volunteer Guard									
Brusett Vol. Guard	Brusett	—	—	—	Brusett [D]				
Carmichael Vol. Guard	Carmichael	—	—	—	—	Carmichael	Carmichael	Carmichael	Carmichael [D]
Hanseta Vol. Guard (1 Btn)	Hanseta	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hanseta
Hyalite Vol. Guard	Hyalite	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Illiuschin Vol. Guard	Illiuschin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Keuterville Vol. Guard (2 Btn)	Keuterville	Keuterville [D]							
Landmark Vol. Guard	Landmark	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lindsay Vol. Guard	Lindsay	—	—	—	—	—	—	Diefenbaker	Diefenbaker [D]
Midale Vol. Guard	Midale	—	—	—	—	—	—	Diefenbaker	Diefenbaker [D]
New Ganymede Vol. Guard	New Ganymede	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pinard Vol. Guard	Pinard	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Renfield Vol. Guard	Renfield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Victralla Vol. Guard (2 Btn)	Victralla	—	—	—	—	—	—	Victralla [D]	
Werfer Vol. Guard	Werfer	—	—	—	Werfer [D]				

TAURIAN CONCORDAT FRONT (2586–2596)

Unit	2586	2587	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594-2596
Taurian 2nd Corps									
1st Concordat Chasseurs									
3rd Pleiades Hussars									
30th Concordat Chasseurs									
Taurian 3rd Corps									
2nd Taurian Guard									
1st Pleiades Hussars									
4th Pleiades Hussars									
5th Pleiades Hussars									
69th Concordat Chasseurs									
74th Concordat Chasseurs	—	—	—	—		Brockway [D]			
82nd Concordat Chasseurs									
88th Concordat Chasseurs									
Taurian 4th Corps									
6th Concordat Velites									
8th Concordat Chasseurs									
3rd Taurian Guard	Sartu [D]								
2nd Concordat Chasseurs	—	Hyalite [D]							
Taurian 5th Corps									
3rd Concordat Velites									
22nd Concordat Chasseurs	—	Dumassas [D]							
Taurian 8th Provisional Corps									
94th Concordat Chasseurs	—	Montour [D]							
99th Concordat Chasseurs	—	Montour [D]							
Taurian Volunteer Guard									
Brusett Vol. Guard									
Carmichael Vol. Guard									
Hanseta Vol. Guard (1 Btn)	Hanseta [D]								
Hyalite Vol. Guard	—	Hyalite							
Illiushin Vol. Guard	—	—	—	Illiushin	—	—	—	—	—
Keuterville Vol. Guard (2 Btn)									
Landmark Vol. Guard	—	Landmark [D]							
Lindsay Vol. Guard									
Midale Vol. Guard									
New Ganymede Vol. Guard	—	New Ganymede [D]							
Pinard Vol. Guard	—	Pinard [D]							
Renfield Vol. Guard	—	Renfield							
Victrola Vol. Guard (2 Btn)									
Werfer Vol. Guard									

MAGISTRACY OF CANOPUS FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2582)

Unit	Jump Off	2577	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582
SLDF							
VII Corps							
19th Division							
55th Brigade	Meadowvale	Gouderak	—	Obrenovac	—	—	—
56th Brigade	Meadowvale	Umka	Scheuerheck	Obrenovac	—	—	Lindenmarle
57th Brigade	Meadowvale	Restitution	Payvand	Eleusis	—	—	—
20th Division							
58th Brigade	Tellman's Mistake	Cranston	Ruschegg	—	Aspropirgos	Borgan's Rift	Tetski
59th Brigade	Tellman's Mistake	Vakarel	—	Bethonolog	Gallis	—	Royal Foxx
60th Brigade	Tellman's Mistake	Butzfleth	—	Bethonolog	—	Fanardir	Adherlwin
21st Royal Division							
61st Royal Brigade	Watermael	Gouderak	—	Eleusis	—	—	Royal Foxx
62nd Royal Brigade	Watermael	Restitution	Ruschegg	—	—	—	Royal Foxx
63rd Royal Brigade	Watermael	Umka	—	—	—	—	—
Independent Regiments							
401st Independent Regiment	Ayn Tarma	—	Scheuerheck	Eleusis	—	—	—
35th Royal CAAN Marine Rgt.	Ayn Tarma	—	Payvand	Eleusis	—	—	—
402nd Independent Regiment	Leyda (CC)	Butzfleth	—	—	—	Borgan's Rift	—
403rd Independent Regiment	Leyda (CC)	Butzfleth	—	—	—	Fanardir	Adherlwin
1st Marik Auxiliary Corps							
Marik Militia							
First Marik Militia	Rohinjan	Cranston	Ruschegg	Obrenovac	—	—	Tetski
Third Marik Militia	Rohinjan	Restitution	Ruschegg	—	Aspropirgos	Borgan's Rift	—
Fourth Marik Militia	Hindmarsh	—	Payvand	Obrenovac	—	—	—
Fifth Marik Militia	Cole Harbour	Gouderak	Payvand	Eleusis	—	—	Tetski
Fusiliers of Oriente							
First Brigade	Mauripur	—	Ruschegg	Eleusis	—	<Redeployed>	—
Second Brigade	Rohinjan	Restitution	Ruschegg	—	Aspropirgos	<Redeployed>	—
Third Brigade	N/A	—	—	—	—	<Deployed>	Tetski
Fourth Brigade	N/A	—	—	—	—	<Deployed>	—
Oriente Hussars							
Second Oriente Hussars	Granera†	Gouderak	Payvand	—	Gallis	—	Lindenmarle
Stewart Dragoons							
Juggernaut	Granera†	Umka	Payvand	—	Gallis	—	Lindenmarle
Orloff Grenadiers							
2nd Orloff Grenadiers	Saonara†	Cranston	Scheuerheck	Bethonolog	—	—	—
3rd Orloff Grenadiers	Saonara†	—	Scheuerheck	—	—	Fanardir	—
Regulan Hussars							
3rd Regulan Hussars	Kanata	Umka	Scheuerheck	Bethonolog	—	—	—
Defenders of Andurien							
1st Defenders of Andurien	Kanata	—	Scheuerheck	—	—	Fanardir	—

† denotes a military staging post/depot that later became a colony. ‡ denotes a world not known to the Star League when war began

MAGISTRACY OF CANOPUS FRONT (2583–2588)

Unit	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587	2588
SLDF						
VII Corps						
19th Division						
55th Brigade	Afarsin	Bass	—	Palladix	—	—
56th Brigade	—	Marantha/Tarol IV	Candear	Harminous	—	Hardcore
57th Brigade	Nobel/Lockton	Joyz	—	—	Cate's Hold	—
20th Division						
58th Brigade	—	Canopus	—	—	—	—
59th Brigade	Megarez†/Krimari‡	—	Techne's Revenge‡	—	Willdwood	Hardcore
60th Brigade	Early Dawn	Brixтана/Canopus	—	—	—	—
21st Royal Division						
61st Royal Brigade	Nobel	—	Candear	—	—	—
62nd Royal Brigade	Nobel	—	Candear	—	—	Kossandra's Memory‡
63rd Royal Brigade	—	Canopus	—	—	Cate's Hold	—
Independent Regiments						
401st Independent Regiment	Megarez‡	—	Techne's Revenge‡	—	Willdwood	Hardcore
35th Royal CAAN Marine Rgt.	—	Canopus	—	—	—	—
402nd Independent Regiment	Hastur	Canopus/New Abilene	—	—	—	—
403rd Independent Regiment	—	Canopus	—	—	Cate's Hold	—
1st Marik Auxiliary Corps						
Marik Militia						
First Marik Militia	—	Canopus	—	—	—	Kossandra's Memory‡
Third Marik Militia	Hastur	Canopus	—	—	—	—
Fourth Marik Militia	Afarsin	Marantha	Candear	—	—	—
Fifth Marik Militia	—	—	—	—	Cate's Hold	—
Fusiliers of Oriente						
First Brigade						
Second Brigade						
Third Brigade	Krimari‡	New Abilene	—	—	—	—
Fourth Brigade	Krimari‡	Canopus	—	—	—	—
Oriente Hussars						
Second Oriente Hussars	Afarsin	—	Candear	—	Willdwood	—
Stewart Dragoons						
Juggernaut	—	Tarol IV	—	Palladix	—	—
Orloff Grenadiers						
2nd Orloff Grenadiers	Afarsin	Bass	—	—	—	—
3rd Orloff Grenadiers	Zatharas	Canopus	—	—	—	—
Regulan Hussars						
3rd Regulan Hussars	Afarsin	Marantha	Candear	—	—	Kossandra's Memory‡
Defenders of Andurien						
1st Defenders of Andurien	Zartharas	Canopus	—	—	—	—

† denotes a military staging post/depot that later became a colony. ‡ denotes a world not known to the Star League when war began.

MAGISTRACY OF CANOPUS FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2582)

Unit	Jump Off	2577	2578	2579	2580	2581	2582
Magistracy Armed Forces							
Magestrix Guard							
Magestrix Guard	Canopus	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chasseurs à Cheval							
1st Canopian Light Horse	Gouderak	Gouderak/Umka	Saonara (FWL Raid)	Eleusis	—	(Megarez‡)	Royal Foxx/Lindenmarle
2nd Canopian Light Horse	Eleusis	—	Granera (FWL Raid)	Eleusis	Vakarel (Raid)	—	Lindenmarle
3rd Canopian Light Horse	Restitution	Restitution	—	Eleusis	Gallis	—	Tetski [D]
4th Canopian Light Horse	Canopus	—	—	—	—	—	Royal Foxx/(Megarez‡)
Canopian Fusiliers							
1st Canopian Fusiliers	Butzfleth	Butzfleth	—	—	Aspropirgos	Leyda (CC Raid)	—
2nd Canopian Fusiliers	Thurrock	—	(Early Dawn)	—	—	Fanardir	—
3rd Canopian Fusiliers	Payvand	—	Ayn Tarma (FWL Raid)	(Hastur)	—	Fanardir	Payvand (Raid)
Canopian Grenadiers							
1st Grenadiers	Royal Foxx	Cranston	(Tetski)	—	—	(Lockton)	—
2nd Grenadiers	Nobel	—	—	—	Aspropirgos	(Canopus)	—
Canopian Cuirassiers							
Canopian Cuirassiers	Canopus	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fleet							
First Fleet	Canopus	Vakarel	(Fanardir)/Meadowvale (FWL Raid)	(Zatharas)	(Gallis)	Cranston (Raid)	(Megarez‡)
Second Fleet	Restitution	Vakarel	(Cate's Hold)/Meadowvale (FWL Raid)	(Tetski)	(Afarsin)	(Wildwood)	(Krimari‡)
Mercenary Troops							
Buquoy's Bandits	Canopus	—	Meadowvale (FWL Raid)	—	Gallis	Tellman's Mistake	(Canopus)
Samuelson's Slaughterers	Vakarel	(Gallis)	Meadowvale (FWL Raid)	Eleusis	—	(Megarez‡)	Eleusis (Raid)
Kincani's Dragoons	Eleusis	—	Meadowvale (FWL Raid)	—	—	Borgan's Rift	—
Mieselsen's Marauders	Umka	Vakarel	Meadowvale (FWL Raid)	—	Hindmarsh (FWL Raid)	(Megarez‡)	—
The Red Hand	Early Dawn	(Hastur)	—	—	—	Borgan's Rift	(Canopus)
Force Majoris	Cate's Hold	—	(Borgan's Rift)	—	—	—	—

‡ denotes a world not known to the Star League when war began.

MAGISTRACY OF CANOPUS FRONT (2583–2588)

Unit	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587	2588
Magistracy Armed Forces						
Magestrix Guard						
Magestrix Guard	—	Canopus [D]				
Chasseurs à Cheval						
1st Canopian Light Horse	—	Marantha	—	Palladix [D]		
2nd Canopian Light Horse	—	—	Candiear	Harminous	Wildwood	Kossandra's Memory‡[D]
3rd Canopian Light Horse						
4th Canopian Light Horse	Krimari‡	—	Candiear	Palladix [D]		
Canopian Fusiliers						
1st Canopian Fusiliers	—	Canopus [D]				
2nd Canopian Fusiliers	—	Joyz	(Cate's Hold)	—	Cate's Hold [D]	
3rd Canopian Fusiliers	—	Canopus [D]				
Canopian Grenadiers						
1st Grenadiers	(Canopus)	Canopus [D]				
2nd Grenadiers	Thurrock [D]					
Canopian Cuirassiers						
Canopian Cuirassiers	—	Canopus [D]				
Fleet						
First Fleet	Thurrock [D]					
Second Fleet	Thurrock [D]					
Mercenary Troops						
Buquoy's Bandits	Cole Harbour (FWL-Raid)	—	Candiear	Harminous	Wildwood	Kossandra's Memory‡[D]
Samuelson's Slaughterers	Early Dawn	Brixtana	(Cate's Hold)	—	Cate's Hold [D]	
Kincani's Dragoons	Thurrock [D]					
Mieselsen's Marauders	—	Marantha [D]				
The Red Hand	—	Canopus [D]				
Force Majoris	Thurrock [D]					

‡ denotes a world not known to the Star League when war began.

RIM WORLDS REPUBLIC FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2587)

Unit	Jump-Off	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587
SLDF								
IV Corps								
11th Royal Division	Trell1	—	Helbrent	—	—	Huesta	—	—
VI Corps								
16th Division	Trell1	Treeline	—	—	Kikuyu	—	—	—
17th Royal Division	Trell1	Persistence	—	—	Malibu	—	Derf	—
18th Division	Trell1	—	—	Medelin	—	Arlina	—	Winter
VIII Corps								
31st Armor Division	Chahar	—	Bucklands	—	—	—	FinMark	Austerlitz*
32nd Division	Chahar	—	Bucklands	—	—	—	FinMark	—
Lyrans Auxiliary Corps								
Fourth Royal Guard Regiment	Roadside	Black Earth	—	—	Qurayyat	Fjernet	—	—
Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers	Roadside	Black Earth	—	—	Qurayyat	Fjernet	—	—
Tamar Tigers	Roadside	Black Earth	—	—	Qurayyat	Fjernet	—	—
Draconis Auxiliary Corps								
Second Sword of Light	N/A				Nightwish	—	Milvano	—
Seventh Sword of Light	N/A				Nightwish	—	Milvano	—
Fourth Prosperina Hussars	N/A				Nightwish	—	Milvano	—
First Arkab Legion	N/A				Nightwish	—	Milvano	—
2nd Marik Auxiliary Corps								
Marik Militia								
Second Marik Militia	New Caledonia	Star's End	—	Stirling	—	—	—	—
Sixth Marik Militia	New Caledonia	Star's End	—	Stirling	Kladnitsa	—	—	—
Fusiliers of Oriente								
First Brigade	New Caledonia	Star's End	—	Stirling	Kladnitsa	—	—	—
Second Brigade	Romulus	—	—	Urjala	—	—	Kitopler	New India
Regulan Hussars								
Second Regulan Hussars	Romulus	—	—	Urjala	—	—	Kitopler	New India
Defenders of Andurien								
Second Defenders of Andurien	Romulus	—	—	Urjala	—	—	Kitopler	New India

RIM WORLDS REPUBLIC FRONT (2588—2596)

Unit	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594	2595	2596
SLDF									
IV Corps									
11th Royal Division	Timbuktu	—	—	—	Here	Lackhove	Anywhere	Steelton	Vulture's Nest
VI Corps									
16th Division	Newtown Square	Illium	Gwynedd	—	—	—	—	Steelton	—
17th Royal Division	Somerset	—	Wotan	—	—	—	Bensinger	Taran's World	—
18th Division	—	—	Herbania	—	—	Toland	—	—	—
VIII Corps									
31st Armor Division	—	Malaga	—	Gotterdamerung	Zertarum	Cryfder	—	Japminboddu	Apollo
32nd Division	—	Edirne	—	—	Zertarum	—	Battaraigi	—	Apollo
Lyran Auxiliary Corps									
Fourth Royal Guard Regiment	Kwangjong-ni	—	Luanda	Barcelona	—	—	—	—	Apollo
Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers	Kwangjong-ni	—	Luanda	Barcelona <withdrawn>	—	—	—	—	—
Tamar Tigers	Kwangjong-ni	—	Luanda	Barcelona <withdrawn>	—	—	—	—	—
Draconis Auxiliary Corps									
Second Sword of Light	Timbuktu	—	Ormstown	<withdrawn>	—	—	—	—	—
Seventh Sword of Light	Timbuktu	—	Ormstown	<withdrawn>	—	—	—	—	—
Fourth Prosperina Hussars	Timbuktu	Marisura	Mahrah	<withdrawn>	—	—	—	—	—
First Arkab Legion	Timbuktu	Marisura	Mahrah	<withdrawn>	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Marik Auxiliary Corps									
Marik Militia									
Second Marik Militia	Viborg	Marisura	—	Barcelona	Gotterdamerung	—	Bensinger	Crellacor	—
Sixth Marik Militia	Viborg	Marisura	—	Barcelona	Gotterdamerung	—	Bensinger	Crellacor	—
Fusiliers of Oriente									
First Brigade	Viborg	Marisura	—	Barcelona	Gotterdamerung	—	Bensinger	Crellacor	—
Second Brigade	—	—	Slewis	—	—	Toland	—	—	—
Regulan Hussars									
Second Regulan Hussars	—	—	Slewis	—	—	Toland	—	—	Apollo
Defenders of Andurien									
Second Defenders of Andurien	—	—	Slewis	—	—	Toland	—	—	Apollo

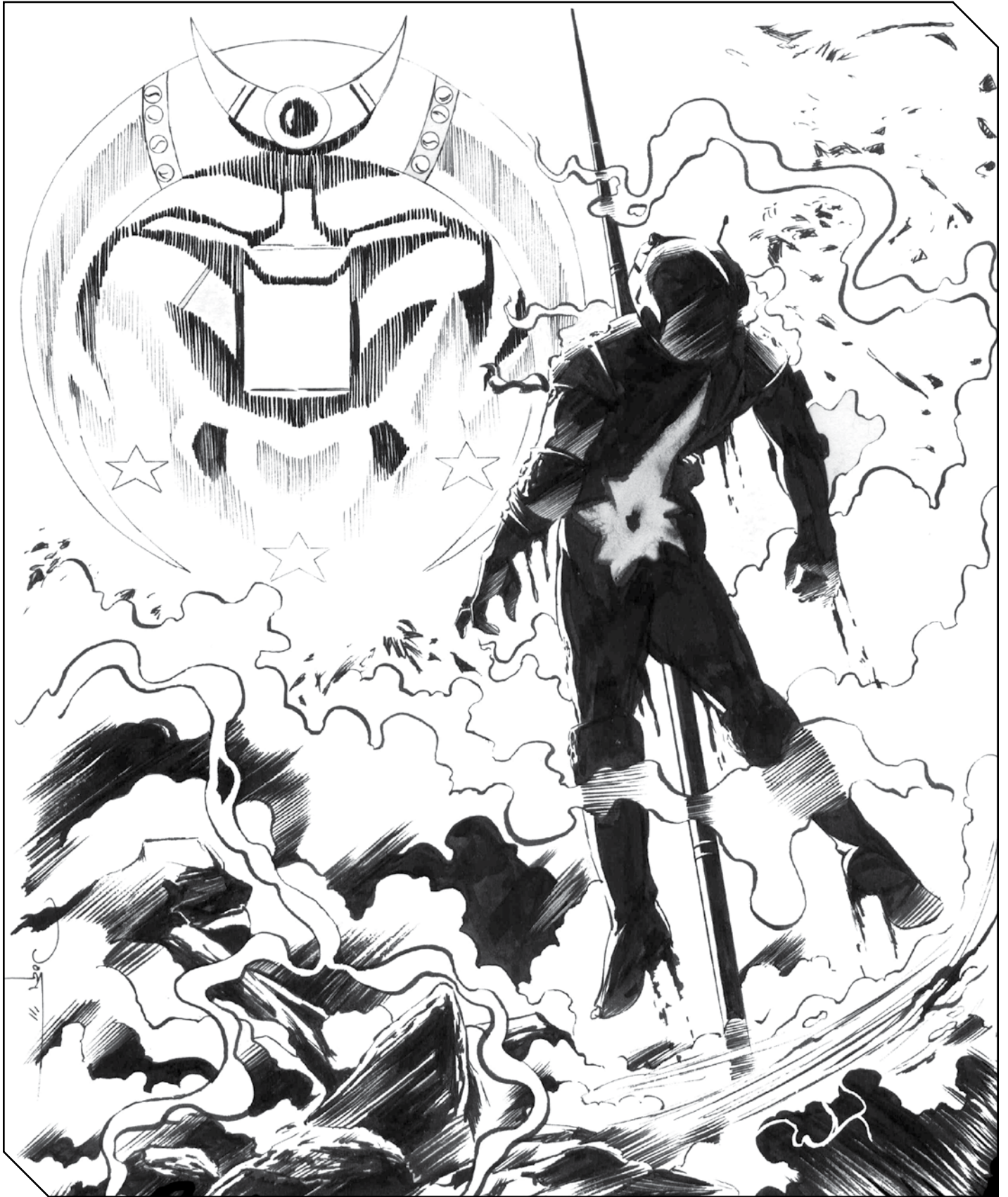
RIM WORLDS REPUBLIC FRONT (JUMP-OFF—2587)

Unit	Jump-Off	2581	2582	2583	2584	2585	2586	2587
Rim Worlds Army								
Household troops								
Amaris Republican Guard	Loyal	Apollo	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tartan Brigade	Loyal	Illum	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amaris Dragoons								
1st Amaris Dragoons	Rebel/Loyal	Kikuyu	—	—	Kikuyu [D]			
2nd Amaris Dragoons	Rebel	Nightwish	—	—	Nightwish [D]			
3rd Amaris Dragoons	Loyal	Malibu	—	—	Malibu [D]			
4th Amaris Dragoons	Loyal	Apollo	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th Amaris Dragoons	Loyal	FinMark	—	—	—	—	FinMark [D]	
6th Amaris Dragoons	Rebel	Quarayyat	—	—	Quarayyat [D]			
7th Amaris Dragoons	Loyal	Timbuktu	—	—	—	—	—	—
8th Amaris Dragoons	Rebel	Treeline [D]						
Amaris Fusiliers								
1st Amaris Fusiliers	Loyal	Malaga	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Amaris Fusiliers	Loyal	Bucklands	Bucklands [D]					
3rd Amaris Fusiliers	Rebel	Viborg	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th Amaris Fusiliers	Rebel	Ujala/New India†	—	Ujala [D]	New India	—	—	New India [D]
5th Amaris Fusiliers	Loyal	Steelton/Star's End [D]/ Persistence [D]	Steelton	—	—	—	—	—
6th Amaris Fusiliers	Rebel	Austerlitz	—	—	—	—	—	Austerlitz [D]
7th Amaris Fusiliers	Loyal	Marisura	—	—	—	—	—	—
8th Amaris Fusiliers	Rebel	Apollo	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amaris Legionnaires								
1st Amaris Legionnaires	Loyal	Medelin	—	Medelin [D]				
2nd Amaris Legionnaires	Loyal	Taran's World	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd Amaris Legionnaires	Rebel	Stirling	—	Stirling [D]				
4th Amaris Legionnaires	Loyal	Gwynedd	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th Amaris Legionnaires	Rebel	Gotterdamung	—	—	—	—	—	—
6th Amaris Legionnaires	Loyal	Helbrent	Helbrent [D]					
7th Amaris Legionnaires	Rebel	Apollo	—	—	—	—	—	—

† Elements of the Fourth Fusiliers raid Alarian in December 2581.

RIM WORLDS REPUBLIC FRONT (2588–2596)

Unit	2588	2589	2590	2591	2592	2593	2594	2595	2596
Rim Worlds Army									
Household troops									
Amaris Republican Guard	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Apollo
Tartan Brigade	—	Illium [D]							
Amaris Dragoons									
1st Amaris Dragoons									
2nd Amaris Dragoons									
3rd Amaris Dragoons									
4th Amaris Dragoons	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Apollo [D]
5th Amaris Dragoons									
6th Amaris Dragoons									
7th Amaris Dragoons	Timbuktu [D]								
8th Amaris Dragoons									
Amaris Fusiliers									
1st Amaris Fusiliers	—	Malaga [D]							
2nd Amaris Fusiliers									
3rd Amaris Fusiliers	Viborg [D]								
4th Amaris Fusiliers									
5th Amaris Fusiliers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Steelton [D]	
6th Amaris Fusiliers									
7th Amaris Fusiliers	—	Marisura [D]							
8th Amaris Fusiliers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Apollo [D]
Amaris Legionnaires									
1st Amaris Legionnaires									
2nd Amaris Legionnaires	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Taran's World	
3rd Amaris Legionnaires									
4th Amaris Legionnaires	—	—	Gwynedd [D]						
5th Amaris Legionnaires	—	—	—	Gotterdamerung	Gotterdamerung [D]				
6th Amaris Legionnaires									
7th Amaris Legionnaires	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Apollo [D]



AFTERMATH

The moment we remove the iron hand from the Rebels' throats they will rise and attempt the mastery... The first fruits of the Reconstruction promise a most deplorable harvest, and the sooner we gather the tares, plow the ground again, and sow new seed, the better.

—New York Tribune editorial, 15 November 1865

If there's anything better for an economy than war, it's the occupation and reconstruction of a defeated enemy. My God, the government's going to be dumping cash out the window by the truckload! Boys, mount up. Let the rest of the idiots fight for scraps on the ground. We're gonna go get us some of them government cash trucks for ourselves!

—Comment attributed to General Mechanics President Web Calladin, 2596

With the surrender of both the Rim Worlds Republic and the Taurian Concordat in September of 2596, the long and tremendously expensive—in both blood and money—Reunification War was finally over. SLDF occupation forces would continue to fight isolated partisan groups in both the Republic and the Concordat for many more years but the Star League could at long last stand down from its wartime footing. It would be years before any of the involved nations—the nations of the Star League or the four conquered Periphery realms—would return to even a shadow of their former selves.

Rebuilding the devastated Periphery would be a task that consumed the Star League for decades, leading directly into the League's grandest years, but soon enough also to its darkest times.

TERRITORIAL GROWING PAINS

While First Lord Ian Cameron's senior generals and admirals spent many long years before and during the war developing invasion operations and contingency plans, his Star League government focused primarily upon building and maintaining support for the war throughout the Inner Sphere. Cameron's government waged a propaganda campaign that demonized the denizens of the Periphery while at the same time elevating the SLDF's invasions seemingly to the level of divine will—and in the process all but calling any that did not support the war effort a traitor. At the same time, the League's government also had to provide for the needs of its army. It was the greatest unified effort mankind had ever partaken in.

But as the war progressed, the Star League found that it was faced with a new series of unexpected challenges. While the Bureau of Star League Affairs developed plans for the occupation and reconstruction of the Periphery, none had taken into account sheer level of devastation and the tens of millions of casualties. Neither had those plans considered the need to replace entire planetary governments—most of which were expected to survive the invasions relatively intact and, as with the battles fought during the Age of War, be willing to work in cooperation with their conquerors.

The nature of the war within the Taurian Concordat quickly disproved nearly every preconceived theory of how the invasions would progress and of how the supposedly backward, unmotivated, uneducated and impoverished residents of the Periphery would

welcome their supposed liberators. The size of the occupation garrisons as well as the support teams required to administer the worlds grew tremendously in the first years of the war, and though only the captured planets of Rim Worlds Republic approached the level of defiance and vitriol that the Taurians reached, the Star League nonetheless found its abilities fall far short of actual requirements in each of the Periphery nations. In fact, it would struggle throughout the war, forcing its battlefield commanders to devote far more of their troops to keeping the conquered populations both pacified as well as provided with basic needs, such as food and shelter.

Perhaps the only benefit of fighting such a long war was that the League bureaucracy had time to prepare for the postwar occupation and reconstruction efforts. The efforts within the Outworlds Alliance began in earnest in September of 2585, a month after the first peace agreement of the Reunification War.

THE TERMS OF OUTWORLDS FREEDOM

The war against the Outworlds Alliance was very different than those fought against the other Periphery realms in many ways, not the least of which was that the Alliance retained control of over half of its worlds. The Alliance had not surrendered unconditionally and had retained the right of self-government under Star League direction. First Lord Ian Cameron's Periphery Policy Council appointed Lady Claudia Cameron-Davis as Director of Outworld Alliance Affairs, entrusting her to rebuild the Alliance and its government.

From the moment of her arrival on Alpheratz, however, she clashed with President Grigori Avellar and his government, as well as with Duke Anton Reitz, whom Alexander Davion had appointed to administer the former Alliance worlds ceded to the Federated Suns. Cameron-Davis had her own ideas on how the Alliance should be governed—ideas which didn't include the Avellar family. She also held House Davion and the Federated Suns in the highest of contempt; having served as a senior Star League administrator responsible for keeping the Alliance front in supply, which had included many visits to Generals Forlough and Barnex in their headquarters, she was keenly aware of Alexander Davion's overt and covert maneuvers during the war.

The first order of business was the establishment of the Outworlds Alliance Army of Occupation, a force primarily composed

INNER SPHERE - 2596



Lyran Commonwealth

Tamar Pact

- 1) Trelshire
- 2) Tamar Domains
- 3) Camlann Shire

Protectorate of Donegal

- 4) Coventry Province
- 5) Alarion Province
- 6) District of Donegal
- 7) Furillo Province

Federation of Skye

- 8) Kannon Shire
- 9) Virginia Shire
- 10) Rahneshire
- 11) Isle of Skye

Draconis Combine

Pesht Military District

- 1) Kagoshima Prefecture
- 2) Coudoux Prefecture
- 3) Bjarrad Prefecture
- 4) Pusht-i-rud Prefecture
- 5) Ningxia Prefecture

Galedon Military District

- 6) Oshika Prefecture
- 7) Matsuida Prefecture
- 8) New Samarkand Prefecture
- 9) Kaznejov Prefecture

Rasalhague Military District

- 10) Radstadt Prefecture
- 11) Trondheim Prefecture
- 12) Tinaca Prefecture

Benjamin Military District

- 13) Baldur Prefecture
- 14) Xinyang Prefecture
- 15) Kajikazawa Prefecture
- 16) Proserpina Prefecture
- 17) Irurzun Prefecture
- 18) Kuzuu Prefecture
- 19) Ashio Prefecture

Federated Suns

Draconis March

- 1) Robinson Operational Area
- 2) Fairfax Operational Area
- 3) Woodbine Operational Area

Crucis March

- 4) Markesan Operational Area
- 5) Minette Operational Area
- 6) Chirikof Operational Area

Capellan March

- 7) Kathil Operational Area
- 8) Taygeta Operational Area

Capellan Confederation

- 1) Tikonov Commonality
- 2) Chesterton Commonality
- 3) Sarna Commonality
- 4) Capella Commonality
- 5) Sian Commonality
- 6) St Ives Commonality
- 7) Andurien Commonality

Free Worlds League

- 1) Marik Commonwealth
- 2) Federation of Oriente
- 3) Principality of Regulus
- 4) Duchy of Andurien
- 5) Stewart Confederation
- 6) Duchy of Graham-Marik

Terran Hegemony

- 1) Alliance Core
- 2) Lone Star Province
- 3) Lockdale Province
- 4) Tyrfin Province
- 5) Terra Firma Province

The Periphery

- 1) Magistracy of Canopus
- 2) Taurian Concordat
- 3) Outworlds Alliance
- 4) Illyrian Palatinate
- 5) Rim Worlds Republic



region capital  District capital  National capital

MAXIMUM JUMP: APPROXIMATELY 30 LIGHT YEARS

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THE FLIP SIDE OF RECONSTRUCTION

The topic of administration and reconstruction on the former Outworlds Alliance worlds ceded to the Draconis Combine and the Federated Suns came up in the Star League Council numerous times in the final years of the 2500s and in the first decade of the 2600s. Both nations' leaders took every opportunity they could to discredit or undermine the other, in many cases trumping up excessive charges based on half-truths and rumors filtering off the occupied worlds.

There were nonetheless kernels of truth in each charge, and one way or another each nation eventually paid for its indiscretions and excesses. The Combine, for example, took to mass deportations of former Alliance citizens, ripping them from their homesteads and businesses and relocating them to either its interior or to worlds within the Rasalhague District—about as far from the Outworlds as possible. The “worst”—those who actively resisted Combine assimilation—found themselves interned in walled and guarded “relocation zones,” which were little more than hastily constructed, tightly packed clusters where these former Outworlders would live and work until they could become “productive Combine citizens.”

Few, of course, ever escaped, living as indentured workers until the Combine itself simply stopped paying for upkeep after about 2616. The walls came down, figuratively and literally, but the people were still stuck in the ghettos built for them. There were, of course, some success stories, but by and large the Outworlders remained close-knit communities that took care of their own (today, there are still several major cities across the Combine that have large Outworlds communities sitting built upon the ruins of their former relocation zones). The Combine refused to provide any aid, forcing many to choose less-than-legitimate career paths, while others organized or joined covert opposition groups. Many with Outworlds roots became vocal proponents for Rasalhague independence, while elsewhere Outworlders became key members of underworld organizations, and even the Black Dragon Society.

House Davion's approach was far less traumatic but just as insidious. Much of the aid that Davion pumped into the region came with a price tag; the Suns expended huge amounts of money and resources on infrastructure projects—in many cases replacing schools, power plants and the like that were still entirely serviceable with new construction—but aid to individuals came only as loans and conditional grants—conditions that could rarely be met. The Federated Suns extended massive breaks and incentives that brought a veritable flood of new colonists and businesses to the worlds. Within just a few decades, the former Outworlders were the clear minority, with most having lost what little they had to begin with to Davion's dirty dealings.

—Professor Murrk Calderon-Szui, *Reunification: The Darkest Hours of Interstellar Peace*, Taurus University Press, 3030

by V Corps. Under the terms of the Armistice Agreement detachments took up position on each of the Alliance's remaining twenty-five inhabited worlds, headquartered right alongside the Star League administration offices likewise set up on each. Almost immediately, Cameron-Davis caused problems by ordering the disarming of the Alliance military, claiming several isolated terrorist attacks were a coordinated effort on the part of the military to eliminate the Star League Army of Occupation. Before anything could happen General Barnex countermanded those orders and further put into place a long series of checks and balances to ensure the League administrator could not use the SLDF on such a whim.

Cameron-Davis fumed, but changed tactics rather than go to political war with the SLDF. As billions of Star League dollars worth of aid rolled into the Alliance, she routed the majority to worlds under House Kurita's administration, focusing the rest upon her own pet projects within the Alliance proper, such as upgrading the bases housing SLDF occupation forces or constructing schools that exclusively taught an obvious pro-Star League (really, a pro-Terran Hegemony) propagandist curriculum.

Both Avellar and Davion objected, with Avellar putting up a bitter fight against Cameron-Davis in any way he could, but with the war continuing on three other fronts Ian Cameron's attentions were elsewhere. Even reports of Star League and Kurita occupation troops flagrantly flouting both Alliance and Star League laws constantly flowing out of the Alliance brought little more than a few additional memos across Cameron-Davis' desk. It wasn't until some of her subordinates began to conspire with Kurita officers and businesses to sell materials and services bought with Star League aid monies to the citizens of the rebuilding worlds that the Star League Department of the Attorney General became involved. Scores of Star League and Draconis Combine officials were indicted on a wide variety of charges, while Ian Cameron removed Lady Claudia Cameron-Davis twenty-one months after her initial appointment.

In her place First Lord Cameron installed Frederick Kiryukin, who arrived on Alpheratz in September of 2587 just weeks after Barton Avellar assumed the Presidency of the Outworlds Alliance. His father, Grigori, had died after suffering a series of heart attacks earlier in the year; four straight years of war, followed by almost two more of battling with Cameron's government over the administration of the Outworlds Alliance had sapped the once-vital man of his strength and his health.

FAILING POLICIES AND NEW RELATIONS

President Barton Avellar had reached majority while the Alliance was still being threatened by war, and spent his first adult years watching the Star League chew away at his home nation and his father's health. He had high hopes of returning his Alliance to its prewar greatness, but he was inexperienced and did not possess the deft political touch he would need in these postwar years. During his first few years he was more of an observer than a leader, watching as Frederick Kiryukin directed the Star League's massive reconstruction efforts. Finally, the bulk of the resources were flowing directly into the Alliance while Davion and Kurita fought for the remaining scraps; Ian Cameron still needed the support of both to fight the remainder of the war, and so redirected the remaining reconstruction monies depending upon which leader he needed most at that time.

Barton Avellar spent the majority of those first few years in office putting out political fires across the Alliance, but soon began to fight for the further expansion of the Star League's reconstruction and recovery efforts. He initiated a number of economic programs that partnered Outworlds businesses with both Combine and Federated Suns concerns. He called upon the political tactics of his father and his predecessors, attempting to first obfuscate the facts that both nations' interests were investing in many of the same schemes, and when they found out, trying to play them off against each other.

Unfortunately for Barton Avellar his efforts backfired. By 2600 his failed policies finally brought about change, but not the kind he had hoped for. A syndicate of Kuritan investors organized a coup, buying or otherwise securing the votes needed to remove Barton Avellar as President and put in his place Rodrigo Avellar.

The Kuritans believed they could control Barton's younger, nebbish cousin but were quickly disabused of that notion as he used Alliance and Star League law to systematically strip them of their influence within the Alliance. He also revisited his cousin's fiscal and trade policies, only this time there were no covert schemes; he extended favorable terms to outside investors, while at the same time rejecting out of hand those deals that would bring profit to Combine interests, bringing more business and more capital into his Alliance.

His banner year was 2607. After seven years of ignoring the Combine he extended most-favored-nation trade status to both the Draconis Combine and Federated Suns, winning support from their leaders in the Star League Council that he needed to permanently exempt the Outworlds Alliance from providing troops to the steadily growing SLDF. In that same year he also convinced the First Lord to withdraw the last of the Star League peacekeepers—a number that had steadily decreased to just a small garrison on each world over the past eight years—from the Outworlds Alliance.

GOOD NEIGHBORS TO THE MAGISTRACY

With the fall of Kossandra's Memory all of the Magistracy was in SLDF hands. The last few years of mopping up had been hard on VII Corps, which had been stretched almost to breaking point; they could breathe a sigh of relief, but not relax. Terrorist attacks plagued the Magistracy for a dozen years, a stark contrast to the "civilized" early years before the end of combat operations. Hardliners refused to bow to the Star League and struck at their personnel and resources despite the Magistracy's opposition. Crystalla Centrella had been removed from power but remained every bit the regal queen, a figurehead for the nation but also a rallying point for opposition to the occupation. She declared her intention not to seek restoration of her office but rather to pass it to the flighty but intelligent Rinalla. Her daughter, she hoped, would not be so attractive a figurehead for the rebels.

Adam Buquoy retired from the military after the end of the Canopian war and for a while was courted by the extremists as a potential leader. He declined and spent the next fifteen years lecturing and overseeing a burgeoning industrial center on Krimari. He died in 2604, a scant three weeks before Rinalla Centrella assumed leadership of the Magistracy, killed by a deranged Canopian extremist.

Despite the efforts of Parliament to ensure his safety, Ian Marik would never become Captain-General. In 2590 he collapsed while out walking and spent the next eighteen months in a coma. He died without ever waking and his mother named her grandson, Brion, as her successor. Marion herself passed away in 2598, aged 95.

Military Governor Melissa Humphreys, who had succeeded Marion Marik as head of the territorial administration, believed that the best way of winning over the people was to demonstrate what the Star League could do for them. She directed the funding of reconstruction efforts, upgrading industrial complexes and building schools, later known as the Good Neighbors Policy. Free Worlds League interests in particular, especially those headquartered within the neighboring Andurien region, invested heavily in the rebuilding Magistracy, bringing even more money and resources onto Canopian worlds than Star League aid alone. Humphreys also established the Central Committee, an elected body intended to review legislation, and also made it clear that when the Magistracy was allowed to resume office, it would be as a constitutional monarch rather than an absolute ruler, with universal suffrage giving all Canopians a say in their governance. These reforms calmed the unrest, though the Star League's granting of several industrialized border worlds to the Free Worlds League in 2602 threatened to reignite matters.

Magestrix-Designate Rinalla, who had finally brought the insurrection to an end in 2597 after the attempted kidnapping of her daughter Carla and FWL liaison Rhean Marik, stepped in and calmed matters. Her flighty nature and hedonism prompted many to regard her as an airhead but in truth it concealed a sharp and manipulative intellect. Humphreys felt that the Magistracy was in good hands and had no qualms about recommending the ending of Canopus' occupation. On 21 March 2604, the Magistracy government was restored and Canopus welcomed into the Star League, albeit as a territorial state rather than a full member. Associate-member status would follow in 2607.

THE PRICE OF VICTORY

With the war over Star League aid flooded into the territorial states. Vast sums were spent rebuilding their economies and infrastructure, costs born by the member-states in addition to the massive debts accrued prosecuting the Reunification War. The Magistracy was a poster child for the reconstruction efforts, modernized and industrialized to become an economic powerhouse. What the Star League didn't reckon with was these efforts creating revamped economies within the territorial states able to outperform and undercut their benefactors, with the Inner Sphere economies ultimately suffering just at the point when they needed to rally and pay the bills for the war.

The Free Worlds was particularly hard-hit, finding itself beset by an aggressive and efficient Magistracy (even with several worlds of significant industrial capacity transferred to the League) though the fiscal wizardry of Captain-General Brion Marik, Marion's grandson and successor, held off disaster for a dozen years. Those that followed him—his seriously-ill daughter Rhean and teenage grandson Tomas—were less adept, and the Free Worlds economy plunged into a depression that lasted most of the 2620s. Compounding this were aggressive legal moves by the Federated Suns to make good the financial damage Albert's efforts had caused half a century earlier. Held in abeyance by an accord between Rhean and Zane Davion, the matter was referred to the Star League courts in 2617 when Tomas became Captain-General and proved to be the last element of the perfect economic storm that wrecked the new Captain-General's first term.

The Lyran Commonwealth suffered too but Archon Kevin Steiner was able to steer his realm clear of the worst troubles, dipping into recession for only a few years before rallying. More troublesome were political matters at home. Relations with Skye and Tamar were strained after the Day of Rage, and even the exonerated dukes their relationship with Tharkad remained cool. Within his own family the Archon faced issues; his mother's Steiner kin and those of his Dinesen father became embroiled in an increasingly bitter (and lethal) secret war which only ended when Kevin used force and the threat of exile to end the bloodshed, choosing to use the Steiner name while his sister, Sarah, used Dinesen.

TRAITOR OR PATRIOT?

Hagar Trondheim: “Henry Calderon is a traitor to the Taurian people and a Star League collaborator.” Those were your words, Minister. How can you—

Minister Argento Calderon: You’re damn right, but they’re not just my words. He betrayed everything he supposedly believes in to sit and be the murderer Cameron’s lap dog. Any real Calderon would have told Cameron to go [censored]. He should be dragged through the streets and left for the vermin to pick apart!

Colonel Lisl Xiao: Careful, Minister. You’re advocating the murder of the Protector of the Taurian Concordat.

Calderon: The real Protector, my sister, is dead by her own hand. She couldn’t stand the thought of bowing down to that power mad thug. And she wouldn’t have stood for anyone from our family taking orders from him or his kind.

Trondheim: The fact of the matter is that your nephew is Protector now, Minister. How do you justify calling for his murder?

Calderon: He doesn’t serve the Concordat, he serves murderers and thieves. He’s a criminal and must be punished.

Xiao: For being the only member of your family that had the balls to stand up and serve his nation? Not a single one of you was willing to do that. Your nation needed you. Were you too scared, Minister? Or too—

Calderon: And what about you, Colonel? What are the Camerons giving you to betray your country? Forty pieces of silver, or are they giving you something else?

Xiao: Unlike you, Minister, I actually fought these sons of bitches. I killed them with my own hands, and if I could I would keep killing those [censored] until they were all dead. But I have a duty to my—

Calderon: To your traitor bastard!

Xiao: My friend. Your nephew. Our Protector.

Trondheim: Colonel Xiao, Protector Henry Calderon has, by his own admission, made several decisions that he himself considered marginal, at best. How are these not the very evidence of his collaboration?

Xiao: We are an occupied nation. The Star League means to erase everything that makes us who we are. He’s in an impossible situation. He ordered a number of patriots apprehended while engaged in illegal activities—

Calderon: Over 300, and they were resisting the Star League murderers—

Xiao: 317 who were bomb-makers and snipers, responsible for killing at least 200, and injuring hundreds more, including ninety-eight of our own citizens, were turned over to Star League forces for trial. That’s something that any leader would agonize over.

—Transcript from *The Trondheim Report*, Hyades Information Network, 13 March 2597

PACIFYING THE BULL

Just as it had proven the toughest of the Star League’s opponents during wartime, the Taurian Concordat would clearly pose the greatest challenges to the Cameron government as the League attempted to build a new Taurian nation.

Protector Marantha Calderon’s suicide was but the first obstacle that Lord Damien Onaga—now both SLDF military commander as well as interim director of the Taurian region—had to overcome. Despite Calderon’s surrender active battles were still being fought on a handful of worlds, while resistance movements on more than two dozen worlds continued to violently oppose Star League rule. Onaga knew that the installation of a Star League government would do little more than encourage the Taurian people to continue to resist; he needed a Taurian government to put a final end to the resistance, with a Calderon at its head.

The Calderon family, however, wasn’t about to simply capitulate and serve as Ian Cameron’s puppets. None of Marantha’s immediate family—her children or siblings—were willing to serve under the thumb of the government that had killed more than a hundred million of their countrymen. In fact, most of the Concordat’s senior government leadership had vanished—some killed in the long war while many of the survivors resigned rather than work for the Star League overlords. It took Onaga’s agents more than two months to track down Calderon’s extended family, most of whom had gone into hiding, and Onaga himself another month to identify several suitable candidates and finally convince one of them to step up as the Concordat’s new Protector.

Subaltern Henry Calderon, Marantha’s nephew who had been serving in the Taurian military’s headquarters, accepted the Protectorship on 3 January 2597 to a resentful nation that saw him as a Star League lackey. Star League collaborators—both actual and suspected—had long been hunted by partisan groups and were either killed publicly or had their dead bodies displayed for all to see. To many Concordat citizens, Henry Calderon was no less a coward and collaborator; cries for his death rung throughout the Hyades Cluster and occupied worlds alike.

Henry Calderon may have been marked a sympathizer or collaborator by many of his countrymen and even family, but he began his Protectorship honestly and without assistance from the Star League. Building on the relationships he already had within the Taurian military, he spent his first year in office simply recruiting a new government. He then began touring his Concordat, now a protectorate of a mere twenty-two inhabited worlds—Ian Cameron’s Star League claimed the remaining three dozen worlds. The Federated Suns immediately annexed a dozen worlds along the Capellan border, assuming complete responsibility for reconstruction, while the Star League administered the remaining two dozen as an independent territory; House Davion ultimately annexed those remaining worlds by 2610.

The response to Henry Calderon’s visits was nearly identical; thousands lined up to protest him and his “Star League puppet government” at every stop, while every appearance was accompanied by at least one attempt on his life. Henry Calderon was a genuinely honest man who slowly began to win the trust of those he encountered. As the darkest century in the Concordat’s history drew to a close, Protector Henry Calderon was beginning to put the pieces of his shattered nation back together.

OCCUPATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

It would be years before the Concordat would finally win independence from the Star League. The SLDF occupied every one of the Concordat’s worlds, imposing a strict martial law that severely punished every citizen that resisted in any way. Half of the worlds still under Calderon’s purview were literally in ruins, a fact that created a wide gulf between the literal haves and have-nots. And, of course, Star League administrators on each world

were dispersing aid and overseeing the reconstruction efforts based on their own views of how a renewed Taurian Concordat should look, in many cases attempting to build a new Terran Hegemony in the Periphery.

Those were the first battles that Henry Calderon fought as the Concordat's Protector. He faced off initially against Lord Onaga, then his successor Garth Quinteros, and then the Camerons themselves. The Concordat was no backward nation, he argued, and before the SLDF had destroyed everything in its path the Taurians were every bit advanced as the Star League member-states. Its citizens not only deserved a say in the reconstruction efforts, they should be the ones overseeing the process. Furthermore, Star League firms profiting wildly from reconstruction contracts to the exclusion of any Taurian interests was not only unfair, but would ensure the Concordat would never return from this disaster. The pragmatic Cameron saw some of the reason in Calderon's arguments, and by 2599 Concordat officials were working under Star League bureaucrats to administer the aid programs while the first Concordat businesses received reconstruction contracts a year later.

It was a start, but one that opened the door to further negotiations with Cameron. Since the official end of the war partisan attacks had occurred on every occupied world seemingly on a daily basis. In response the SLDF continued its heavy-handed tactics; instead of even presenting the illusion of allowing the Taurians to deal with their own problems, assault teams backed up by armor and 'Mech forces would cordon off entire communities and search for the Taurian terrorists building by building, giving no consideration to who they injured or what they damaged in the process. Suspects were unceremoniously rounded up and thrown into makeshift prison camps before being tried and convicted in what, as often as not, were sham military trials.

Calderon once again took the case to Cameron. It was no wonder that the Taurian people continued to resist, and they would clearly continue to do so as long as their fates were determined by another. This was a battle that Calderon continued this fight into the new century, winning more and more concessions from first Ian Cameron and then his successor. The Taurians won the right to police their own citizens beginning in 2600, and the right to punish their terrorist suspects in 2603. A year later, occupation forces began to pull out, with the final occupation troops withdrawn by October of 2605. A full corps remained stationed in and around the Taurian Concordat for decades longer, however; this deployment would of course ultimately bloom to the permanent stationing of a full SLDF army in each Periphery realm by the middle of the century.

These actions, combined with the recovery and development programs he and his government initiated, began to turn public sentiment in Henry Calderon's favor. As soon as associate member-status was granted to all four Periphery realms in 2607, Henry Calderon became a staple at all High Council sessions, arguing vehemently for what he considered the "right" positions, what would be fair—whether it was a decision that affected his Periphery nation or one that only affected the Lyran Commonwealth.

RIM WORLDS

With Operation MAILED FIST concluded, Amaris began to re-exert his authority over the Republic. He hated being dependent on the SLDF and being unable to crush his enemies but he was acknowledged as the legitimate leader of the Republic and the Rim Worlds would not be subject to a military governor, unlike the other Periphery realms. Restoring order and authority would be a long and complex process, but one he could use the SLDF to achieve. Rebuilding his military—and ensuring its loyalty—would be a more time consuming affair. In the ultimate irony of the Rim Worlds campaign,

PATHS THAT NEVER WERE

Some historians—with 20/20 hindsight—suggest the greatest mistake of the Star League during the Rim Worlds campaign was restoring the Amaris family to power. Certainly the history of the clan was one of greed and personal ambition, but in many regards that was no different from the ruling houses of any of the member-states, despite the political gloss applied by later generations. For much of their history the Amaris were steadfast allies of House Cameron (albeit as 'that annoying kid' rather than a bosom buddy) and the bad reputation of the clan is laid squarely at the feet of Stefan Amaris in the Twenty-eighth century, the tragic consequences of whose actions—for the whole of humanity—are best detailed elsewhere.

Just as alternative histories without Hitler, Ghengis Khan, Stalin or Minoru Kurita have been postulated, so have dozens of theories of a universe where Stefan never came to power. Would the Star League have survived? Without question he plunged the original version into crisis, but it was the House Lords who killed the Star League just as they did the Second Star League whose collapse brought about the Jihad. Another crisis may well have had the same consequences, triggering the Succession Wars, or the League may have evolved and survived like the Roman empire of ancient Terra—the western empire existed from 27 BC until 476 AD but the eastern provinces survived (as the Byzantine Empire) from 306 AD until 1453 when the city of Constantinople fell to the Turks. Could the Star League, in some form, have similarly survived for over a thousand years? Rome metamorphosed—and we can see firsthand what became of the exiled SLDF in a scant two centuries—so would a Thirty-fifth century Star League still be recognized by Ian Cameron? Perhaps without Amaris' meddling humanity might have entered a true golden age, reaching undreamed of levels of social and technological development. Rose-tinted spectacles prompt many to overlook the social and political struggles during the Star League—and no small number of military clashes—so pipe-dreams of a harmonious human sphere are little more than fantasies.

We shouldn't forget that Stefan Amaris, as with Hitler, was a product of the age in which he lived as much he was a catalyst for tragedy. There may not have been a Treaty of Versailles to poison society in his favor, but the scheming and greed of the High Council played a central role in allowing Amaris to become the scorpion at Terra's heart.

—*Paths to Infinity*, Misha Auburn, Donegal Press, 3080

Gregory would only have three years to enjoy his restored power and position. On 11 August 2599 the military leadership of his new military staged a coup. Admiral Hakim Wbika executed "the tyrant Amaris" and elevated Richard Amaris to the presidency of the reformed Republic (under the admiral's guidance, of course). The Star League simply turned a blind eye to the coup; that the Rim Worlds government had chosen to violently remove Gregory Amaris from power and install another was not its concern.

Richard Amaris was no mere pawn, however. He bided his time, building a strong relationship with the Star League and key officials both inside the Rim Worlds and out. When the time was right in 2604, he staged his own coup against the military junta. The Amaris clan was once again in firm command of their realm.

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The postwar years were fraught with more than just the confusion and political turmoil of nation rebuilding. The nations of the Periphery were not the only ones to lose long-serving and (mostly) beloved leaders. In May of 2600, the SLDF's first commanding general and wife to the First Lord, Lady Shandra Noruff-Cameron, died at eighty-four after several years of battling a degenerative neural disease. Ian Cameron was never quite the same following her death; he relied on his son, Lieutenant General Nicholas Cameron, to take on many of his day-to-day responsibilities as the elder Cameron increasingly withdrew from the public eye and even the politics of the Star League Council. The younger Cameron retired

LIEUTENANT GENERAL NICHOLAS CAMERON, SLDF (RET.)

Born 13 October 2556 at the Camerons' countryside manor near London, British Isles, Nicholas Cameron was Lord Ian and Lady Shandra Cameron's second child. Their first, Timothy, died shortly after birth in 2536 of a congenital heart defect. Remaining largely out of the public's eye, Nicholas lived most of his early life in the British Isles, but spent his four years of secondary schooling abroad, jumping across the Terran Hegemony before enrolling at the Royal Sandhurst Military Academy, graduating with honors as a MechWarrior lieutenant with a degree in interstellar relations in 2578.

At his own request he was immediately posted as a Reunification War replacement to the Forty-third Royal Light Horse Regiment, a part of the First Royal Division on Ridgebrook. Serving under an assumed name (and with a special forces bodyguard detachment always operating to keep him secure), Nicholas Cameron saw his first combat on Wrentham, advancing first to lance commander and then company commander within a year's time. Less than a year later he found himself in the hell that was the Battle for the Pleiades Cluster. He saw the worst nature of humanity there, including the desperate lengths the Taurians were willing to go to oppose the Star League.

He rotated off of the front lines in summer, before the conquest of the Pleiades had been completed, serving briefly within General Charles Wexworth's headquarters and then later on I Corps' operations staff. He was promoted to the permanent grade of captain in January 2580 and returned to the Forty-third Light Horse as Bravo Company commander in 2581, seeing one combat drop in Flintoft's Copper Valley in July as his regiment rotated onto the front line. In January 2581, he took command of the Forty-third's Second Battalion.

General Carlos Lee immediately reassigned Major Cameron to Terra after General Amalthia Kincaid's assassination in June of 2583; there he resumed his given name and

served in a number of staff assignments before transferring to the Tenth Royal Cavalry Regiment of the Star Guards Corps as First Battalion commander in 2586. He assumed command of the regiment less than four years later, leading it to the Taurian Concordat when Lord Damien Onaga assumed command of the front. He spent the bulk of 2590 training his regiment to fight in zero-G environs, preparing them for the assault on the Hyades, but was transferred to Onaga's staff before his regiment entered the battle; he served the remainder of the Hyades campaign likewise overseeing the retraining of SLDF troops in zero-G combat operations.

After the conclusion of the war, and a brief return to Terra where he married Duchess Lydia Petersen of Bryant, he requested to be reposted to I Corps. He reported as chief of staff, First Royal Division, in March 2598 as I Corps shifted to occupy the Concordat's spinward reaches. In November 2599, he was promoted to lieutenant general and assumed the position of assistant division commander. The Third Royal Brigade, including the Forty-third Light Horse, had been stationed on Badlands since late 2597; he was on a routine visit to the world over Christmas of 2599 as the brigade continued to subdue a particularly troublesome rebel band. General Cameron was twice wounded on Badlands while observing combat operations, once on 4 January by a piece of shrapnel that penetrated the cockpit of his *Rifleman* and again on 7 January when he stumbled into an ambush that left his *Rifleman* ruined; his former company came immediately to his aid but in the process he lost his right arm and was left gravely wounded.

Lord Onaga ordered his return to Terra for recuperation, where he arrived just following his mother's death. He retired effective 1 June 2600 after twenty-two years of active federal service, having earned the Medal of Valor, three Hegemony Stars, and four wound badges, as well as numerous lesser decorations.

from the SLDF soon after his arrival on Terra, and by the end of 2600 had been named First Lord-Designate. His father died 24 August 2602, just days after the Star League celebrated its thirty-third year of incorporation. A year of mourning followed in which all official Star League vehicles displayed a black stripe and all government officials wore a piece of black clothing (this would be a tradition that continued until the end of the Star League era).

Nicholas Cameron was sworn in as First Lord minutes after he announced to the nation the passing of his father. While Ian Cameron had brought the entirety of Humanity under the aegis of his Star League, he didn't live to truly see his dream become reality. It would be under his son that the Star League excelled. And while First Lord Nicholas Cameron continued many of his father's policies, he brought a sensibility and perspective forged after years of hard fighting on the Taurian front; he seemingly held a grudge against Henry Calderon and his Taurian Concordat, often raging against the Protector in Council meetings, but rarely did he not take the sensible and logical choice in the end.

On the other hand, Coordinator Hehiro Kurita's death in 2591 brought to power Leonard Kurita—who could charitably be called an unqualified, unbalanced hedonist. He let his generals and bureaucrats to their own devices while he pursued his every pleasure and folly, which ultimately led his Combine down a road that nearly brought it to blows with Nicholas Cameron and the whole of the Star League. The Kurita family finally dealt with its own problems in March of 2605 when Leonard Kurita died of “a mysterious illness,” but that did not put an end to the crisis of leadership within the Combine; Leonard's twenty-year-old son Blaine assumed the Coordinatorship, but died seven months later. His great-grandmother Siriwan McAllister-Kurita assumed leadership of the Combine for a record third time at the age of 109, serving less than two years before Sanethia Kurita finally stepped up to the mantle of leadership; Coordinator Sanethia attempted to repair the damaged relationship between her Combine and the Cameron government but her continuing troubles with her now-independent-minded generals as well as her people's resistance to what was commonly thought of as the Camerons' plans to eradicate their national identity ensured that the Draconis Combine rarely saw eye-to-eye with the Star League First Lord.

Archon Viola Steiner died in 2595 from wounds she suffered while leading her troops on the Rim Worlds front, leaving her son Kevin, still somewhat shaken from the coup attempt that nearly killed him, to take charge of the Lyran Commonwealth. Captain-General Marion Marik passed away three years later, leaving her grandson Brion as her successor. Meanwhile, Capellan Chancellor Ursula Liao, who had never married, died in 2599, leaving the question of succession to the Capellan Prefecture; their unlikely choice was Normann Aris, a successful industrialist with substantial professional contacts within the Star League government. House Davion's long-serving leader Alexander Davion died at the age of ninety-three in 2600, four years after his eldest sons mysteriously disappeared *en route* to Terra and a year after his heir-designate Ian Davion was assassinated. The reins of the Federated Suns' fell to his nineteen-year-old great-grandson, Zane Davion.

And so by 2607, the last vestiges of the Age of War and the politics that had led directly to the bloody formation of the Star League had passed on. Some three decades of unrelenting warfare and, in many cases, brutal occupation had finally given way to a unified, if not entirely united, Star League. The fate of Humanity was now left to a new generation.

GOOD YEARS

In the wake of decades of chaos and warfare, a strange air of peace settled over the Human Sphere. Economic woes crept up for a number of years while industries across the Inner Sphere retooled from their wartime footings and again began to serve the needs and wants of trillions of citizens in ten different realms. Soon enough investment capital did more to reinvigorate the blasted economies of the Periphery in just a few years time than over a decade of Star League aid had done. Research and development efforts, which

TECH CREEP

In the years before the formation of the Star League, and indeed throughout the Reunification War, the Terran Hegemony developed and deployed numerous technological advances. While it made many of these advances freely available to the other Star League member-states, the Hegemony jealously guarded many others—especially those with direct military applications.

The SLDF, primarily the Hegemony-native Royal units, made extensive use of these advanced weapons throughout the Reunification War, fully realizing that some samples would undoubtedly be salvaged by Periphery teams. Such was the cost of war.

Of course, the Periphery nations—primarily led by the Taurian Concordat—captured some of the Terran Hegemony's most prized advances and began reverse-engineering them. By war's end both the Taurians and the Rim Worlders were manufacturing their own versions of several of the most important advances. Moreover, each of the member-states involved in the war had not only captured (or otherwise acquired) numerous samples of these technologies, they were engaged in an underground war to “liberate” key Periphery factories and labs and capture “renegade” researchers to put them to work on their own R&D projects.

At war's end, Star League officials did their best to ensure that none of the Periphery nations were actively manufacturing or pursuing research on these technologies, but were only partially successful. The genie had already been let out of the bottle, so to speak; while the Periphery nations continued their underground R&D efforts in the 27th century, the Inner Sphere member-states were actively pursuing numerous advances.

Hegemony lawyers moved this “war” into the realm of the Star League courts in an effort to forestall the inevitable. Thousands of trademark and patent violation cases were filed during the 27th century, with the majority of verdicts found in favor of Hegemony concerns. Despite verdicts imposing stiff fines and penalties—bankrupting some major corporations—or the forfeiture of assets, a war in the courts could only do so much. Throughout the 27th century, every Inner Sphere and Periphery nation was engaged in a covert bid to upgrade their own militaries with these technologies, and by the mid-28th century was openly fielding advanced designs—often thanks to “sweetheart” licensing agreements that padded the pockets of major Star League contractors headquartered within their own borders. Meanwhile, the SLDF likewise gave its core formations—the Royal units—mass upgrades in the 28th century, in the process debuting the so-called Royal variants of commonly fielded 'Mechs, tanks and fighters.

By the time of the Amaris Civil War, the SLDF was still in the technological lead. Barely.

had introduced countless new high-tech weapons and devices to the Star League armies over the past three decades, turned their unlimited imaginations, and nearly unlimited budgets, towards more humane endeavors. Discoveries made on a nearly daily basis led directly to new therapies and treatments, to new devices and new advancements that eradicated diseases and increased the human lifespan, that transformed the way that the common citizen lived and that expanded both the breadth and reach of culture.

The Good Years, as the era from 2600-2650 is now known, saw the development of some of the most important advancements Humanity has ever seen. The first Hyper-Pulse Generator signal was transmitted 1 January 2630, nearly instantaneously transforming how people across the Human Sphere lived. Communications from world-to-world would no longer take weeks or months; with this new HPG, even the most distant worlds could communicate with each other in a matter of days. Like the development of the telegraph almost a millennium earlier, the HPG transformed how governments, militaries, businesses, scientists and even the common man would work.

Other, no less important, advances similarly revolutionized life in the newly expanded Star League. The Jamerson-Ulikov Water Purifier, dating from 2622, was a fraction the size and cost of previous water purifiers, suddenly transformed otherwise-marginal worlds into viable candidates for colonization and expansion. The Eligus Medical Diagnoser of 2642 put advanced imaging and testing capabilities previously reserved for only the largest and best-equipped hospitals into the hands of nearly every clinic doctor. Neural-Dimensional technology, first developed in the 2630s but kept a state secret by the Terran Hegemony for more than two decades, similarly revolutionized computer technologies in every sector.

THE SECOND INVASION

In the days that immediately followed the end of the Reunification War, First Lord Ian Cameron's reconstruction and redevelopment programs included incentives that brought businesses and colonists to the Periphery in droves. This, of course, in addition to the millions more colonists that Houses Davion, Kurita and Marik all encouraged through various means to settle upon the former Periphery worlds they each had claimed after the war.

More than anything, though, it was the development of so many new technological advances that drove this "Second Invasion" of the Periphery. As the viability of so many worlds increased, and the length of time it took to communicate across the stars decreased so precipitously, millions of Spheriods struck out to build new lives for themselves on Humanity's furthest reaches.

There was a darker side to this Second Invasion, however. Each of the Great Houses dispatched colonists into the hearts of what remained of the four Periphery nations in an attempt to build a base of support within their former opponents, in some cases—such as with the Capellan Confederation—attempting to virtually annex worlds by the simple presence of house troops. Millions

more ne'er-do-wells and criminals took advantage of the cheap transports and homestead bonuses to leave their pasts behind to become little more than the dregs of Periphery society.

Still, scores of worlds throughout the Periphery were settled in the decades following the Reunification War. By the end of the 27th century, each of the four Periphery nations had more than doubled the number of pre-war worlds they had claimed, while hundreds more were settled within the new boundaries of the Inner Sphere. The Star League gained an amazing 750 worlds total during these wild years.

MILITARY BUILDUP

Shortly after coming to power as First Lord, Nicholas Cameron directed Commanding General Nicholas Kinnol, who had taken command of the SLDF after General Carlos Lee retired in 2597, to develop contingency plans for the invasion and occupation of each of the Star League member-states. The crisis with Leonard Kurita had brought the League to the brink of war, and the Star League general-cum-First Lord was not about to allow the poor decisions or insanities of one of the Council Lords to rip the greatest civilization man had ever created apart.

At the same time, he ordered the expansion of the SLDF while it still possessed the logistical backbone that it needed to accomplish that. Though the SLDF no longer offered the same recruiting bonuses it did during the war, the many new recruiting stations and training bases remained open, first to fill the countless holes remaining within the SLDF's ranks and then to raise new regiments and divisions. By the end of the official occupation of the Periphery, the SLDF had raised four new corps—one permanently stationed in each of the Periphery nations.

With the war over, the Council Lords objected to the continued recruitment of citizens from within their borders and even the operation of SLDF training commands. Before they war, they had provided the SLDF with trained forces, and even throughout the conflict continued to supplement the SLDF with fully-trained troops. They felt it was their right to provide the SLDF its power—or deny it, if necessary. Neither the First Lord nor his Commanding General agreed; Nicholas Cameron issued Executive Order 34 in 2606, permanently authorizing the SLDF to recruit from each of its member-nations and to oversee its own training programs (a loophole allowing criminals to escape justice by enlisting in the SLDF was largely closed in 2631, but still left the door open to those looking to avoid political entanglements).

The Periphery realms were not exempted from the recruiting effort. In fact, each of the realms (save the Outworlds Alliance, which negotiated an exemption) was compelled to transfer a quarter of its standing military to the SLDF in 2608. (This policy, of course, led to a new host of problems; the SLDF scattered the new Periphery transfers throughout its commands, but many—especially the Taurians—were nothing but problem cases. While a number simply disappeared from their assignments, many more proved to be continual discipline problems that either had to be cashiered from service or imprisoned.)

By the middle of the 27th century, the SLDF had expanded to twenty full corps, while over the course of the next century those twenty corps served as the basis to expand to an SLDF consisting of twenty full armies. At the same time, the house lords increased the size of their own militaries, continually battling with the Cameron First Lords throughout the years to build even larger militaries.

HIDDEN WARS AND INCREASING DISCORD

The years from 2650 to 2750 are commonly referred to as the Century of Peace. The truth, of course, is somewhat different. While it is true that there were no declared wars, those years were far from free of conflict. The citizens and soldiers of the militant Draconis Combine were growing increasingly frustrated with the lack of worthy adversaries as well as the Camerons' continued policies designed to shrink the sizes of the house armies. The so-called First Hidden War began with a series of duels against SLDF troops initiated by Combine MechWarriors in 2681. This began a fifty year tradition of dueling that, while costing the lives of some of the Combine's and Star League's best MechWarriors, allowed both sides to vent their frustrations.

In 2725, the Second Hidden War erupted when House Kurita attempted to place Vincent Kurita, the scion of a Kurita-Davion marriage, on the Federated Suns' throne. Kurita's invasion of Marduk triggered four years of war between their two nations. Meanwhile, the Free Worlds League faced a crisis of its own as it erupted into civil war. The Camerons and the Star League armies simply stood by, refusing to involve themselves in either. The First Lord ultimately labeled the Marik civil war as an internal affair, but by 2729 First Lord Jonathan Cameron ordered the SLDF to put an end to the War of Davion Succession, ruling against Kurita and deeming their invasion illegal.

Throughout this "Century of Peace," pirates and outlaws began to prey more and more upon the fringes of society. Though not limited exclusively to preying upon the worlds of the Periphery, by and far the majority of the outlaw activity seemed to hit these outland regions. Many were a product of "mere" outlaws, though not a few cases were due to interference on the part of the Great Houses.

Nevertheless, the Periphery realms continued to benefit tremendously from the Star League. The Taurian Concordat developed the best educational system in the entire Star League, while the Magistracy of Canopus boasted the best medical system. The Rim Worlds and Outworlds likewise developed tremendous industries, though where the Avellars continued to invest in their nation, the Amaris' focused their economic might upon building a secret army that would prevent an enemy from ever subjugating them again.

All of this advancement came with a price, however. The Star League Council passed a number of laws that granted more and more freedoms to the Periphery—or at the very least removed many of the Star League oversights. As a direct consequence—a fact not lost upon the House Lords—many Inner Sphere businesses and investors were able to exploit these laws to profit immensely while all but locking the Periphery nations out from the same profits.

Cries for Cameron's head and secession were commonplace throughout the Periphery

STUMBLING TOWARDS FALL

The Century of Peace ended as the Star League continued to reach new technological and economic heights, but the foundations of Humanity's greatest empire were beginning to crumble. The leaders of the Great Houses imposed more and greater taxes upon the Periphery nations, while giving them nothing in return. The grand rift between the Inner Sphere and the Periphery powers, never fully closed after the Reunification War, was opening wider with each passing year.

Isolated banditry soon turned to organized resistance on the part of the Periphery nations. As the Star League began to flounder, it lost its leader. First Lord Simon Cameron died in a mining accident in the Star's End system on 17 February 2751, leaving his eight-year-old son Richard as his only heir. Thus began the Regency and an era where the interests of the five Great Houses trumped all.

REBELLION AND FALL

General Aleksandr Kerensky was appointed Regent for the young First Lord, but primarily focused upon his duties as the SLDF's Commanding General, leaving young Richard to grow and mature in the internecine environment fostered by the House Lords. Only Stefan Amaris, leader of the Rim Worlds, showed Richard any kindness, which he more than repaid with his blind trust.

This, of course, was the beginning of the end for the Star League.

The rebellion in the Periphery grew daily just as the Star League Council pushed more and more measures designed to punish the rebelling territories. What began initially as isolated rebel activity soon turned to state-sponsored terrorism. Each of the Periphery realms—save for Amaris' Rim Worlds—saw protests and isolated rebel activity. The New Vandenberg Crisis of 2565 was the final straw. Once again it was the Taurian Concordat that triggered war with the Star League, only this time the entire Periphery seemingly exploded as one into outright rebellion.

Kerensky had but one possible response, and that was to mobilize the entire SLDF in an attempt to put a quick end to the rebellion. Throughout the rest of 2765 and the entirety of 2766, the Star League armies streamed into the Periphery and, like their forbears two centuries earlier, soon found that their opponents would not be pushovers.

Then Stefan Amaris killed Richard Cameron. The Usurper and his private armies took command of Terra and the Camerons' Hegemony in one fell swoop. The Star League, mankind's greatest achievement, died 27 December 2766, though it would be twenty more years of unrelenting warfare, followed by Kerensky's Exodus and finally the dawn of the Succession Wars before it would be obvious to all.

Twenty more years before the Periphery would finally have independence once and for all.

REUNIFICATION WAR

RULES ANNEX

This section provides rules for regular campaign play that reflect the unique strengths and weaknesses of the Star League and the Periphery nations during the Reunification War. These rules are for use with *BattleTech* games of all kinds, omnibus rules for which can be found in *Total Warfare* (TW), *TechManual* (TM), *Tactical Operations* (TO), *Strategic Operations* (SO), and *A Time of War* (AToW).

Creating Reunification War Scenarios, when used in conjunction with the Creating Scenarios rules contained within *Total Warfare* (see p. 256, TW), allows for the quick generation of *BattleTech* scenarios and forces for pick-up games. *Reunification War Militaries* provides optional rules for simulating the unique characteristics of the various forces that fought in the Reunification War, while *Notable Personalities* similarly provides rules that allow the most significant commanders and leaders of each nation to interact within Reunification War scenarios. The last sections, including *Advanced & Prototype Components*, *Weapons of Mass Destruction*, *Irregular Troops*, and *New Combat Units* provide descriptions and game information for new weapons and combat units.

CREATING REUNIFICATION WAR SCENARIOS

Gamemasters and players can use the rules on the following pages to generate scenarios set within the Early Star League era, to include the years between the end of the Age of War (2550) to the beginning of the Golden Years (approximately 2650); this era includes not only the Reunification War, but also the Hidden Wars during the Star League era.

BEFORE YOU START

The nature of the Reunification War makes presenting hard and fast rules for scenario and campaign generation difficult. Every world and every battle was different. Instead, the following pages provide a basic framework and a series of suggestions that will aid gamemasters and players in setting up their own battles, based on the historical information described in this sourcebook's previous chapters. Additional rules presented in *Tactical Operations* and *Strategic Operations* will allow them to create games set in the various terrain and weather conditions.

Gamemasters and players should use historical information to create a general framework for their battles and campaigns, and then use these following rules as well as common sense to generate the specifics. Prior to the start of any games or campaigns, all involved players should agree on the setup and any special case rules that will be included. Remember also the two "prime directives" in playing *BattleTech*:

1. HAVE FUN
2. DON'T LET YOURSELF GET SO CAUGHT UP IN THE RULES THAT YOU STOP HAVING FUN

GENERAL RULES

Except as outlined below, gamemasters and players should follow the *General Rules for Creating Scenarios* in *Total Warfare* when designing scenarios and campaigns set during the Early Star League era.

C-Bills: While ComStar is more than two centuries away from forming at the time of the Reunification War, and therefore the C-Bills common to most *BattleTech* gameplay do not yet exist as a currency, we will nonetheless use the term "C-Bills" in this *Rules* chapter to refer to the common universal currency of the era. At the start of the Star League era, the most common currency is the Terran Hegemony dollar, though eventually that would transform into the Star League Dollar (sometimes jokingly referred to as the "Cameron-bill," or "C-Bill," which helped give rise to that term for ComStar-issued currency).

It is beyond the scope of this book to define the relative strengths and weaknesses of each nation's economy. For simplicity's sake, simply assume that a 2570 "C-Bill" is worth the same as a modern C-Bill, and that the exchange rates for each other nation's currency is equivalent to modern exchange rates.

Note: Unless otherwise specified, whenever Star League forces are mentioned throughout this chapter, the appropriate coalition forces from Houses Davion, Kurita, Marik or Steiner are assumed to be included; likewise, whenever the forces of the Periphery nations are mentioned, the military forces of the appropriate Periphery power, as well as any allied forces (such as House Davion's Pitcairn Legion within the Outworlds Alliance), are assumed to be included.

Additionally, the majority of the rules in this chapter are designed to aid gamemasters and players in designing ground-based campaigns and scenarios. The Reunification War encompassed much more than just simple ground combat, however. Some of the largest and most epic battles were those fought in deep space between fleets of WarShips, DropShips and fighters; while the rules in this chapter will also aid you in generating the forces involved in those battles, remember this overriding principle: while in general the Star League held an advantage both in skill and technology over the Periphery nations in ground-based battles, in the aerospace realm the two sides held a relative parity in both technology and skill.

Finally, the Reunification War occurred at the very end of the Age of War, an era that until now we have paid relatively little "attention" to within the *BattleTech* Universe. This is the era in which the technology we have all come to know as "common" or "standard" truly came of age. Many of the most common combat units and other vehicles within the *BattleTech* canon either haven't been designed yet or are just coming into service during the Reunification War. Meanwhile, many of the obsolete systems they were designed to replace are still in common service. This is especially true of Primitive designs—the

first BattleMechs and combat vehicles that utilize decidedly lower technology construction rules—which are still in regular service throughout the Periphery and even in the lowest-rated Inner Sphere units. Though we have published some sources for these Primitive units—including the *Experimental Technical Readout: Primitives* series—we simply do not have the pagecount available in this book to outline the dozens, if not hundreds, of unique primitive and other “low tech” designs that could be found throughout the Inner Sphere and Periphery during the Reunification War. As a result, you will see some designs on the Random Unit Assignment Tables that, according to published sources, had not yet been designed or built during the Reunification War, or had not proliferated outside of their nation of origin; in these cases, simply assume that the units in question are simply “filling in” for units common to the era and the nation that have not yet been detailed in any published source.

Forced Withdrawal

In the time period covered by these rules, each side will be subject to Forced Withdrawal rules (see p. 256, *TW*) under differing situations. Typically, each involved force should follow Forced Withdrawal rules except when defending their home location (as determined by the gamemaster or by player consensus); other circumstances where a force may not be subject to Forced Withdrawal should also be determined by the gamemaster or player consensus.

Force Generation

When generating forces for both sides in a Star League vs. Periphery nation battle, the sides will typically not be balanced by Battle Value, or possibly even in number. As a rule of thumb, for every Star League lance (4 units) committed to battle, the Periphery nations will typically have the same number of similar-type units (not accounting for the needs of particular battles described in previous chapters), reinforced by additional *Irregular Troops* (see p. 200). On the other hand, the Star League soldiers will typically possess better skills than their opponents.

Use the guidelines described below in *Random Assignment Tables* for choosing the battlefield units for Reunification War-era scenarios and campaigns.

Periphery Irregular Forces: Unless the scenario would otherwise prevent it, if a battle will happen on a Periphery world, the player controlling the Periphery force may field additional *Irregular Troops*. For every Periphery BattleMech, tank or aerospace fighter fielded in the battle, the Periphery force may also contain one Militia platoon and one Insurgent platoon, to a maximum of four total irregular platoons per mapsheet (other special rules may change the total number of irregulars available in a given game).

Note on Game Balance: The Reunification War, like most military campaigns, was by no means an even fight. The Star League possessed better pilots, better equipment, and better-maintained equipment than their Periphery opponents. So while the Star League did lose a number of individual battles, on the whole they typically outclassed their opponents in almost every case. On the other hand, the Periphery nations could—and often did—rely

upon masses of poorly trained militias equipped with outdated or even makeshift weapons as well as civilian vehicles fitted with military-grade armor and weapons.

Of course, this reality makes for a potentially “un-fun” Reunification War campaign. In order to achieve some level of game balance, gamemasters and players will need to utilize some fuzzy logic in designing and setting up their scenarios. As indicated above, a good rule of thumb for game balance is that every Star League lance should be opposed by a similar Periphery lance reinforced by one to two times that number of irregular units. This assumes a relative equality in equipment “size” (an average of one lance of heavy Star League ‘Mechs facing approximately the same number of heavy Periphery ‘Mechs, for example), but the Star League force will often possess a skill advantage as well as a technological advantage. Unfortunately that disparity in technology (Star League-era tech facing simple 3025 tech, or even Primitive tech) will also have a significant impact upon game balance that Battle Value (BV) that the rules in this chapter may not be able to mitigate. In these cases, gamemasters and players should feel free to “listen to their guts” and make adjustments to the scenario to better even out the game balance. And, above all, remember to have fun!

TERRAIN

The campaigns of the Reunification War were played out on hundreds of worlds throughout the Periphery. As such, gamemasters and players should use the Selecting Mapsheets rules, found in *Total Warfare* beginning on p. 262. Gamemasters and players should use common sense when designing the playing board, especially when playing out scenarios based on the battle reports found in this book; in other words, if playing out a battle that was described as happening within a mountain city, the board should include that appropriate terrain rather than a series of randomly rolled mapsheets. On the other hand, gamemasters and players can easily use these guidelines if they need to quickly generate maps for encounters outside of those described regions.

Planetary Conditions: The wide environmental and weather conditions encountered on planets throughout the periphery can (and did) play a significant role in the Reunification War. Gamemasters and players are encouraged to use the various additional types of environmental, terrain and weather considerations as described in *Planetary Conditions* (see p. 28, *TO*) to “spice up” their games.

Minefields: Periphery forces defending one of their own planets may place a number of minefields (see p. 207, *TO*) before the start of a game. The player(s) controlling a defending Periphery force(s) may place up to two minefield hexes per mapsheet; these minefields may be either 15-point standard minefields or 10-point command-detonated minefields (player’s choice, and it may include a mix of either type up to the maximum number of minefield hexes allowed), placed anywhere on the board (other special rules may change the total number of minefields available in a given game). These “free” minefields are not available if the Periphery force is attacking in a scenario.

RANDOM ASSIGNMENT TABLES

The Random Unit Assignment Tables in this section should be used instead of those provided within the *Creating Scenarios* rules (see p. 256, *TW*) to provide for era-specific unit choices. Likewise, they should replace the Assignment Tables starting on page 130 in *A Time of War*. The Random 'Mech and Vehicle Assignment Tables in this book are designed specifically to determine the composition of any Reunification War-era force.

Statistics for most of these units may be found in *Technical Readouts 3039*, *3050 Upgrade*, *3057 Revised Edition*, *3075*, and the *Experimental Technical Readout: Primitives* series, as well as in this book. We have included a number of designs on these tables that will appear in future *Experimental Technical Readout: Primitives*; until those *Experimental Technical Readouts* are published, players may substitute standard variants found in *Technical Readout 3039* for these units.

Assigning 'Mechs and Vehicles

After determining the weight classes of the combat units in each force (see p. 265, *TW*), use the *Random Unit Assignment Table: Reunification War* (see pp. 171-173) to determine the specific designs to be used.

To use the table, the players need to determine what type of unit(s) they will be using and reference that particular table, and then determine which nationality to use, and if using BattleMechs, what weight class to use; they will then simply roll on the corresponding column of the appropriate section of the table.

Star League Forces: Because the SLDF proper was comprised of whole companies, battalions and regiments originally hailing from one of the six Star League member-states (Terran Hegemony, Capellan Confederation, Draconis Combine, Federated Suns, Free Worlds League and the Lyran Commonwealth), the original source of a given formation's vehicles may not be known. All Royal units hail from the Terran Hegemony (and will use the SLDF Royal columns on the *Random Unit Assignment Table: Reunification War*), while all other SLDF units are a mix of forces provided by the remaining member-states—typically grouped in battalion and regimental formations, though rarely company-sized formations were formed into mixed-nation battalions (and will use the appropriate columns on the *Random Unit Assignment Table: Reunification War*). All forces of a given company-sized formation will hail from the same nation (the gamemaster or players should determine, if a larger-sized formation will be utilized, whether all constituent companies will hail from the same nation, or if the origins of each company will need to be determined). To determine the nation of origin for each SLDF force, roll 2D6 and reference the *Random SLDF Nationality Table*, below.

The Terran Hegemony's military did far more than supply some half of the new SLDF's active combat strength; as the nation with the largest military, as well as the first to develop

and field the BattleMech, it possessed large depots of moth-balled military equipment that were drained rapidly to help make up for combat losses experienced early in the war. As a result, before making any rolls, the player controlling *any* SLDF unit may choose to roll once per lance/platoon on the appropriate *Terran Hegemony* column instead of rolling based on the force's nationality. (Players and gamemasters may also use the *Terran Hegemony* columns to randomly generate Terran Hegemony militia and pre-Star League units.)

Finally, a number of different new combat unit designs began to appear during the course of the Reunification War. These combat units are listed in *italics* on the SLDF Royal columns of the table, while the date of introduction is listed in parentheses; the given unit may not be used in games that take place before the listed year, and if a roll on the table results in the selection of an unavailable combat unit, simply reroll until an eligible unit is selected.

For games taking place after the year 2585, SLDF players will have a slightly wider access to equipment. Players controlling post-2585 non-royal units may roll once per lance on the SLDF Royal columns instead of rolling based on the force's nationality (this may be in addition to rolling once on the *Terran Hegemony* columns).

Royal Variants: Several different *BattleTech* sourcebooks have detailed SLDF Royal BattleMech, aerospace fighter and vehicle variants. Without exception, these "royal variants" were designed and fielded during the 28th century, after the massive expansion of the SLDF and before the Amaris Civil War. In fact, the technologies that were so integral to their development were just coming to age during the 25th and 26th centuries. Accordingly, these Royal variants are not available for use during the Reunification War.

RANDOM SLDF NATIONALITY TABLE

2D6	Nation
2	Federated Suns
3	Capellan Confederation
4	Roll Again
5	Draconis Combine
6	Lyran Commonwealth
7	Free Worlds League
8	Federated Suns
9	Capellan Confederation
10	Terran Hegemony
11	Draconis Combine
12	Lyran Commonwealth

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: REUNIFICATION WAR

Royal SLDF

2D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
2	THE-N Thorn [20]	KTO-19 Kintaro [55] (2587)	GLD-2D Galahad [60] (2594)	THG-11E Thug [85]	Nightshade ECM VTOL [25] (2597) ^V
3	FLC-4N Falcon [30] (2582)	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	BL-6-KNT Black Knight [75]	STK-3F Stalker [85] (2594)	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}
4	FS9-H Firestarter [35]	HOP-4C Hoplite [55]	OSR-2C Ostroc [60]	PLG-1N Pillager [100]	Alacorn Heavy Tank [100] (2587) ^{T‡}
5	LCT-1V Locust [20]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	GLT-3N Guillotine [70]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	LVT-4 Hovortank [50] ^H
6	THE-N Thorn [20]	PXH-1 Phoenix Hawk [45]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	STC-2C Striker [80]	Turhan Urban Combat Vehicle [50] ^W
7	STG-3R Stinger [20]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	Merkava Mk. VIII [75] ^T
8	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	HBK-4G Hunchback [50]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	Burke Defense Tank [75] ^T
9	FS9-A Firestarter [35]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	CPLT-C1 Catapult [65]	MSK-9H Mackie [100]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
10	LCT-1V Locust [20]	KTO-19 Kintaro [55] (2587)	ON1-K Orion [75]	THG-11E Thug [85]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}
11	FLC-4N Falcon [30] (2582)	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	BL-6-KNT Black Knight [75]	HGN-732 Highlander [90] (2592)	Cobra Transport VTOL [30] (2582) ^V
12	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	HOP-4C Hoplite [55]	LNC25-01 Lancelot [60] (2581)	PLG-3Z Pillager [100] (2594)	Alacorn Heavy Tank Mk. VI [100] (2591) ^T

Terran Hegemony

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	KY2-D-01 Kyudo [45]	OSR-2C Ostroc [60]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
2	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [45]	ARC-1A Archer [70]	MSK-8B Mackie [100]	Turhan Urban Combat Vehicle [50] ^W
3	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	RFL-1N Rifleman [50]	MSK-9H Mackie [100]	Strike Falcon Attack VTOL [30] ^V
4	STG-3R Stinger [20]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	ON1-C Orion [75]	STC-2C Striker [80]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
5	THE-F Thorn [20]	GRF-1A Griffin [60]	TDR-1C Thunderbolt [65]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	Merkava Mk. VIII [75] ^T
6	LCT-1V Locust [20]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	EMP-1A Emperor [90]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}

Capellan Confederation

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	FRB-1E Firebee [35]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	OWR-2M OstWar [65]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	KRV-2 Korvin [50] ^T
2	FRB-2E Firebee [35]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	BKX-1X BattleAxe [70]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
3	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	RFL-1N Rifleman [50]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	A-3 Augustus MBT [75] ^T
4	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	KRV-3 Korvin [50] ^T
5	LCT-1V Locust [20]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	KSC-3I Koschei [65]	XNT-30 Xanthos [100] (2579)*	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
6	FLC-4N Falcon [30] (2582)	DV-6M Dervish [55]	KSC-3I Koschei [65]	STK-3F Stalker [85] (2594)	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}

Draconis Combine

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	RFL-1N Rifleman [50]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Sand Devil [50] ^H
2	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	BKX-1X BattleAxe [70]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
3	COM-2D Commando [25]	GRF-1A Griffin [60]	CRS-6B Crossbow [60]	MSK-8B Mackie [100]	Marsden II MBT [60] ^T
4	THE-F Thorn [20]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	HMH-3D Hammerhands [75]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
5	STG-3R Stinger [20]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	Condor Heavy Hover Tank [50] ^H
6	FLC-4N Falcon [30] (2582)	DV-6M Dervish [55]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	STK-3F Stalker [85] (2594)	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}

Federated Suns

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	BKX-1X BattleAxe [70]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
2	COM-2D Commando [25]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	BKX-7K BattleAxe [70]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Marsden II MBT [60] ^T
3	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	DV-6M Dervish [55]	HMH-3D Hammerhands [75]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	Condor Heavy Hover Tank [50] ^H
4	STG-3R Stinger [20]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	RFL-1N Rifleman [50]	MSK-8B Mackie [100]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}
5	FS9-A Firestarter [35]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
6	FLC-4N Falcon [30] (2582)	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	STK-3F Stalker [85] (2594)	LVT-4 Hovortank [50] ^H

Free Worlds League

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	ICR-1S Icarus II [40]	OWR-2M OstWar [65]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	Gallant Urban Assault Tank [70] ^W
2	FLE-4 Flea [20]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	TDR-5S Thunderbolt [65]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
3	STG-3R Stinger [20]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	Merkava Mk. VIII [75] ^T
4	THE-F Thorn [20]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	ON1-C Orion [75]	EMP-1A Emperor [100]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
5	LCT-1V Locust [20]	SCP-1N Scorpion [55]	GLT-3N Guillotine [70]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}
6	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	GLD-4R Gladiator [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	MSK-8B Mackie [100]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T†}

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: REUNIFICATION WAR

Lyran Commonwealth

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	COM-1A Commando [25]	AL-A1 Alfar [55]	CRS-6B Crossbow [60]	BWP-2B Ymir [90]	Marsden III MBT [60] ^T
2	COM-2D Commando [25]	EFT-4J Eisenfaust [45]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
3	FLC-4N Falcon [30] (2582)	DV-1S Dervish [55]	GLT-3N Guillotine [70]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	Merkava Mk. VIII [75] ^T
4	FS9-A Firestarter [35]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	BNC-3E Banshee [95]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
5	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	ARC-2R Archer [70]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}
6	LCT-1V Locust [20]	SCP-1N Scorpion [55]*	RFL-1A Rifleman [50]	EMP-1A Emperor [100]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}

Magistracy of Canopus

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	FRB-2E Firebee [35]	QUA-51T Quasit [45]	BKX-7K BattleAxe [70]	XNT-3O Xanthos [100] (2579)*	KRV-2 Korvin [50] ^T
2	LCT-1V Locust [20]	TLS-1B Talos [50]	KSC-3I Koschei [65]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
3	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	GLD-4R Gladiator [55]	ARC-1A Archer [70]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
4	STG-3R Stinger [20]	ICR-1S Icarus II [40]	ON1-C Orion [75]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}
5	FLE-4 Flea [20]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	TDR-1C Thunderbolt [65]	EMP-1A Emperor [100]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}
6	COM-1A Commando [25]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	BWP-2B Ymir [90]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}

Outworlds Alliance

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	QUA-51T Quasit [45]	OWR-2M Ostwar [65]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
2	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	QUA-51T Quasit [45]	BKX-1X BattleAxe [70]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
3	STG-3R Stinger [20]	QUA-51T Quasit [45]	RFL-1N Rifleman [50]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
4	COM-1A Commando [25]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	ARC-1A Archer [70]	EMP-1A Emperor [100]	Condor Heavy Hover Tank [50] ^H
5	COM-2D Commando [25]	TLS-1B Talos [50]	BKX-7K BattleAxe [70]	MSK-8B Mackie [100]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}
6	TR-A-6 Toro [35]	GLD-4R Gladiator [55]	HMH-3D Hammerhands [75]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}

Rim Worlds Republic

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	COM-1A Commando [25]	PX-3R Phoenix [50]	CRS-6B Crossbow [60]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	Ignis Infantry Support Tank [30] ^T
2	THE-F Thorn [20]	TLS-1B Talos [50]	OWR-2M Ostwar [65]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	Hipparch Cavalry Tank [30] ^H
3	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	GLD-4R Gladiator [55]	ARC-1A Archer [70]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
4	LCT-1V Locust [20]	GRF-1N Griffin [55]	CRD-3R Crusader [65]	EMP-5A Emperor [100]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
5	FLE-4 Flea [20]	SHD-1R Shadow Hawk [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	BWP-2B Ymir [90]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}
6	STG-3R Stinger [20]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	ON1-C Orion [75]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}

Taurian Concordat

1D6	Light (20 to 35 tons)	Medium (40 to 55 tons)	Heavy (60 to 75 tons)	Assault (80 to 100 tons)	Combat Vehicle
1	WSP-1 Wasp [20]	DV-1S Dervish [55]	RFL-1N Rifleman [50]	MSK-6S Mackie [100]	Merkava Mk. VII [75] ^T
2	TR-A-1 Toro [35]	SHD-2H Shadow Hawk [55]	BKX-1X BattleAxe [70]	MSK-8B Mackie [100]	Condor Heavy Hover Tank [50] ^H
3	WSP-1A Wasp [20]	WVR-6R Wolverine [55]	BKX-7K BattleAxe [70]	BNC-1E Banshee [95]	LRM/SRM/AC Carrier [60] ^{T †}
4	COM-2D Commando [25]	TLS-1B Talos [50]	HMH-3D Hammerhands [75]	EMP-1A Emperor [100]	LVT-4 Hover Tank [50] ^H
5	TR-A-6 Toro [35]	TLS-1B Talos [50]	TDR-1C Thunderbolt [65]	VTR-9B Victor [80]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T
6	TR-A-6 Toro [35]	GLD-4R Gladiator [55]	WHM-6R Warhammer [70]	LGB-0W Longbow [85]	T-12 Tiger Medium Tank [55] ^T

*This is a four-legged (quad) BattleMech.

^HHover ^TTracked ^VVTOL ^WWheeled

[†] Roll 1D6 to determine which variant: 1-3 use SRM Carrier, 4-5 use LRM Carrier, 6 use AC/2 Carrier

[‡] Roll 1D6 to determine which variant: 1-4 use Alacorn Mk. III, 5-6 use Alacorn Mk. IV

Note: The column headers do not correspond to technology or equipment rating

RANDOM UNIT ASSIGNMENT TABLE: REUNIFICATION WAR

Aerospace Fighters

1D6	Terran Hegemony	Capellan Confederation	Draconis Combine	Federated Suns	Free Worlds League
1	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]	LTN-G14 Lightning [50]	SL-25 Samurai [50]	CNT-1D Centurion [30]	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]
2	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	SL-25 Samurai [50]	CNT-1D Centurion [30]	LTN-G14 Lightning [50]
3	HMR-HD Hammerhead [75]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	SB-26 Sabre [25]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	EGL-R6 Eagle [75]
4	SL-25 Samurai [50]	TR-5 Thrush [25]	SB-27 Sabre [25]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	EGL-R6 Eagle [75]
5	STU-K5 Stuka [100]	CNT-1A Centurion [30]	SB-27 Sabre [25]	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]	Aquarius Escort [200]
6	STU-K5 Stuka [100]	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	TRB-D36 Thunderbird [100]	Lyonesse Escort [175]

Aerospace Fighters

1D6	Lyrn Commonwealth	Magistracy of Canopus	Outworlds Alliance	Rim Worlds Republic	Taurian Concordat
1	SYD-21 Seydlitz [20]	MM-1 Dragonfly [40]	SL-25 Samurai [50]	VLC-1N Vulcan [80]	CNT-1D Centurion [30]
2	TFN-2A Typhoon [90]	MM-2 Dragonfly [40]	CNT-1D Centurion [30]	VLC-5N Vulcan [80]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]
3	TFN-2A Typhoon [90]	SB-27 Sabre [25]	SB-26 Sabre [25]	SB-27 Sabre [25]	EGL-R6 Eagle [75]
4	TRB-D36 Thunderbird [100]	CNT-1D Centurion [30]	SB-27 Sabre [25]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	Aquarius Escort [200]
5	LCF-R15 Lucifer [65]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	CNT-1D Centurion [30]	TRB-D36 Thunderbird [100]	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]
6	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90] (2584)	EGL-R6 Eagle [75]	LTN-G15 Lightning [50]	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90] (2584)	TRB-D36 Thunderbird [100]

Aerospace Fighters

2D6	Royal SLDF
2	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90] (2584)
3	RPR-100 Rapier [85] (2596)
4	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]
5	SL-26 Samurai [50]
6	STU-K5 Stuka [100]
7	SPR-H5 Sparrowhawk [30]
8	HMR-HD Hammerhead [75]
9	STU-K5 Stuka [100]
10	CHP-W5 Chippewa [90] (2584)
11	RPR-100 Rapier [85] (2596)
12	SL-26 Samurai [50]

Armed IndustrialMechs

1D6	A (1-2)	B (3-4)	C (5-6)
1	Harvester Ant (MG) [20]*	Harvester Ant (LRM) [20]*	Crosscut (Flamer) [30]
2	Crosscut (Rocket) [30]	Powerman (Laser) [35]	Powerman (SRM) [35]
3	Buster (AC) [50]	Buster (PPC) [50]	Carbine (Rocket) [30]
4	GTX2 Daedalus (Mil.) [60]*	QUA-51T Quasit [45]	GTX2 Daedalus (Mil.) [60]*
5	Crosscut (Flamer) [30]	Harvester Ant (LRM) [20]*	Harvester Ant (MG) [20]*
6	Buster (AC) [50]	Carbine (Rocket) [30]	Crosscut (Rocket) [30]

Assigning 'Mechs and Vehicles in A Time of War

The *Random Unit Assignment Table: Star League or Periphery* can also be used to assign the starting 'Mech or Vehicle for a new *A Time of War* character who hails from the Reunification War era. In this case, use the tables in this book instead of the *Random Assignment Tables* (see pp. 130-135, *AToW*). Base the character's equipment rating on the character's current regiment (or the regiment with which he last served).

If the character has not served with the SLDF or one of the other Inner Sphere or Periphery militaries, assume he has a rating of C. Increase the rating by one level for every two of the following which the character possesses: Property, Title, Connections, Leadership Skill level of 7+, or a Tour of Duty Life Module (only one Tour of Duty Module counts towards this total). Decrease by one level for every two of the following: negative-TP Reputation, negative-TP Wealth, negative-TP Extra Income, Bloodmark, or the Ne'er-Do-Well Life Module. The rating cannot be increased above A or below C.

Repairs

For most stand-alone battles, repairs will not be a concern. But for campaign play, players and gamemasters will need to know the availability of replacement weapons and equipment, as well as the

techs and repair facilities that can be called upon. Use the following guidelines to help determine each force's repair abilities.

Star League: For all intents and purposes, the Star League has a nearly limitless logistical train to draw upon (so long as that logistics train is not disrupted). Each regiment possesses enough replacement armor, weapons and other equipment to keep its 'Mechs, fighters and tanks operating through the campaign, as well as a strong force of replacement units (and if it doesn't, it can call upon another regiment that does). Likewise, the Star League possesses a strong and skilled technical pool, with each company typically assigned its own tech team (while additional technical teams were standing by at the regimental level to assist with battle repairs).

However, the Star League does have a few significant weaknesses. Their best maintenance facilities are on their DropShips, which—except for a few rare instances—are typically far removed from the battlefields. That leaves them with portable field repair gantries—of which there are limited numbers (typically only a handful per battalion formation)—to accomplish much of their maintenance and repair needs. That is, unless their regimental commander authorizes the movement of their DropShips closer to the battlefield.

Of course, that's easier said than done. The typical 'Mech and aero fighter carrier has little additional mass for replacement parts,

let alone for all of the support personnel needed. One or more additional DropShips, typically cargo ships or troop carriers, are needed for that logistics chain. But that also means finding and offloading the right parts, and then getting them to the right place. A DropShip could take off and relocate, but which one (or ones)? And if one or more DropShips relocate, what happens to the field base that is set up around the DropShips?

There are also more mundane issues to deal with. They have limited manpower and limited time. There are only so many techs that can work on a single unit at once, and a counterattack could happen at any time.

Those are just some of the issues the Star League player(s) will have to deal with.

Periphery Nations: The Periphery Nations have somewhat more limited logistical resources to draw from. Supplies, especially on worlds furthest away from the “core” of each nation and with little to no industrial support to draw from, may be scarce (to the point that many combat machines are left unrepaired after battle), and repair bays on these worlds are often little more than shacks with cobbled-together gantries. Technical staffs are often overworked and need as many bodies as possible, though they tend to spend most of their time fabricating replacement parts and jury-rigging repairs than anything.

Unless otherwise captured, the Periphery nations have a very limited cache of Star League-technology equipment, as determined by *Advanced & Prototype Components* (p. 176). Any such equipment damaged or destroyed must either be repaired or somehow replaced (with scavenged or captured equipment). If appropriate replacements cannot be secured, the battlefield unit must be customized (using less advanced equipment; see *Customization*, below) or left unrepaired.

Customization

Numerous customized combat units were used by both the Star League as well as the Periphery nations during the Reunification War. Players and gamemasters looking to insert an additional level of excitement and randomness may employ customized battlefield units. Use the following rules, in conjunction with Customization (see p. 188, SO), to customize your units for play.

Star League: The SLDF’s soldiers were, at least on paper, the best of the best. First Lord Ian Cameron tried to ensure his military was likewise supplied with the best equipment possible (though at the outset of the war this was easier said than done). Some warriors’ skills and dedication, however, demanded something additional to reward them or better complement their abilities. The customizations allowed are outlined below.

All SLDF Royal unit lance commanders and regular unit (non-royal) company commanders may make minor customizations to their ‘Mechs/fighters/vehicles. They may replace one major weapon or piece of equipment (massing five tons or more and/or occupying three critical slots or more), or up to five lesser pieces of equipment (massing no more than ten tons) with equipment of the same or a different class (yet massing the same amount and occupying the

same or fewer critical spaces). This replacement may be a Class A or Class B Refit (see p. 188, SO), and all new equipment must be placed in critical slots vacated by the replaced equipment. Additionally, up to one more battlefield unit per regular company (or up to two in royal companies) may receive such a refit (after the conclusion of a given two-year Reunification War campaign period, any soldier credited with at least five ‘kills’ was also afforded the opportunity to make such modifications).

All SLDF Royal company commanders and “regular” battalion commanders may make any number of Class A or Class B Refits (see p. 188, SO) on their ‘Mechs/fighters/vehicles.

All Royal battalion commanders and “regular” regimental commanders, or higher, may make any number of Class A, B, C and/or D Refits (see p. 188, SO) on their ‘Mechs/fighters/vehicles.

These refits may only be made on the soldier’s primary battlefield unit (the unit he or she was initially assigned). Replacement and captured units cannot be refit “automatically” in this way during the course of the Reunification War campaign (though one soldier can pilot another’s customized unit if the situation warrants, such as on a temporary basis, or if permanently assigned to that unit after the death or incapacitation of its previous warrior).

Periphery Nations: The Periphery nations have the ability to make the refits outlined above as if they were SLDF “regular” units, unless otherwise specified, using the equipment and facilities at hand (see p. 188, SO). Any Outworlds Alliance units making these refits suffer from a Time Multiplier of 1.5 and Refit Rolls are made with a +1 penalty (both in addition to any other modifiers).

Class E and F Refits are only possible on the relatively few worlds home to a major production facility. Before 2585, Class E and F Refits can be made normally. After that date, all such refits suffer from a Time Multiplier of 1.5.

Pre-Existing Damage

The Reunification War was a tremendously expensive proposition for every nation involved—Periphery and Star League alike. Just a few years into some two decades of unrelenting war in the Periphery, each nation began to experience significant shortfalls in both spare parts as well as replacement personnel (and equipment), impacting their ability to keep their ‘Mechs and vehicles in operational order.

Unless otherwise indicated, all regiments—Star League or Periphery—have the potential of beginning a scenario with pre-existing damage. First roll 2D6 for each individual regiment with elements in the battle; on a roll of 10 or greater, that regiment’s combat units may suffer from pre-existing damage. Modify this roll by +1 for every year that nation’s forces have been fighting the war (to a maximum of +6); the Star League (including member-state forces) gains a –1 bonus to this roll, while SLDF Royal units gain an additional –1 bonus (for a total of –2); the Taurian Concordat gains a –1 bonus to the roll, while the Outworlds Alliance suffers a +1 penalty.

If the roll indicates that pre-existing damage is possible, roll 1D6 for each combat unit (‘Mech, vehicle, conventional or aerospace fighter) and apply the appropriate result from the Pre-

Existing Damage Table below to determine what damage, if any, each suffers. All Star League (including member-state) and Taurian Concordat units gain a –1 bonus to this roll.

Units that receive pre-existing damage suffer the indicated amount of damage and critical hits, determining the locations and any critical hits randomly against the affected units. For BattleMechs, use the Front/Back column to determine the locations of all damage. Aerospace fighters and conventional aircraft use the Above/Below column. For conventional combat vehicles, determine the location of any damage by first rolling a direction of attack (using the *BattleMech Facing After a Fall* chart) before rolling the hit location of any damage. Note that no units may take to the field if it has suffered any critical damage that would render it completely inoperative or immobilized; reroll any critical damage that would destroy a unit or reduce its mobility to 0. If the second result also destroys or immobilizes the unit, disregard both results and simply apply an additional 5 points of damage to a random location.

PRE-EXISTING DAMAGE TABLE

1D6	Pre-Existing Damage
1	No pre-existing damage.
2-3	Light existing damage. This unit receives 1 point of damage for every 5 tons of mass, distributed randomly in 5-point (or fraction thereof) groups. Do not roll critical hits, even if internal structure is damaged.
4-5	Moderate existing damage. This unit receives 2 points of damage for every 5 tons of mass, distributed randomly in 5-point (or fraction thereof) groups. Determine one critical hit to a random location, as well as any possible critical hits suffered from any internal structure damage. Disregard any hits that would immobilize or destroy the unit (including cockpit/crew killed hits, ammunition hits, and destroyed motive systems/engines and gyros).
6	Heavy existing damage. This unit receives 4 points of damage for every 5 tons of mass, distributed randomly in 5-point (or fraction thereof) groups. Determine two critical hits, each to a random location, as well as any possible critical hits suffered from any internal structure damage. Disregard any hits that would immobilize or destroy the unit (including cockpit/crew killed hits, ammunition hits, and destroyed motive systems/engines and gyros).

Additionally, there is a chance that any units with pre-existing damage that employ ammunition-based weapons may not have a full combat load. Roll 1D6 for each unit that requires ammunition: on a result of 1-2, the unit has a full load of ammunition; on a 3-4, the unit has only half its ammunition load (rounded up); on a 5, the unit has only 1D6 rounds of ammunition for each weapon; on a 6, the unit has no ammunition. Again, all Star League (including member-state) and Taurian Concordat units gain a –1 bonus to this roll.

Finally, specialized ammunition is rare. Any time specialized ammunition is requested (to include LB-X cluster and Artemis missile ammunition), roll 1D6. On a result of 1-2, the ammunition is available; on any other result, the specialized ammunition is unavailable.

Campaign Play: Players and gamemasters looking to fight a Reunification War campaign should first generate all of the forces available to each involved force. They can then apply any pre-existing damage to the various units, as appropriate. This will be the condition each is in prior to the start of any campaign play. Once the initial pre-existing damage is applied, no further rolls for such damage will be made through the end of the campaign (unless reinforcements are received from other forces). All units will have to then accomplish regular maintenance on their units, as well as repair battle damage, as appropriate.

IndustrialMechs

Before and throughout the Reunification War, many Periphery militias fielded IndustrialMechs jury-rigged with heavy weapons to help give them an advantage in combat. These refit machines became “force multipliers” that a commander could utilize to at least begin to even the odds when battling against the superior numbers and firepower of the Star League. As a result, armed IndustrialMechs were a common sight on the battlefields of the Reunification War.

IndustrialMech Reinforcements: A Periphery military unit may randomly add one armed IndustrialMech to its combat force for every two BattleMechs, vehicles or aerospace fighters, or for every company of infantry (not including *Irregular Forces*), it fields. These additional reinforcement units do not count towards any BV, tonnage, or total unit limits.

IndustrialMech Substitution: If the nature of the battle or scenario allows, the player controlling a Periphery force may choose to randomly substitute one or more armed IndustrialMechs for a like number of other units (including units with pre-existing damage) of his or her choice within the force. A player may choose to make one or more substitutions after determining pre-existing damage for his or her combat units (though before determining any potential pre-existing damage for the IndustrialMechs).

IndustrialMech Pre-Existing Damage: Just as with other combat units, armed IndustrialMechs may potentially begin a game with pre-existing damage, though because of their ease of repair (at least in comparison to dedicated combat units), the chance of this damage is lower. Unless otherwise specified, the controlling player will roll randomly as indicated under Pre-Existing Damage, above, though applying a –2 to the roll (treat any result below 1 as a roll of 1).

Randomly Determining IndustrialMechs: Use the *Random Unit Assignment Table: Armed IndustrialMechs*, p. 173, to determine the specific IndustrialMech design(s) to be used. First roll randomly to determine which column of the table to roll on: roll 1D6; on a result of 1-2 roll on column A, on a result of 3-4 roll on column B, and on a result of 5-6 roll on column C. After determining the column to roll on, roll 1D6 again to determine the specific unit assigned.

ASSIGNING PILOTS

Once the players have determined the 'Mechs and other battlefield units they will be using, they should then assign pilots to each. The players may make direct use of the *Random Experience Level Table* and the *Random Skills Table (Expanded)* (see p. 273, TW).

If playing elements from a specific unit, consult the rules provided for that unit (see *Reunification War Militaries*, p. 181); each unit (and sub-unit) is given a rating of Elite, Veteran, Regular or Green. If playing an Elite unit, the controlling player should add a +4 modifier to the Random Experience Level roll and a +2 modifier to the Random Skill Rating roll. If playing a Veteran unit, add +2 to the Experience roll and +1 to the Skill roll. If playing a Regular unit, apply no modifiers, and if playing a Green unit, apply a -2 to the Experience roll and -1 to the Skill roll.

ADVANCED & PROTOTYPE COMPONENTS

The Early Star League era offers a wide range of opportunities for *BattleTech* players. It saw the last of the engagements fought predominantly with "primitive" technologies but also saw the first use of the advanced technologies that would ultimately become synonymous with the Star League army. The following rules detail the new technologies and experimental systems that become available during the last days of the Age of War and throughout the Reunification War.

When choosing 'Mechs and vehicles for use in a Reunification War scenario or campaign, or making modifications to existing designs, all units must conform to the construction rules found in *TechManual*. However, the early Star League scientists continued experimenting with prototype weapons systems developed during the final days of the Age of War—specifically those focused on widening the families of weapons available to them; as a result the SLDF—primarily the royal units—may utilize limited quantities of advanced or prototype technologies. The five Great Houses and the Periphery nations both ultimately developed the same technologies, though typically at much later dates (long after the end of the Reunification War).

The *Advanced Components: Reunification War Table* lists the new and prototype technologies available to each power, the date that the prototype systems first became available for field testing, the date that the system went into full production, and their relative scarcity (both as a cost multiplier and as a maximum number that may be deployed in a given formation). These systems are considered "experimental", and are more fully explained in the *Prototype Systems* section below.

AVAILABILITY RESTRICTIONS

Depending on their nature, these equipment items are selectively available to the Star League and to the Periphery Nations as indicated on the *Advanced Components: Reunification War Table* (see *Availability Roll* below for additional restrictions). This equipment may be used to customize, refit or repair combat units, based on the limitations out-

lined in this chapter and in *Tactical Operations*. These systems become available in prototype form (described in *Prototype Systems* below) as of the year listed in the Prototype Intro Date column; the full system, as described in the *Tech Manual* or in *Tactical Ops* enters production and becomes better available as of the Production Date.

Only a limited number of each technology item may be employed by a force, indicated in the Max Per Lance column. This number indicates the total number of prototype systems that may be available for an entire player's force, based on the total number of combat units fielded by a particular force (rounded normally, to a minimum of 1). After the system is placed into full production, twice as many of these systems will be available per lance. Likewise, after the system is placed into full production, the Prototype Cost Multiplier is cut in half (to a minimum modifier of x1).

Where more than one of an item can be employed by a lance, those items may be mounted in a single 'Mech or vehicle or in several 'Mechs or vehicles. Where a fractional Max Per Lance rating appears—as with the Beagle Active Probe—a force must contain multiple lances before the technology can be employed. There is a maximum limit of up to four pieces of prototype or advanced equipment (of any kind) per lance.

No Limit indicates there is no limit on the number that can be employed in a lance.

Example: if Manny was fielding a Royal SLDF unit in 2594 consisting of three lances, he could have a maximum of three prototype LB 10-X autocannon, one prototype Arrow IV, and two production Gauss rifles spread throughout his force. Since his company has a maximum limit of 12 pieces of prototype or advanced equipment, he could attempt to acquire up to six more pieces of equipment.

Note: These prototype weapons all conform to the rules for the standard Inner Sphere versions, except as noted below. After the listed production date, that piece of equipment will conform to the standard rules for the Inner Sphere versions as outlined in *Total Warfare* (though prototype systems previously mounted may remain in service). Only the Rocket Launchers saw no additional refinement; with all of the advanced weapons available to them, the Inner Sphere as a whole did not even attempt to further develop the Rocket Launcher system (though similar analogs continued to be utilized by low-tech militaries throughout known space—especially the Periphery; the modern system developed by the Marian Hegemony represents the standard for Rocket Launchers in the thirty-first century).

Also note that the rules in this section apply only to prototype and production models produced within the Star League or the Periphery and mounted on combat units fielded by their respective native forces. Any equipment captured, salvaged off of the battlefield, or otherwise acquired through non-standard means may be utilized in any way the controlling player sees fit—based on the guidelines of the gamemaster and rules set forth in *TechManual*, *Tactical Operations* and *Strategic Operations*—regardless of the rules outlined here. Likewise, any of this equipment that is mounted normally on combat vehicle models utilized by a given force should not be counted or in any way limit the prototype equipment available to that force.

AVAILABILITY ROLL

To determine if a given piece of prototype equipment is even available to a Star League (to include member-states) or Periphery combat unit, make an Availability Roll: roll 1D6; on a result of 5 or greater, that piece of equipment is available. Roll once for each individual component desired, starting with the first of a given type (such as a Gauss rifle or an LB 10-X autocannon); if the roll is successful, the player may roll again for another like component until either the Max Per Lance limit is reached or an unsuccessful roll is made. Continue rolling for each type of component desired. Each available component must still be purchased or otherwise acquired, based on the nature of the scenario or campaign.

Additional limitations and availability modifiers are listed below based upon the particular force's faction.

Star League Availability

The Terran Hegemony was primarily responsible for developing each of the advanced components listed below. While membership in the Star League ensured that each of the member-states would gain access to many of the advanced technologies developed by the Hegemony, that did not mean that the Hegemony would willingly give up the most important military advancements or, for those they were willing to share, that a given state's research & development community and industry would be able to immediately place those technologies into production.

Components available to the Star League are listed under the *Star League* header on the *Advanced Components: Reunification War Table*. No Star League component will be available outside of the Terran Hegemony prior to 2571. After the formation of the Star League, the Terran Hegemony only shared a select few military technologies with its fellow member-states (samples of which had already been "acquired" by outside agents); those technologies that are available outside of the Hegemony within the Star League are listed in *italic* under the *Star League* header on the *Advanced Components: Reunification War Table* (no other technologies will be available outside of the Hegemony during the Reunification War). Prototype and production technologies developed prior to 2571 will begin to be available to the other Star League member-states as indicated below.

Terran Hegemony: The Terran Hegemony has full access to all technologies developed prior to 2571 in their prototype or production forms, as appropriate. HAF units gain a +2 bonus to the Availability Roll.

SLDF: Royal units gain a +2 bonus to the Availability Roll. Non-royal units may only have access to half the number of components listed in the Max Per Lance column.

Capellan Confederation: The Confederation gains access to advanced components beginning in 2580, with a -1 to the Availability Roll and with an additional +3 Prototype Cost Multiplier.

Draconis Combine: The Combine gains access to advanced components beginning in 2576, with a -1 to the Availability Roll and with an additional +2 Prototype Cost Multiplier.

Federated Suns: The Federated Suns gains access to advanced components beginning in 2574, and with an additional +1 Prototype Cost Multiplier.

Free Worlds League: The Free Worlds League gains access to advanced components beginning in 2573, and with an additional +1 Prototype Cost Multiplier. FWLM units gain a +1 bonus to the Availability Roll.

Lyran Commonwealth: The Lyran Commonwealth gains access to advanced components beginning in 2574, with no additional modifiers.

Periphery Availability

While the Periphery nations were the last to develop these advanced technologies—prior to the start of the Reunification War, it lagged behind the Inner Sphere by many decades when it came to military technologies—once the war began, they were firsthand witnesses to the potency of these new advancements. From the very beginning of the war, the Taurian front was the Star League's proving ground for each of its new technologies, the place where its MechWarriors and soldiers could put the advanced components through their paces and determine their ultimate viability.

Of course, that also put these advancements at risk for capture and reverse engineering. That was a price the Star League was willing to pay, and for which the Periphery—and especially the high-tech and massively industrialized Taurian Concordat—took full advantage of. And, ironically, what also gave the Periphery powers access to many of these technologies before the rest of the Star League.

Components available to the Periphery nations are listed under the *Periphery* header on the *Advanced Components: Reunification War Table*, with availability and cost as modified below.

Magistracy of Canopus: The Magistracy of Canopus gains access to advanced components three years after the dates listed for Periphery Equipment, and with an additional +1 Prototype Cost Multiplier.

Outworlds Alliance: The Outworlds Alliance will gain no access to any of these technologies during the Reunification War.

Rim Worlds Republic: The Rim Worlds Republic gains access to advanced components one year after the dates listed for Periphery Equipment, and with an additional +2 Prototype Cost Multiplier.

Taurian Concordat: The Taurian Concordat gains access to advanced components on the date listed. After 2585, the TDF may double the total Max Per Lance items available.

Note: After the conclusion of the war (2584 in the Magistracy of Canopus, 2596 in the Rim Worlds Republic and Taurian Concordat), the Periphery nations were forced to largely give up R&D efforts on these technologies, though they nonetheless continued in secret (effectively quarantining the Max Per Lance availability and adding a +2 to the cost).

ADVANCED COMPONENTS: REUNIFICATION WAR TABLE

Technology	Prototype Intro Date	Production Date	Prototype Cost Multiplier	Max Per Lance
Star League Equipment				
Arrow IV	2593	2600	x4	.25
Artemis IV FCS	2592	2598	x3	1
Beagle Active Probe	2560	2576	x3	.5
CASE*	2452	2476	x3	1
Double Heat Sinks	2559	2567	x3	1 unit
Endo Steel*	2471	2487	x3	.5 unit
Extralight Fusion Engine	2556	2579	x5	.25
Ferro-Fibrous Armor	2557	2571	x3	1 unit
Gauss Rifle	2587	2590	x4	.25
Guardian ECM	2595	2597	x5	.5
LB 10-X Autocannon	2590	2595	x4	1
NARC	2580	2587	x3	1
Pulse Lasers	2595	2609	x5	1
Remote Sensors	2586	2590	x2	1
TAG	2593	(2596) 2600**	x3	.25
Periphery Equipment				
Beagle Active Probe	2579	2587	x5	.25
CASE	2580	2586	x5	1
Double Heat Sinks	2583	2589	x6	1 unit
Endo Steel	2582	2591	x10	.5 unit
Extralight Fusion Engine	2588	—	x10	.25
Ferro-Fibrous Armor	2581	2586	x6	.5 unit
Rocket Launcher 10	~2300	N/A†	x1	No Limit
Rocket Launcher 15	~2300	N/A†	x1	No Limit
Rocket Launcher 20	~2320	N/A†	x1.5	No Limit

*Technology made available to the Star League member-states; see *Star League Availability* to determine when these technologies become available to each nation.

**TAG transitioned from prototype to production status relatively quickly, but was not put into production until much later. After the date indicated in parentheses, TAG conforms to the standard rules for the weapon, but will not reach production status (with the associated cost and availability bonuses) until the later date.

†Rocket Launchers remain experimental weapons throughout this era and do not reach production status.

Note: Each faction has different access to these technologies that may modify the information contained on this table. (see *Availability Roll*). After the listed Production Date, each component conforms to its standard rules, while the cost multiplier is cut in half (to a minimum of x1) and the Max Per Lance limit is doubled.

PROTOTYPE SYSTEMS

The Age of War saw the maturation of technology from the “primitive” weapons and systems available at the birth of the BattleMech to those that we now consider “standard” or “baseline” technologies. While the general level of technology plateaued briefly during the Age of War, it never truly stopped climbing. As the Age of War gave way to the Star League era, scores of new developments had already been made while many more were on the cusp of occurring. The Star League Defense Forces in particular debuted more than a dozen prototype combat systems during the Reunification War that would ultimately develop into full-fledged deployable systems. Meanwhile, the Periphery nations long maintained a two-pronged approach to closing the ever-widening technology gap between themselves and the Inner Sphere, relying upon a combination of traditional low-tech solutions coupled with technologies stolen or copied from Inner Sphere sources to outfit their combat forces.

The systems outlined below (identified by the suffix “-P”) are available in their prototype form to the Star League and Periphery nations as indicated on the *Advanced Components: Reunification War*

Table above. These prototype systems lacked many of the refinements of the final production versions (as they appear in the *Tech Manual* and *Tactical Ops*) and/or suffered one or more side effects.

For the purposes of *BattleTech* games, all of the following weapons and equipment are classified as Experimental, and are not legal for tournament play.

Arrow IV (Arrow-P)

Tube artillery, airborne bombers and orbital strikes were the primary fire support options available to the Star League forces throughout much of the Reunification War, though oftentimes that support was either too inaccurate or too late in coming to satisfy the needs of the frontline combat forces. Turning to a page in history, the SLDF directed the development of a missile artillery weapon that could provide extremely accurate localized fire support missions, utilizing either a battlefield designator (the TAG) or conventional artillery targeting methods. Though the final production models did not debut until after the end of the Reunification War, those prototype systems that did see combat action were well received by their users—on both sides.

These weapons function as Inner Sphere Arrow IV launchers per the standard Arrow IV rules with the following exceptions:

- The Arrow-P occupies one additional critical slot (or equipment slot) and masses one additional ton.
- The Arrow-P ammunition has only four shots per ton.

Artemis IV FCS (Artemis-P)

The Artemis IV Fire Control System, designed as an alternate to the NARC missile beacon, mated several sensor systems with a laser designator and tight-beam microwave transmitter to accurately guide Artemis-equipped missiles onto target. During its years of testing, additional software tweaks and hardware upgrades made for an even more accurate production model (while also allowing for easy upgrades to extant prototype systems).

These function as Inner Sphere Artemis IV FCSs per the standard Artemis IV FCS rules with the following exception:

- Artemis-P provides only a +1 bonus to the cluster hits roll.
- After the listed Production Date, existing Artemis-P systems require only a few simple upgrades to function as a normal system. In game terms, the system must be repaired, with a +1 bonus applied to the repair roll; upon a successful roll, the system functions as a normal Artemis IV FCS.

Beagle Active Probe (BAP-P)

Code-named "BEAGLE" by the original defense contractor that developed it, the Star League's Active Probe combines both passive and active sensor systems into one suite capable of detecting just about any modern combat unit. Though later advances partially nullified the "Beagle probe," it was a welcome addition to Reunification War reconnaissance units and continued to be used throughout the Star League era.

These function as Inner Sphere Beagle Active Probes per the standard Active Probe rules with the following exceptions:

- The BAP-P occupies a total of three critical slots.
- The BAP-P masses a total of two tons.

CASE (CASE-P)

In the late 25th century, HAF 'Mechs and other combat vehicles were suddenly becoming less and less susceptible to destruction from catastrophic internal explosions. It took decades before the secret—Cellular Ammunition Storage Equipment—made its way through the Inner Sphere, and decades many more years before nations outside of the Hegemony had finally produced their own serviceable copies.

These function as Inner Sphere CASE per the standard CASE rules with the following exception:

- Roll 1D6 for each ammunition or weapon explosion that would normally destroy the CASE-protected location; on a roll of 1-2 CASE has no effect.

Double Heat Sinks (DHS-P)

Constructed with advanced materials and further supplied with specially engineered cooling fluids, the double heat sink revolutionized the design of both BattleMechs and aerospace fighters in the 26th century and beyond.

These function as Inner Sphere double heat sinks per the standard heat sink rules with the following exceptions:

- DHS-Ps cannot be mounted in an engine.
- DHS-Ps may be combined with single heat sinks in combat units that can mount double heat sinks.

Endo Steel (ES-P)

The Terran Hegemony developed endo steel structure in the 25th century, jealously guarding that incredible advancement until it inevitably proliferated throughout the rest of the Inner Sphere. The secrets of endo steel ultimately found their way into the Periphery, though by the beginning of the Reunification War very few combat units outside of the Terran Hegemony had yet been refitted with endo steel frames.

This functions as Inner Sphere endo steel per the standard internal structure rules with the following exceptions:

- ES-P occupies two additional critical slots.

Extralight Fusion Engine (XL-P)

The first prototype Hegemony extralight fusion engines were already operating in select royal regiments at the onset of the Reunification War, and by the middle of the 2580s, thousands of SLDF BattleMechs, vehicles and fighters had been equipped with these vital power plants.

These function as Inner Sphere XL fusion engines per the standard engines rules with the following exceptions:

- The XL-P generates +1 additional heat each turn.
- Each critical hit to an XL-P generates 1D6/2 (rounded up) extra heat each turn (in addition to the normal +5 heat).

Ferro-Fibrous Armor (FF-P)

Ferro-fibrous armor was the very first military advancement that First Lord Ian Cameron shared with the newly formed Star League, though few League nations had developed serviceable versions of their own by the end of the Reunification War.

This functions as Inner Sphere ferro-fibrous armor per the standard armor rules with the following exceptions:

- FF-P occupies two additional critical slots.

Gauss Rifle (GR-P)

Though research into making rail guns lightweight and energy efficient enough to mount on modern battlefield units had long preoccupied Terran scientists, a series of breakthroughs in both materials design and power transfer brought the concept of the Gauss rifle to reality. Its superior range and damage capacity out-

classed all previous kinetic-electromagnet weapon designs, and made the *Highlander* the iconic terror that it was.

These weapons function as Inner Sphere Gauss rifles per the standard Gauss rifle rules with the following exceptions:

- The GR-P occupies one additional critical space.
- The GR-P jams whenever a 2 results on its to-hit roll per Ultra Autocannon rules.

Guardian ECM (ECM-P)

The “Guardian” ECM suite was an outgrowth of the constantly changing face of electronic warfare (EW). While comm systems and targeting modules provided for basic EW needs, a more capable system was needed on the battlefield that could jam enemy sensors while remaining compact enough to deploy on typical ‘Mechs and armored vehicles. Though developed in the last few years of the Reunification War, by war’s end designers had totally reengineered their complex ECM suites to allow for easy software and modular hardware upgrades.

These function as Inner Sphere Guardian ECM Suites per the standard ECM rules with the following exceptions:

- The ECM-P occupies a total of three critical slots.
- The ECM-P masses a total of two tons.

LB 10-X (LB 10-X-P)

Developed to fill the need for a dual-purpose weapon capable of both powerful direct fire as well as anti-air fire, the LB 10-X utilizes two different ammunition types: traditional armor-piercing shells as well as flechette shells that proved as equally capable in anti-air roles as in anti-armor and anti-personnel roles. The SLDF debuted its LB-X autocannon in time to participate in the final battles in both the Rim Worlds Republic and the Taurian Concordat, while those two nations fielded only a relative handful of prototypes before the end of the war.

These weapons function as Inner Sphere LB 10-X autocannon per the standard autocannon rules with the following exceptions:

- The LB 10-X-P requires 1 additional critical slot.
- Apply a –1 modifier (to a minimum of 2) to the cluster hits roll to determine the number of hits from cluster munitions.
- The LB 10-X-P jams whenever a 2 results on its to-hit roll per Ultra autocannon rules.

NARC (NARC-P)

The product of decades of one-upmanship between guided missiles and conventional ECM gear, the NARC system combines a single-tube missile launcher and a rocket-launched magnetic grapple beacon designed to draw specially equipped seeker missiles to it. While it only achieved limited popularity with Star League MechWarriors and tank crews, it did carve out a niche for itself while also leading directly to the development of the Artemis IV FCS.

These weapons function as Inner Sphere NARC launchers per the standard NARC rules with the following exceptions:

- NARC-P provides only a +1 bonus to the cluster hits roll.
- NARC-P ammunition has only five shots per ton.

Pulse Lasers (PL-P)

Pulse lasers progressed from theory to prototype in relatively short order in the final years of the Reunification War, though it took a decade and a half to develop final designs that were both stable and accurate.

These weapons function as Inner Sphere pulse lasers per the standard lasers rules with the following exceptions:

- All attacks with the LPL-P are made at just a –1 bonus to the target number.
- All attacks with the LPL-P and MPL-P generate 1D6 heat in addition to that normally associated with the weapon.
- All attacks with the SPL-P generate 1D6/3 heat (rounded up) in addition to that normally associated with the weapon.

Remote Sensors (RS-P)

The evolution of modern remote sensors was a natural progression of battlefield technology, incorporating modern advances. These sensors were continually upgraded as standard EW capabilities increased right along with processing power.

These function as Inner Sphere remote sensors per the standard Remote Sensors rules in *TO* (p. 375) with the following exceptions:

- For every turn of operation for each deployed sensor, roll 1D6; on a result of “1” the sensor is inoperative for that turn.

Rocket Launchers (RL-P)

Rocket Launchers were among the simplest technologies the militaries—and especially the militias and irregular troops—of the Periphery utilized in their battles against the Star League. Long utilized by militaries throughout the ages, the Rocket Launcher utilizes a simple concept: fire a mass of unguided projectiles at a target and hope as many as possible hit. Simple, cheap and effective, they gave the Periphery insurgents a series of weapons that they could at least produce in quantity.

These weapons function as Rocket Launchers of the appropriate designation (RL-10, RL-15 and RL-20) per the standard Rocket Launcher rules with the following exception:

- Apply a –1 modifier to all rolls on the Cluster Hits Table, to a minimum modified result of 2.

TAG (TAG-P)

Target Acquisition Gear, or TAG, was developed in conjunction with the Arrow IV missile artillery system. Though the gyro-stabilized laser targeting and designator system was perfected years before the Arrow IV reached production status, TAG languished in prototype status for some four years before it rolled out alongside the first complete Arrow IV launchers.

These weapons function as Inner Sphere TAG per the standard TAG rules with the following exceptions:

- TAG-P masses a total of 1.5 tons.

REUNIFICATION WAR MILITARIES

Many major combat formations, both Star League and Periphery, possess certain specialties and skills based on their experience and the abilities of their commanders and personnel. The following game rules simulate these characteristics and supplement existing *BattleTech* rules presented in *Total Warfare*, *Tactical Operations*, *Strategic Operations* and *A Time of War* rules. Gamemasters and players should all agree on the use of any supplemental rules before game play. Similarly, players should feel free to modify any rule that seems inappropriate for their campaign.

All of the following rules are ineligible for tournament play.

BATTLETECH GAME ADDITIONS

Many of the following rules are specifically designed for use with Creating Scenarios (see *TW*, starting on p. 256). However, players should feel free to use them in other game situations. Unless otherwise stated, the following rules apply to *BattleTech* games only.

Using Hidden Units Rules

Certain units can use the *Hidden Units* rules (see p. 259, *TW*) to set up part or all of their forces when scenario circumstances allow. If the opportunity does not exist, the regiment cannot exercise this option. For example, in a chase scenario both sides move at the start of the game, so the Hidden Units rules are void. In a stand-up fight scenario, however, one side can use the Hidden Units rules. Players must decide if a scenario accommodates the use of hidden units; in all cases, both players must agree before using the rules in a scenario.

If the rules for a scenario already call for hidden units, ignore the regiment's special ability to set up hidden units.

Special Abilities and Advantages

Several combat formations utilize one or more special abilities or advantages described in *Command-Level (Tactical) Comms* (see pp. 191-193, *TO*). The following abilities and advantages come into play in Reunification War scenarios: Banking Initiative, Forcing the Initiative, Off-Map Movement, and Overrun Combat. All of these abilities are applied at the Force Commander level.

Overlapping Abilities and Advantages: If opposing forces possess identical abilities or advantages, the advantages cancel each other out. For example, if two opposing units both have the advantage of choosing the side of the map from which they enter, ignore the advantage and instead determine the edge from which a side will enter using standard rules.

THE STAR LEAGUE

Star League Defense Forces

I Corps: Apply a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for all I Corps forces. All First Royal Brigade forces additionally receive a +2 bonus when rolling to randomly determine lance weight. When rolling to randomly determine the composition of

Second and Third Brigade forces, the controlling player may roll once per lance on the appropriate Royal/Terran Hegemony column, while all I Corps units receive a +1 bonus when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components).

II Corps: Apply a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for all II Corps forces. II Corps receive a +1 bonus to all Initiative rolls, may Force the Initiative and utilize Overrun Combat. Additionally, General Forlough ensured that II Corps continually received the best logistical support possible; II Corps receives a +1 bonus Availability Rolls for all Advanced Components, to repair rolls and to any rolls to determine the availability of supplies or replacement equipment.

III Corps: III Corps receives a -1 penalty to all Initiative Rolls when operating alongside any Draconis Combine forces. Target Numbers for all III Corps artillery strikes and orbital bombardment attacks receive a -1 bonus.

IV Corps: IV Corps may utilize Overrun Combat. In Hold the Line scenarios and when it is the defender in any scenario it also receives a +1 bonus to all Initiative Rolls. After 2590, IV Corps units engaged on the Taruian Front receive zero-G qualification (*AToW* characters receive an effective skill level of +3 in Zero-G Operations, while *BattleTech* formations receive no standard penalties for operating in zero-G environs).

V Corps: In battles that occur prior to 2583, apply a -1 penalty to the Random Experience Level roll for all V Corps forces and further apply a -1 penalty to all V Corps Initiative Rolls unless it is the defender in a scenario. In battles that occur in 2583 and beyond, those penalties no longer apply, and V Corps further gains the ability to Bank Initiative and to select its own home edge in any battle in which it is the attacker.

VI Corps: VI Corps may Bank Initiative and use Off-Map Movement, and there is a 50% chance that the commander of the VI Corps force may select half of the maps to be used in a particular scenario and select his/her home edge.

VII Corps: VII Corps may utilize Overrun Combat and gains a +1 bonus to all repair rolls. Irrespective of the scenario rules, the VII Corps commander may select half the maps used. VII Corps adhere to the Ares conventions and suffer a -2 initiative penalty if forced to fight on city maps.

VIII Corps: Apply a -1 penalty to the Random Experience Level roll for all VIII Corps forces. When rolling on the Unit Type table (see p. 265, *TW*), VIII Corps should regard 2-3 as indicating a combat vehicle and 4-5 as indicating a BattleMech.

First & Second Reserve Corps: Apply a -1 penalty to all Reserve Corps Initiative rolls in games in which it fields a force larger than one company or in which it fights alongside any other force (SLDF or Great House). The Reserve Corps also receives a -2 penalty to any roll made to determine the availability of supplies or replacement equipment (including Advanced Components). In scenarios in which the Reserve Corps are the defenders, the controlling player may automatically select the home edge and may place 25% of the force into hidden positions.

Star Guard Corps: Apply a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for all Star Guard Corps forces, and a +1 bonus to all rolls to acquire equipment, including Advanced Components, and replacements. The 22nd Royal Division randomly determines its forces normally for a royal unit, though it gains a +1 bonus when rolling to randomly determine lance weight; players controlling 23rd and 24th Division forces may roll once per lance on the appropriate Royal/Terran Hegemony column. The Star Guard Corps may select 25% of the maps to be used in any scenario and may utilize Overrun Combat. After 2590, the Star Guard receives zero-G qualification (*AToW* characters receive an effective skill level of +3 in Zero-G Operations, while BattleMech formations receive no standard penalties for operating in zero-G environs).

XI Corps: Apply a –2 penalty when rolling to randomly determine lance weight, but a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll. XI Corps may utilize Off-Map Movement and Overrun Combat, and when the attacker in any scenario may select up to 25% of the maps to be used in the scenario as well as its own starting edge. When rolling to randomly determine the composition of all Light Horse units, the controlling player may choose to reroll any selection that results in a 'Mech or vehicle with a walk/cruise speed of 4 or less (the reroll must be in the same weight class, and the player must keep the rerolled unit regardless of its speed, with the following exception); if at least half of the units in a given lance do not have a walk/cruise speed of 5 or greater and/or have jump movement, the controlling player may discard one unit and randomly roll for another one of the same kind ('Mech or vehicle) and in the same weight class.

Capellan Confederation

Red Lancers: As the elite personal guard—and enforcers—of the Capellan Chancellor, the Red Lancers receive a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll and a +1 bonus when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components). They receive a +1 Initiative bonus on the battlefield, and before the beginning of any game may select one of the opposing side's special abilities and prevent them from using that ability throughout the game (combat abilities only; modifiers to random skill and equipment rolls do not count).

Draconis Combine

Benjamin Regulars: Apply a –2 penalty to any roll made to determine the availability of supplies or replacement equipment (including Advanced Components). The Benjamin Regulars receive a +1 bonus to all morale checks, and if they are outnumbered 2-to-1 or greater at any point in a battle, they also receive +1 Initiative bonus.

Dieron Regulars: The Dieron Regulars are some of the most skilled and best equipped of any of the Combine's district forces; for each MechWarrior, pilot and crew, there is a 50% chance of applying a +1 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll. Likewise, there is a 25% chance that the maximum amount of Advanced Components per lance may be doubled.

Galedon Regulars: Apply a –1 penalty to any roll made to determine the availability of supplies or replacement equipment (including Advanced Components). The Galedon Regulars will not shy away from engaging civilians, or "getting their hands dirty;" they gain a +1 bonus to any physical attack To-hit Rolls. They will also not break, and are not subject to forced withdrawal rules.

Sword of Light: Brutal and effective, the Sword of Light may Force the Initiative and use Overrun Combat. Additionally, their opponents suffer a –1 penalty on all morale checks.

Federated Suns

Avalon Hussars: The Avalon Hussars represent the "work-horse" regiments of the AFFS. While they do not have the same easy access to cutting-edge technologies as elite formations like the Davion Guards, they are veteran combat organizations. The Avalon Hussars have access to half the number of components listed in the Max Per Lance column on the *Advanced Components: Reunification War Table*. In any scenario in which an Avalon Hussars unit is the attacker, they may either deploy half of their forces anywhere in the first half of the map(s) representing their starting/home edge or may reduce the defender's total number of hidden units by half. In any scenario in which an Avalon Hussars unit is the defender, they may either place up to one quarter of their forces in hidden positions anywhere on their "half" of the board or may deploy twice the normal number of conventional minefields *and* if utilizing artillery in a game may pre-designate twice as many hexes as normal (see p. 180, *TO*). The controlling player must choose which of these abilities to employ prior to selecting any combat units.

Davion Brigade of Guards: Apply a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for all Davion Guards forces, and an additional +1 bonus when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components). The Davion Guards may Force the Initiative and utilize Overrun Movement, and gain a +1 Initiative bonus when two or more Davion Guards lances (including the Pitcairn Legion) are operating together.

Pitcairn Legion: Apply a +3 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for all Pitcairn Legion forces, and an additional +2 bonus when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components). It may field twice as many Advanced Components per lance as normal, and may customize its combat equipment as if it was an SLDF Royal unit (see *Customization*, p. 174). The Pitcairn Legion may Bank Initiative and utilize Overrun Combat, and in scenarios in which it is the attacker has a 50% chance of selecting one-quarter of the maps to be used in the battle and selecting its own home edge.

Syrtis Fusiliers: Owing to its still-lingering distrust of First Prince Alexander Davion, the Syrtis Fusiliers are among the worst-equipped regiments in the AFFS. Apply a –1 penalty to any roll made to determine the availability of supplies or replacement equipment (including Advanced Components), while the Fusiliers only have access to one half of the Advanced Components normally available. Nonetheless, they are enthusiastic, if somewhat reckless, fighters; when fighting against Taurian Concordat (or Capellan

Confederation) units, the Fusiliers receive a +2 bonus to all Initiative and Physical Combat To-hit rolls and may use Overrun Combat, but may never select any maps in the battle or their home edge. When fighting alongside any Davion Brigade of Guards unit, though, they lose their Initiative bonus and further suffer a –1 Initiative penalty.

Free Worlds League

First Marik Militia: The lead unit of the FWLM, the First is well equipped and gains a +2 bonus when determining the availability of supplies and equipment. Additionally, they may double the number of Advanced Components per lance and gain a +1 bonus on Random Experience Level rolls.

First Fusiliers of Oriente: The most experienced FWLM forces, the First Fusiliers gain a +2 bonus on Random Experience level rolls and may Force the Initiative.

Third Regular Hussars: Determined to prove Regular might, the imposing Third Hussars may use Overrun Combat and Zone of Control abilities. However, their rivalry with other FWLM forces imposes a –1 initiative roll penalty when the Third fights alongside non-Regular FWLM troops.

Lyran Commonwealth

Fourth Royal Guards: When randomly Random Lance Type for the Fourth Guards, apply a +2 modifier to the roll (treating a result greater than 12 as a 12). Additionally, apply a +1 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for Fourth Royal unit. Any force containing the Fourth gains a +1 Initiative bonus when the attacker in a scenario.

Twenty-fifth Skye Rangers: A jack-of-all-trades formation, the Twenty-fifth has no special combat abilities. However, apply a +1 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for Twenty-fifth Skye Ranger units and a +1 bonus when determining the availability of Advanced Equipment.

Tamar Tigers: Apply a –2 modifier when rolling to randomly determine lance weight of Tamar Tigers units (treating results less than 4 as Light). Additionally, a force containing the Tigers gains a +2 bonus to initiative rolls. Tamar Tigers units may use Off-Map movement.

THE PERIPHERY

Magistracy of Canopus

The Chasseurs à Cheval: Mobile and elusive, the regiments of the Chasseurs à Cheval gain a +1 bonus to Initiative Rolls and may use Off-Map movement.

Buquoy's Bandits: A mercenary force, the composition of the Bandits does not correspond with other Canopian units. Each unit has a 50% chance to be Canopian or Inner Sphere. If Inner Sphere, roll 2D6 and consult the Random SLDF Nationality Table to determine which RAT to use. The Bandits gain a +1 bonus on Random Experience Level rolls and Morale Checks.

Kossandra's Volunteers: As their name suggests, many of the Volunteers are not experienced soldiers and as a consequence they

gain a –2 penalty on Random Experience Level rolls. Additionally, though skilled at close-in fighting, they lack the training to be effective ranged combatants and are thus considered Brawlers (see TO, p. 193).

Outworlds Alliance

Alliance Armored Divisions: When randomly determining the composition of armor platoons, the controlling player may roll once per platoon each on the Draconis Combine and Federated Suns tables.

Alliance Borderers & Grenadiers: The Alliance Borderers and Grenadiers were formed in late 2582 from a combination of captured Star League salvage and the covert efforts of House Davion. When rolling to randomly determine lance/platoon composition, roll twice on the standard SLDF tables and once on the Federated Suns tables per lance/platoon.

Carabineers & Lancers: The Pitkin Lancers and Santiago Carabiniers were formed from significant SLDF equipment captured by the Pitcairn Legion on Haynesville. When rolling to randomly determine lance/platoon composition, roll on the SLDF tables as if these regiments were Royal units (reroll any results that would include a piece of equipment available in the year 2584 or later).

First Alliance BattleMech Regiment: The Outworlds Alliance organized its first BattleMech regiment in the early 2570s after buying whatever outdated BattleMechs and armed WorkMechs it could acquire. By the beginning of the Star League invasion, the First Regiment had pushed all of its converted WorkMechs into militia service, replacing them with conventional 'Mech designs purchased through Kurita sources through House Davion's covert assistance. When rolling to randomly determine lance composition, roll once per lance on the Draconis Combine table.

Rim Worlds Republic

The military of the Rim Worlds Republic is sundered by civil war, but despite this there were occasions where the Loyalist (RWA) and Rebel (RRA) forces cooperated against the common SLDF enemy. In such cases the Republican force suffers a –2 penalty to initiative rolls. Due to the shattered logistics train, all Rim Worlds units suffer a –1 penalty on all repair rolls.

Fourth Amaris Dragoons: Determined and scheming, the Fourth Dragoons are adept at turning the situation to their advantage. They may use Banking the Initiative and Overrun Combat.

Seventh Amaris Legionnaires: The Seventh Legionnaires gain a +1 initiative bonus when they are defenders in a scenario. The commander of the Seventh may choose 50% of the maps used in a scenario.

Taurian Concordat

Taurian Concordat forces may deploy twice the normal amount of *Irregular Forces* and *Minefields* in each battle (see *Force Generation*, p. 169, and *Terrain*, p. 169). All *Irregular Forces* (p. 169) gain a +1 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll.

Calderon Guard: Apply a +2 bonus to the Random Experience Level roll for the Calderon Guard, and an additional +2 bonus when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components).

Concordat Chasseurs: Unless otherwise specified, the Chasseurs may choose their own home edge, and have a 50% chance to choose all of the maps to be used in the game.

Pleiades Hussars: The Pleiades Hussars excel in mobile warfare. They have the option of either choosing half of the maps in the game or selecting their own home edge, and when rolling to randomly determine lance/platoon composition may choose to reroll any selection that results in a 'Mech or vehicle with a walk/cruise speed of 4 or less (the reroll must be in the same weight class, and rerolled unit must be kept regardless of its speed). Additionally, they may Bank Initiative, Force the Initiative and use Off-Map Movement.

Taurian Guards: Apply a +1 bonus when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components). Each Taurian Guard MechWarrior (or other pilot/crew) receives one Edge point to use in each battle.

Taurian Volunteer Guard: Apply a -1 penalty to the Random Experience Level roll for the Calderon Guard, and an additional -2 penalty when rolling to determine the availability of equipment and replacements (including Advanced Components). On the other hand, they receive a +3 bonus to all morale checks, and receive +2 Initiative bonus if they are outnumbered at any point in a battle.

NOTABLE PERSONALITIES

The following rules allow players to take the notable personalities from this book and plug them into their campaign play. The rules cover a very wide gamut of options, reflecting the disparate nature of the characters in this sourcebook. Some may have rules exclusive to a *BattleTech* boardgame, some may have rules only appropriate for roleplaying using *A Time of War*, while others may have a mix. Players are encouraged to use which rules are the most applicable for the type of game they're playing, adjudicating as necessary if a given character rule does not explicitly state every situation that might be covered.

Additional information on generating and using special skills and abilities assigned to notable personalities can be found under *Notable Personalities in Non-RPG Campaign Play—Campaign Traits, Masters and Minions: The StarCorps Dossiers*, pp. 246-252.

THE STAR LEAGUE

SLDF

First Lord Ian Cameron: Though a career soldier, politics was never far from Ian Cameron's life and when his brother was assassinated he easily slipped into the role of Director-General, a position transformed into First Lord of the Star League by his consummate diplomatic skill. Central to Cameron's success was knowing his own limits and when to delegate to others, be it Albert Marik and the diplomatic initiatives to forge the Star League or his wife in shaping

the SLDF. Cameron gains a +2 bonus to any Negotiation rolls (+3 if he is accompanied by Albert Marik).

Lady Shandra Noruff-Cameron: The first Commanding General of the SLDF and its architect, Shandra Noruff had a long and distinguished career with the HAF but did not serve as an operational commander in the Reunification War, being forced to retire due to ill health. Noruff-Cameron receives a +1 bonus to all Administration or Strategy Action Checks but suffers a -1 penalty to all BOD-based Action Checks and has the Glass Jaw Trait.

Lieutenant General Nicholas Cameron: Despite the fact that he served under an alias for his first several years of service within the SLDF, his cover identity never fooled anyone who served alongside him. Discounting the platoon of elite special forces operatives and lance of elite bodyguard 'Mechs which followed him wherever he went, his features and his confident stance clearly gave him away as the son of the First Lord and the former commanding general to anyone who had seen the two. Thanks to this, even though he never asked for special treatment or consideration, he gains a +2 bonus to any rolls when interacting with a Star League citizen who recognizes him; this increases to +4 after he becomes First Lord. Those facts notwithstanding, Nicholas Cameron is an intelligent, capable and decisive leader both in combat as well as in politics. He gains a +1 bonus to all INT- and WIL-based Attribute or Skill Checks (+2 if combined).

General Amos Forlough: Amos Forlough is a decisive if impatient man who detests incompetence and especially loathes the political "game" that oftentimes limits his ability to complete the assignment given him. He is a consummate strategist and tactician, and gains a +2 bonus to all such rolls, while he will provide a +1 Initiative bonus if he is in command of a battlefield unit and will also preventing his opponents from using any of their special battlefield abilities (bonuses and other abilities that affect crew quality and the selection of combat units are not impacted). Any individual that has crossed him in the past or who has failed to live up to his expectations receives a -2 penalty to rolls when interacting with the general, while he himself suffers a -2 penalty to all Protocol rolls as well as any interactions with politicians.

General Amalthia Kincaid: Though she is a *wunderkind* of the SLDF, Amalthia Kincaid suffers from numerous health issues that have plagued her throughout her career. She receives a -2 penalty to all BOD- or DEX-based Attribute or Skill Checks (-4 if it is a BOD and DEX Double Attribute Check), but due to sympathy for her disabilities a +1 bonus to all interactions with others. Her mind, on the other hand, remains incredibly sharp; she gains a +2 bonus to INT- and WIL-based Attribute or Skill Checks.

Commanding General Carlos Lee: As the SLDF's second, and arguably most influential, Commanding General, Carlos Dagmar Lee served a distinguished career as a soldier in the HAF before having to learn how to negotiate the political battlefields of the newly forming Star League and its military; he gains a +1 bonus to all appropriate rolls when interacting with nobles and politicians. During his three-and-a-half decades in the HAF, he developed a deep sense of loyalty—to his nation, to the Camerons, and to those

who demonstrated their own unswerving loyalty. As a result, he will provide his steadfast support to his most loyal subordinates, even if that means compromising on other decisions in order to continue that support. On the other hand, the good of the SLDF as a whole remains his greatest goal, and given a choice between the best option for the SLDF and what would benefit a loyal friend or subordinate, he will choose what is best for the SLDF.

General Lord Damien Onaga: Damien Onaga is noble by birth, but his title is all that he retains; his family's wealth was drained long before his birth, though he does have the ability to call upon the Onaga family's Lyrans contacts, and likewise built for himself a long series of contacts within both the Terran Hegemony and the Federated Suns; he gains a +2 bonus to all Connection Rolls when using these Connections, while the connections that he makes have an effective level of +1 of what they normally would be. He is well-liked by both subordinates and superiors, and gains a +2 bonus to rolls when interacting with anyone familiar with the man as well as with nobles of any kind. General Onaga also has a unique ability to bring out the best qualities and a little extra effort from those around him; while in his direct presence (including within 10 hexes of him on the battlefield), everyone on "his side" receives a +1 bonus to all Attribute and Skill Checks, while those to whom he has just spoken for more than five minutes (be it in a one-on-one conversation or an address to a large audience) gain a +2 bonus to all morale-based checks (lasting a total of 1D6 hours).

General Charles Wexworth: Fancying himself a skilled politician, General Charles Wexworth relies overly so upon his staff and subordinates while also continually making decisions based upon a consensus-building model. While these qualities served him well so long as he was surrounded by a skilled staff and he operated in a purely political setting, they failed him whist waging war. He gains a +2 bonus when interacting with politicians, other officers, and with nobles in purely political and social settings. If he is in direct command of a unit, that unit receives a -1 penalty to all Initiative rolls, while his indecision also imposes a -1 penalty to all of his Strategy and Tactics rolls.

Capellan Confederation

Chancellor Ursula Liao: Having grown up the product of a broken marriage within one of the most potentially dangerous of households, Ursula Liao was never able to commit to a personal relationship and produced no offspring. Her fascination with the history and the noblest qualities of her family (one that conveniently ignored the worst of the Liao's brutality and insanity) shaped her into a principled leader who vocally opposed naked aggression and policies designed to subjugate, hurt or kill. Nevertheless, she shrewdly acted to benefit her nation, oftentimes willingly "selling" her vote on the Star League Council in exchange for concessions and breaks for the Confederation. While this garnered her the reputation of a "weak-willed idealist" among her peers, she also used that fact to her advantage in deals time and again throughout her reign.

Normann Aris: Wealthy military industrialist and last scion of the once-powerful Aris family, Normann Franken Aris suc-

ceeded the childless Ursula Liao as Chancellor after her death. As a senior corporate officer within Earthwerks, Ltd., Aris possesses extensive military, political and business contacts throughout the Inner Sphere; he gains a +3 bonus to all Connection Rolls when using these Connections, while the connections that he makes have an effective level of +2 of what they normally would be. He is also very much the "hawk" to Ursula Liao's "dove;" he mandated national service within the Confederation and overturned many of his predecessor's policies and initiatives. He gains a +1 bonus when interacting with any non-Confederation Star League politician or military officer.

Draconis Combine

Coordinator Hehiro Kurita: Hehiro Kurita was a unique and unexpected product of a household dominated by the ever-scheming, and some say power mad, Siriwan McAllister. Though he inherited and then honed his mother's skills of manipulation, Hehiro somehow remained an idealist amid the toxic environment of the Combine's royal court, and amazingly retained his optimism through a two-decade career within the DCMS. In many ways the exact opposite of his brutal and unforgiving mother, he gains a +2 bonus in all rolls when interacting with other Combine citizens as well as a +1 bonus to all WIL-based Skill or Attribute Checks.

Leonard Kurita: Leonard Kurita cares about one thing and one thing only: Leonard Kurita; everything and everyone else is a far distant second. He is a hedonistic sociopath who uses his family's wealth and power to gain him his every want. He is also shameless, never even attempting to hide his excessive ways—be they his drug use, his sexual improprieties or his interests in blood sports. Decades of drug and alcohol abuse have left him hopelessly addicted, while his entire lifestyle has drained him of much of his vitality; he suffers from a -4 penalty to all WIL-based Skill or Attribute Checks, and further a -1 penalty to all BOD-based Skill or Attribute Checks. On the other hand, his security detail—loyal to the Combine rather than to any individual—will readily "clean up" his every mess; that is, until they recognize that he is nothing more than a liability to the nation.

Siriwan McAllister: Even as a young woman, Siriwan McAllister was an intelligent, willful individual who knew what she wanted, and would do just about anything to achieve those goals. She is a skilled manipulator who rarely misses anything, though after abdicating the Coordinatorship in favor of her son, Hehiro, she rarely concerned herself with the interstellar politics of the Star League or its war. Instead, Siriwan concentrated upon the Draconis Combine, influencing—sometimes subtly and sometimes overtly—her son and other members of the Combine government to act in ways she thought best. She gains a +2 bonus to all WIL-based Skill or Attribute Checks, and a further +1 bonus to all CHA-based checks. Siriwan also gains an additional +1 bonus when attempting to intimidate or cajole another into following her wishes (these bonuses are halved when dealing with her son or any of the other members of the Star League Council).

Federated Suns

First Prince Alexander Davion: Despite the fact that he was little more than a pawn to his aunts during his early life, Alexander Davion was a bright young man who somehow developed a realistic moral compass that served him well during the Davion Civil War and on throughout his life. He is a skilled strategist—be it in the military or political realm—gaining a +2 bonus to all Strategy rolls. He is also an outstanding negotiator and orator, gaining a +2 bonus to all CHA-based Skill and Attribute Checks.

President Lawrence Davion: As the youngest of First Prince Alexander Davion's children, Lawrence Davion struggled to find a position for himself within his family during his youth. He finally recognized the path he would take after his appointment New Avalon's representative to the Federated Suns' High Council. Using the contacts he made within the Council as representative, and later those he formed throughout the Suns and the rest of the Star League as President of the High Council, he built for himself—and the rest of his family—a massive business empire. Displaying all of his father's charm and skills as a negotiator, and armed with a self-deprecating manner that caught many opponents off-guard, Lawrence amassed a long series of business partners and political allies throughout his life. The is no doubt that Lawrence Davion is a greedy man, and if judged today his business decisions and methods would certainly be labeled both "unfair" and "illegal," but he also made sure that his family, friends and allies were well taken care of. He gains a +2 bonus to all CHA-based Skill and Attribute Checks, and he gains a +3 bonus to all Connection Rolls, while the connections that he makes have an effective level of +2 of what they normally would be.

Colonel Elias Pitcairn: "Outstanding officer," "skilled battlefield tactician" and "loyal patriot" were some of the words used to describe Elias Pitcairn as he rose through the ranks of the Davion Brigade of Guards, making him just the kind of officer Alexander Davion needed to lead a legion of volunteer MechWarriors against their own nominal Star League allies on the Outworlds front. Pitcairn receives a +2 bonus to all Tactics rolls, and any force he leads on the battlefield receives a +2 Initiative bonus. Additionally, if he is present on the battlefield, he either may prevent an enemy force from using any of their special battlefield abilities (bonuses and other abilities that affect crew quality and the selection of combat units are not impacted) or may provide each Pitcairn Legion MechWarrior (or other pilot/crew) one Edge point to use in each battle.

Free Worlds League

Captain-General Albert Marik: The elder statesman of the Star League, partner to Ian Cameron in the good-cop, bad-cop routine they used against the Great Houses, Albert's legacy was considerably larger than his diminutive frame. Unfit for active military service, he nonetheless became a skilled tactician and strategist, though this skill paled compared to his political and diplomatic savvy. Marik gains a +2 bonus to all Negotiation Action Checks (+3 if Ian Cameron is present) and +1 to all Strategy Action Checks.

However, he suffers a -2 penalty to all Attribute and Action checks involving BOD.

Captain-General Marion Marik: Her father's strong right arm and a formidable force in her own right, Marion Marik was architect and executor of the Magistracy Campaign. Happier on the battlefield than in Parliament (but highly skilled in both arenas) she was responsible for maintaining the relative civility of the Magistracy Campaign and in doing so laying the groundwork for the post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Canopus, something scarcely considered on the other fronts. Marion Marik gains a +1 bonus to all Administration and Strategy checks. Additionally, any force under her personal command ignores the Forced Withdrawal rules.

Duke Ian Marik: Overshadowed by his illustrious grandfather and formidable mother, history hasn't been kind to Ian Marik. Many know him best as a womanizer and the man who was recalled by Parliament, yet his military record was distinguished and his role in the SLDF's Magistracy Campaign was second only to Marion. His leadership of the Marik Auxiliaries was exemplary, as was his role in Parliament after his recall and even his stint as Military-Governor of Canopus (with its attendant scandals). Ian Marik gains a +1 bonus to all Tactics and Strategy checks and has the Attractive Trait. Additionally, any force under his personal gains a +2 bonus to all Availability Checks when seeking spare parts.

Rhean Marik: Young and idealistic when she was thrown into the Freebooter's War, Rhean gains a +1 bonus to any Protocol or Language rolls.

Duchess Melissa Humphreys: Stateswoman, military governor and political operative, Dame Humphreys' contribution to the post-war efforts in the Magistracy brought political and economic rewards (though the economic dividends would later sour). Her career pre- and post-Canopus alone would have earned her a place in history but even in retirement she continued to serve the Free Worlds and the Captains-General. Any Negotiation Checks gain a +1 modifier if Dame Humphreys is in the party (and +2 if she takes a direct hand). Additionally, she gains a +1 modifier to all Administration Action Checks.

Prince Narinder Selaj: Ruthless, ambitious and suave, Prince Selaj was as skilled a political operator as he was a general. An ability to see the big-picture—political and economic as well as military—allowed him to hone his tactics, a skill that later earned him operational command of the FWLM. Duke Selaj gains a +1 bonus to all Attribute Checks and Action Checks involving WIL. Any military force under his personal commands gains a +1 Initiative bonus and increases its Force Loyalty (see pp. 38-40, SO) by one level (C becoming B and so forth).

Lyran Commonwealth

Archon Viola Steiner-Dinesen: By turns icy and passionate, Archon Viola was a study in contrasts, her cool aloofness a far cry from her obsession with her husband and her legendary temper. If Viola is leading a force personally, that unit may use the Force the Initiative and Overrun Combat abilities. Her troops are well supplied and gain a +1 bonus to all Maintenance and

Repair checks. However, her temper results in a -1 penalty to all WIL Attribute Checks and she has the Compulsion/Berserker Trait. After the Day of Rage she has the Lost Limb (Arm) Trait but due to her intensive rehabilitation suffers only a -3 penalty to DEX-related rolls.

Kevin Steiner-Dinesen: Before his kidnapping Kevin Steiner-Dinesen was a conscientious but somewhat overwhelmed young politician. After his imprisonment he was haunted but also driven, becoming a force to be reckoned with. Prior to his kidnapping Kevin suffers a -1 modifier to all Negotiation and Administration Action Checks. After his ordeal he gains a +1 bonus in such tests but suffers from the Compulsion/Paranoia Trait.

Speaker Henry Gram: To outsiders Gram would become known as a self-aggrandizing traitor but he viewed himself as a patriot, willing to take difficult but correct steps to achieve his goals. He gains a +1 modifier to all Negotiation Action Checks (+2 if the negotiation is within the Estates general) and has access to vast wealth and influence to achieve his goals.

Duke Selvin Kelswa II: Cold as a Tharkad winter, respected and feared in equal measure, the Duke of Tamar is an institution with the Lyran Commonwealth. He gains a +2 bonus to all Attribute Checks and Action Checks utilizing INT and a -2 penalty on all Attribute Checks and Action Checks utilizing CHA.

Duke Aldo Lestrade: A social butterfly yet also one of the richest and most influential figures in the Lyran Commonwealth, the Duke of Skye is a mercurial figure in Lyran politics, one moment your best friend and the next a bitter enemy. He gains a +1 bonus to all Driving and Negotiation Action Checks and has the Gregarious Trait.

THE PERIPHERY

Magistracy of Canopus

Magestrix Crystalla Centrella: Crystalla's rejection of the Pollux Proclamation cemented her political reputation but also condemned her realm to war. Though trained as a warrior, she acknowledged her skills as insufficient to the task at hand and did what she excelled at: delegating, drawing on others' strengths. A shrewd judge of character she is able to get the best out of social situations: before any Opposed Action involving social skills (Negotiation, Interrogation, Seduction and the like) make a CHA Attribute Check for the Magestrix; if it succeeds she may add that roll's Margin of Success to her Margin of Success in the Opposed Action or she may reduce her opponent's Margin of Success by a similar amount, potentially reducing it below 0 and turning it into a Margin of Failure.

Rinalla Centrella: Young and flighty, Rinalla Centrella has negligible military skills but inherited her mother's political instincts. Few who encountered her during the Reunification War or early post-war era, but her steel began to show in the late 2590s and she was a popular and strong Magestrix upon the restoration of civil government in 2604. She has the Attractive and Gregarious Traits (see p. 108, 118, AToW).

Colonel Adam Buquoy: Outcast, sellsword, general. Adam Buquoy is a far cry from people's expectations as supreme military commander, yet his rugged and often disheveled appearance concealed one of the Periphery's finest military minds. He gains a +2 bonus to all Strategy or Tactics Action Checks and gains a +2 bonus to his Initiative rolls. Any force under his command may use Off-Map Movement or start the scenario with up to 25% of their force as Hidden Units. Furthermore, his ability to sow confusion among opposing troops places the enemy force under the effects of Communications Disruption.

Outworlds Alliance

President Grigori Avellar: Grigori Avellar may have given up the image of his mis-spent youth, but he did not succeed in leaving behind all of his vices. He is nonetheless a charismatic and decisive leader who seeks only what is best for his nation and who is not only able to choose able subordinates but also who is willing to trust them and value their service. He gains a +2 bonus to all CHA-based Skill and Attribute Checks, as well as a +1 bonus to all Strategy checks, but is saddled with numerous addictions and suffers a -1 penalty to all WIL-based Skill or Attribute Checks when under stress.

Barton Avellar: Shielded from his father's private demons as well as the stresses of his position by a mother intent on protecting her only son, Barton Avellar was wholly unprepared to assume the Presidency of the Outworlds Alliance. To say he was in over his head would be a major understatement. He suffers a -1 penalty to all Strategy checks and a further -1 penalty to any Connection Rolls.

Chairman Welkens Nordd: Despite his Rasalhague heritage and service as a Combine soldier, as well as the antagonistic relationship he had with Grigori Avellar while serving as Avellar's bodyguard, Welkens Nordd formed and led the Outworlds Alliance's military arm through the Reunification War. He is exceedingly principled, which is what drove him away from the inequities within the Combine and to the Alliance, as well as unswervingly loyal to his friends and comrades. He maintains numerous contacts within the Draconis Combine, specifically within the Rasalhague Province, which aided him in building the OAM; he gains a +2 bonus to all Connection Rolls, while the connections that he makes have an effective level of +1 of what they normally would be. On the battlefield, any unit he leads gains a +1 bonus when rolling to randomly determine force experience.

Rim Worlds Republic

First Consul Gregory Amaris: Conceited and ultimately self-destructive, Gregory Amaris blamed everyone but himself for the troubles that erupted in the Rim Worlds Republic. Despite his short-sightedness and arrogance he was a skilled orator and politician, extensively bolstering the Republican economy (and his own ego) before the troubles. He gains a +2 modifier to any Negotiations he is involved in and a +2 modifier to Leadership rolls made to inspire those in his presence. However, Leadership Action Checks made against remote persons suffer a -2 penalty. However, he suffers

from the Compulsion Trait and suffers a –4 modifier to all Action and Attribute Checks involving WIL.

Colonel Catherine Dormax: Determined but not exceptional, Catherine Dormax's infamy as the officer whose rebellion sparked the crisis in the Rim Worlds is in stark counterpoint to her reputation for fairness and thoughtfulness. She gains a +1 bonus to all Administration and Protocol Action Checks and has the Patient Trait.

Admiral Hakim Wbika: Responsible for the greatest SLDF losses in the Republican Campaign, the Newtown Shoals debacle, Hakim Wbika was a hero to some, a villain to others. He was one of the few Republican commanders able to operate freely in the war with the Star League, and though captured at Newtown Square was able to barter his success for political influence in the post-war era, leading a coup against Gregory Amaris. Wbika gains a +1 bonus to all Protocol, Strategy and Tactics Action Checks.

Taurian Concordat

Protector Mitchell Calderon: Like most Taurian leaders both before and after him, Mitchell Calderon possesses a lingering paranoia of House Davion. He also detests House Liao, and any they would consider allies, which of course also means that he considers the Star League an enemy of his Taurian Concordat. Mitchell Calderon is a schemer as well as a micromanager who, while he sought the power and trappings as Concordat Protector, saw himself as the only Calderon who could possibly lead the Taurian Concordat against the Star League after its formation. He demands absolute loyalty and is often incapable of recognizing another point of view other than his own. As a result, he often disregards the advice of those around him who speak plainly, instead clearly favoring those who simply tell him what he wants to hear.

Marantha Calderon: Despite inheriting an untenable position, Marantha Calderon proved a capable Protector, but one who sympathized too much with her people and their plight. She took every defeat personally, empathizing with her citizens and soldiers who were "murdered by the stormtroopers of the heartless Star League." By the end of the war, hysteria and depression were ruling her every decision. Drugs prescribed by her doctors helped, and it was in a period of relative lucidity, brought on by the SLDF's monumental breaching of the Hyades Cluster, in which she surrendered her nation to the Star League. Of course, the depression soon took over again, prompting her to commit suicide the next day.

Henry Calderon: Something of a romantic crossed with a historian in the guise of a military officer, Henry Calderon believed in the concepts of Duty, Honor and Country, which is what prompted the young subaltern to step up and become the Concordat's leader following the Reunification War. He fought hard for what he believed was right, no matter the personal cost, despite being largely discounted by his own people as well as the Star League. He gains a +3 bonus to all WIL-based Skill or Attribute Checks.

Marshal Gisela Cardenas: Born into privilege, Gisela Cardenas possessed equal parts ability and desire. As she progressed through the TDF, however, she relied more and more upon her family's status to secure her future. She took assignments she was barely quali-

fied for, but instead of expending the effort to become a better officer she perfected the art of being a political officer. As a result, despite mediocre reviews and commanding the ignoble defeat at Robsart, she continued to advance within the TDF navy. She gains a –1 penalty to all Strategy and Tactics checks, but a +1 bonus to all CHA-based checks when interacting with superior officers and members of the government.

Marshal David Santos: David Santos was labeled a maverick and discipline problem from his earliest years, but also possessed an obvious natural affinity for space operations. He gains a +2 bonus to naval/space-based Navigation, Piloting, Sensor Operations, Strategy, Tactics and Zero-G Operations skill rolls, as well as the ability to use one Edge point in *each* of those skills in every scenario in which he participates. He further gains a +2 bonus to all CHA-based Attribute and Skill Checks when interacting with other naval personnel, but a –1 penalty to the same checks when interacting with politicians, bureaucrats and career non-naval officers. Any force that he leads in battle gains a +2 Initiative bonus, while any ship that he commands may always move last in the turn.

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The Reunification War was a terrible conflict that saw every "rule" of "civilized" warfare thrown out. By and large, especially on the Taurian Front, "total warfare" was the guiding principle. Each side resorted to the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction, or WMDs, early in the war in an effort to break the will of their opponents; of course, WMD use rarely did more than cement their opponents' resolve and bring a new intensity—or desperation—to the battles that followed.

The sections that follow describe the use and game effects of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction that were most commonly utilized during the Reunification War by both the Star League as well as the Periphery Nations. Additional guidelines covering the use of orbital bombardment attacks (see *Capital Weapons Fire in Atmosphere*, p. 103, SO) are available.

WMD USE

WMDs were used to various degrees during the Reunification War on several fronts, but not on all and certainly not to the exclusion of other options. For example, while they were used extensively on the Taurian Front, especially nuclear weapons, on the Magistracy and Outworlds Fronts they were not used at all. Gamemasters and players can use the following guidelines to aid them in designing scenarios that might incorporate WMD use in Reunification War campaigns and battles.

Magistracy of Canopus Front

Captain-General Marion Marik was a firm believer in the Ares Conventions and the need to keep the invasion of the Magistracy of Canopus as "clean" a war as possible. Magestrix Crystalla Centrella likewise did not support the use of WMDs against the Star League invaders, recognizing that her own citizens would be far more

affected by their use for far longer. Nuclear, biological and chemical WMDs will not be used in any Reunification War battles that occur within the Magistracy of Canopus

Orbital Bombardment: Both sides in the Magistracy campaign made use of WarShips but as they adhered to the Ares Conventions were very cautious about using orbital fire support. It was used, but very rarely and only against strategic targets where there was no risk to the civilian populace or infrastructure.

To determine if Orbital Bombardment is even possible, roll 2D6 before the beginning of any world campaign; on a result of 12, an SLDF WarShip is available in orbit and on a result of 2 a MAF WarShip is available. Any available warship may provide 1D6/2 orbital strikes during the course of the game but may not fire against any urban maps or maps adjacent to an urban map.

Outworlds Alliance Front

Despite the fact that perhaps the Star League's most ruthless general led the invasion of the Outworlds Alliance, the campaign was nonetheless a "clean" affair when it came to the use of WMDs. The simple fact was that the Alliance did not possess a significant military, ensuring that the SLDF almost always possessed the advantage in numbers. So while General Amos Forlough freely targeted his Star League troops upon civilian targets, the Alliance simply did not possess enough strategic targets, or large military formations, to justify the use of nuclear weapons, or other WMDs for that matter. The relatively mobile campaigns among the largely unpopulated worlds that typified the Alliance invasion required precision, not mass devastation.

Orbital Bombardment: The SLDF invasion of the Outworlds Alliance began with a much smaller WarShip fleet than assigned to any other front—because the Alliance itself possessed no WarShips—and as the war dragged on, many more of the invasion force's WarShips were reassigned to the Taurian Front. The few SLDF WarShips that remained assigned to the invasion force were primarily needed to defend the large JumpShip fleets required to transport the Star League troops from system to system. SLDF forces within the Outworlds Alliance therefore utilized orbital bombardment on a very limited basis.

To determine if Orbital Bombardment is even possible, roll 2D6 before the beginning of any world campaign; on a result of 11 or 12, an SLDF WarShip is available in orbit. Before the start of any individual battle, roll 2D6 again; on a result of 11 or 12, that WarShip is both in position and otherwise untasked and may provide 1D6/2 orbital strikes during the course of the game.

Rim Worlds Republic Front

The Rim Worlds front wasn't as horrific as the Taurian Concordat but the situation was bitter and both sides perpetrated atrocities, including the use of strategic weapons. The Republican factions were disorganized, locked in a de-facto civil war, their resources limited to what they could scrounge and so the many of the WMDs employed by the RRA and RWA were improvised chemical weapons of limited impact. The SLDF, on the other hand, was quite prepared

to bring its full might to bear on difficult situations, and though General Isaacson refused to sanction the use of nuclear weapons, he did allow WarShip bombardment of fortifications and bunker complexes.

Other WMD Attacks: The SLDF will not employ chemical, biological or chemical weapons but the Republican troops may make small-scale use of Class I to III chemical weapons only.

Orbital Bombardment: Most of the Republican fleet was in hiding during the early Rim Worlds Campaign (and destroyed after Newtown Shoals) and had little opportunity to influence the ground war. The SLDF, on the other hand, had WarShip escorts for most strike forces which could, as needed, be called upon for fire support.

In each battle the SLDF has 1D6 minus 3 WarShips available for fire support missions (treat results of less than zero as zero), each of which may make 1D6/2 orbital strikes per battle. Orbital bombardment may not be directed against an urban area but may be employed against industrial or military structures.

Taurian Concordat Front

WMDs of all kinds, as well as orbital bombardment of ground targets, were used regularly against both military formations and civilian targets on the Taurian front by both sides. While the Star League forces were the first to fire upon purely civilian targets—razing whole cities and deliberately attacking non-combatants—it was the Taurians themselves that first used nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons, as well as radiological "dirty" bombs, against their opponents, who retaliated in kind. The use of these weapons was greatest during the first decade of the war; by the time the Star League began to invade the worlds surrounding the Hyades Cluster, nuclear and radiological weapons were largely abandoned by both sides, though biological and chemical weapons continued to be used through the New Vandenberg campaign. Nuclear weapons were again utilized by both sides as the SLDF breached the Hyades Cluster, though as these attacks were space-based, the "fallout"—literal and figurative—was severely limited. Orbital strikes, on the other hand, continued to be popular throughout the war.

The SLDF will not, however, utilize WMDs of any kind while General Kincaid or General Onaga is in command of the front.

Nuclear Attacks: The TDF will make selective use of nuclear strikes against SLDF formation during and after the Pleiades Cluster campaign; they will not strike urban locations, however. If a Taurian nuclear weapon is available, roll 2D6 against a TN of 11, modified by -1 for every previous battle on that world lost by that TDF force; a success allows use of a nuclear weapon in that battle. The SLDF will likewise use nuclear weapons only *after* the Taurians have used at least one on the current disputed planet, and will only target a massed battalion or larger formation (the entire formation must be on the playing field; the SLDF will not hesitate to attack such formations deployed on urban maps); the SLDF force will roll 2D6 against a TN of 10, modified by -1 for every previous battle on that world lost by that SLDF force, and modified by an additional -1 if General Forlough is in command of the front.

Other WMD Attacks: The Taurian defenders made extensive use of chemical and biological weapons throughout the war. TNs to acquire Class II, III and IV are modified by -1, though TNs for Class V weapons are made at a +2. If a biological or chemical weapon is available, roll 2D6 against a TN of 10, modified by -1 for every previous battle on that world lost by that TDF force; a success allows use of a biological or chemical weapon in that battle. As with nuclear weapons, the SLDF will use a biological or chemical weapon only after the Taurians have used a weapon of the same class on the current disputed planet; the TN is 10, and is modified by -1 for every previous battle on that world lost by that SLDF force, and modified by an additional -1 if General Forlough is in command of the front.

Orbital Bombardment: Any Star League or Taurian force with one or more WarShips in orbit may make use of orbital bombardment attacks. If it is not clear whether a force has any WarShips in orbit, roll 1D6; SLDF forces have a random WarShip available on a roll of 4-6, Taurian forces have a random WarShip available on a roll of 4-6 (after the Battle of Robsart in 2581, this is reduced to a roll of 5-6), and Federated Suns forces have a random WarShip available on a roll of 6. Any available WarShip may make 1D6/2 orbital strikes in any given battle.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The best known and most common among modern WMDs, nuclear weapons come in a variety of yields and types. Used extensively throughout the Age of War, at least until the adoption of the Ares Conventions, nuclear weapons remain an important tool within the arsenals of every major power (despite the fact that the use of such WMDs is widely considered morally repugnant).

It is important to note that these rules are not designed to replicate real-world nuclear weapons, or to simulate all the various ways in which such weapons can be delivered. Instead, these rules provide a relatively realistic framework for the use of “standard” nuclear weapons within *BattleTech* game play and within the established fictional setting of the *BattleTech* universe. How these rules are implemented in game play is left up to the gamemaster and the individual gaming group. For example, the detonation of a WMD is effectively an “act of God” and will usually annihilate everything on a playing field.

Therefore, in place of simply tossing a nuclear weapon into any hex of a game on four mapsheets and destroying everything, entire campaigns can be played in an effort to stop such a detonation from obliterating a vital target. Or a campaign may take place on the fringes of such a detonation, or gaming groups may generate “to survive despite the horror”-type scenarios and post-apocalyptic storylines. The possibilities are endless.

While nuclear weapons are the best-known WMD, other such weapons exist, including biological and chemical weapons, as well as more esoteric devices. Such WMDs are described in *Biological and Chemical Weapons*, p. 196.

Game Rules

By and large, nuclear weapons should never be used in game play, as even the lightest of such devices can significantly alter the outcome of a scenario or a campaign. To reflect this, nuclear weapons have no Battle Value to speak of. Game scenarios that use BV as a balancing factor should not permit the use of any nuclear weapons. More importantly, given the overwhelming nature of such weapons in standard game play, all players should read through these rules and agree to their use before play begins.

Nevertheless, for campaign purposes, any military force may acquire functional nuclear weapons. The *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table* below indicates the most common tactical nuclear weapon types found in the stockpiles of the various Inner Sphere and Periphery powers. To acquire such weapons, a force's controlling player need only spend the amount of C-bills indicated on the *Nuclear Weapons Construction Data Table*, and then make a 2D6 roll against the Availability Target Number (TN) of the weapon's class as indicated on the *Weapon Acquisition and Costs Modifiers Table*, modified as appropriate for the force's experience, reliability, size, affiliation and equipment ratings. A roll result equal to or exceeding the target number will grant the force one of the desired weapons. This roll may be made only twice per month, per type of weapon desired, by the force attempting to obtain such weapons. The C-bills are deducted regardless of success. Rolls made for larger commands may not be repeated for sub-forces (such as for a battalion within the same regiment) or vice versa (for each battalion and then the regiment they belong to) within the same month.

A Time of War RPG: Though describing in detail the use and acquisition of nuclear weapons in *A Time of War* campaigns is beyond the scope of this book, players and gamemasters wishing to do so may model their own attempts to obtain such weapons on these rules. In such an event, nuclear weapons are considered to have a minimum base Tech Level/Availability/Legality rating of C/E/F.

Consequences of WMD Use: Per Articles I and VI of the Ares Conventions, the use of WMDs is considered a “crime against humanity,” and by the letter of the law, any force that uses said weapons should be branded rogue by every state, including the force's own government. Of course, First Lord Ian Cameron suspended the Ares Conventions before the start of the Reunification War, absolving any Star League force (SLDF or House auxiliary) from penalty, though interstellar human rights organizations throughout the Inner Sphere and Periphery condemned the use of WMDs and continually pushed for the severe punishment of those that used WMDs. And then there were the individual moral consequences of the use of these weapons.

Given the complexities involved—based on era, the type of force wielding the weapon, the general level of WMD use by various states at the time and so on—the gamemaster determines how the consequences of WMD use play out in a given campaign. Guidelines for rogue mercenaries appear in *Mercenaries Supplemental II* (see pp 98-99); gamemasters are free to adopt elements of those rules and apply them as best suited to each gaming group's campaign, as well as specific circumstances.

Base Rules

The statistics for the most common nuclear weapons in the *BattleTech* universe are listed in the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*. This table covers only the tactical weapons used in the BT universe (those with a yield of 500 kilotons or less). While larger strategic weapons have appeared in *BattleTech's* history, their use in game play is beyond the scope of these rules.

The weapons are listed in the order of their attack yields (in kilotons). Each weapon listed has a Base Damage rating, which defines its maximum damage in standard damage points at ground zero (the hex of impact on a *BattleTech* map) and a Capital Damage rating, which gives its capital-scale damage to armor (and its chance for a critical hit; see below). The Degradation by Hex values then define the rate at which the weapon's base damage drops off on the *BattleTech* board for each hex away from ground zero, indicating the rate of damage degradation in a ground blast on the left of the slash, or an airburst on the right.

The Secondary Radius gives the maximum range of secondary effects from a *BattleTech* nuclear weapon strike, again with the ground burst radius (in hexes) to the left of the slash, and the airburst radius to the right.

The Crater Depth caused by such nuclear weapons on a *BattleTech* map (ground strike only) is then given, indicating the number of levels of elevation an exploding weapon will dig up at ground zero (this crater depth reduces by one level for every 2 hexes from the impact hex, until it reaches the base terrain elevation). The weapon's range is given next in terms of its appropriate rules set (either in standard *BattleTech* mapsheets, for ground engagements, or in range brackets or based on a weapon type for Aerospace battles), with *BattleTech* ranges (in mapsheets)—if any—appearing to the left of the slash and Aerospace ranges to the right. Finally, the weapon's listed mass indicates (chiefly for cargo purposes) how much a given nuclear weapon weighs.

Specific details for using these weapons in game play are covered in the descriptions on pp. 193-196, but their effects in combat are the same once deployed.

Ground Zero Hex: The Ground Zero Hex is defined as the target hex where a nuclear device strikes. If the attack is an air burst (see below), a Ground Zero Hex on a *BattleTech* game board must be determined (this can be done by the gamemaster, randomly, or in some other fashion agreed upon by all players). Any units and or buildings within the Ground Zero Hex are completely annihilated.

Crater Area: More powerful nuclear weapons, delivered in a ground burst, can create a crater in the terrain, the deepest point of which is inflicted at the Ground Zero Hex (the depth is indicated in the weapon's Crater Depth rating). For every two hexes away from the Ground Zero Hex, this crater depth reduces by one level, until it reaches a relative depth of 0. All terrain, structures and units in this affected region are annihilated.

Air Burst: Nuclear weapons are typically detonated at some altitude above ground level in order to maximize damage potential. These attacks are commonly known as air bursts. In game terms, an air burst is detonated on the Low Altitude Map directly above a Ground Zero Hex. An air burst does not create a crater, but in all other ways follows the standard rules as indicated in this section. For detonations on the High Altitude Map, see *Nuclear Weapons at High Altitudes*, p. 193).

Blast Area: The Blast Area is defined as the total number of hexes on a playing map(s)—radiating outward from the Ground Zero Hex—within which a nuclear device delivers direct damage (this does not include additional possible *Secondary Effects*, see below).

In a *BattleTech* game, unless annihilated at the Ground Zero Hex (or within a Crater Area) or sheltered by a building, each unit in the Blast Area of a nuclear attack suffers damage as outlined below. For units in buildings, this damage affects the building first, with any remaining damage then transferring to the units inside.

Units within a Blast Area suffer damage equal to the weapon's Base Damage, reduced by the number of points equal to the nuclear weapon's ground Damage Degradation rating (the number to the left of the slash in the Degradation by Hex column on the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*) times the number of hexes away from the Ground Zero Hex. (So, a unit standing 8 hexes from the Ground Zero hex of a ground-bursting Type I nuclear weapon would suffer 60 points of damage, rather than the full 100 the weapon can generate: $100 [\text{Base Damage}] - [8 (\text{hexes away}) \times 5 (\text{Degradation by Hex})]$, or $100 - 40 = 60$.) This damage is delivered in 5-point clusters, determined using the attack direction that faces the Ground Zero Hex.

'Mechs and vehicles within the Blast Area that survive the damage must make an immediate Piloting Skill Roll at a base +2 penalty (plus any modifiers based on weapon type as indicated in the PSR Mod column of the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*, as well as all other applicable modifiers for damage and critical hits); reduce this penalty by 1 for every map sheet (or 17 hexes) of distance between the 'Mech and Ground Zero (to a minimum of a +0 penalty imposed by the nuclear attack). 'Mechs that fail this roll immediately fall, while vehicles that fail this roll suffer random Motive System Damage. No roll is required for units without a Piloting Skill level.

Airborne Units in Blast Area: In a Blast Area, airborne units—such as VTOLs, airships, low-flying aircraft and aerospace craft—may be subject to the primary effects of the nuclear blast. The total affected Blast Area is dependent upon whether these units are operating on the standard ground map (including *Aerospace Units on Ground Map Sheets*, p. 242, TW), or if these are aerospace units operating on the Low Altitude Map. Units operating on the Ground Map Sheet determine the total Blast Area (and the area impacted by Secondary Effects) the same way that ground units do: by counting the total number of ground hexes from Ground Zero, and using the numbers to the left of the slash in the Degradation by Hex and Secondary Effects columns of the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*. Units operating on Low Altitude maps again count the total number of hexes from Ground Zero, but as each Low Altitude hex is roughly equal to seventeen Ground hexes (one map sheet), the effects will encompass far fewer total hexes; use the numbers to the right of the slash in the Degradation by Hex and Secondary Effects columns of the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table* to determine these effects.

Airborne units within the Blast Area that survive the damage must make an immediate Piloting Skill Roll (or Control Roll) at a base +2 penalty (plus any modifiers based on weapon type as indicated in the PSR Mod column of the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*, as well as all other applicable modifiers for damage and critical hits); reduce this penalty by 1 for every map sheet (or 17 hexes)

of distance between the 'Mech and Ground Zero (to a minimum of a +0 penalty imposed by the nuclear attack). Airborne vehicles (such as VTOLs) that fail the roll immediately crash; all other aerospace craft may suffer Random Movement (see p. 93, *TW*) if the margin of failure was 5 or greater.

For airborne units operating on the Ground Map Sheet, refer to the Airborne Effects column on the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*. Any airborne units at or below the Low Altitude Level indicated to the left of the slash *and* which are in the Ground Zero hex (or in hexes that have been cratered by the nuclear explosion) are immediately destroyed; units in the Ground Zero hex above that altitude but at or below the level indicated to the right of the slash suffer damage as if they were twice as many hexes away from Ground Zero as they have current altitude levels. Other airborne units within the Blast Area at or below the level indicated to the right of the slash will suffer a number of points equal to the weapon's Base Damage, reduced by the number of points equal to the nuclear weapon's ground Damage Degradation rating (the number to the left of the slash) times the number of hexes away from the Ground Zero Hex (airborne units should add their current altitude to the number of hexes away from Ground Zero they are).

Aerospace units operating on Low Altitude maps suffer damage slightly differently than standard ground units (as each Low Altitude hex is the equivalent of one standard *BattleTech* map sheet). Any aerospace unit within the Ground Zero hex and at or below the "Destroyed" Airborne Effects level (indicated to the left of the slash on the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*) roll 1D6 and are destroyed on a roll of 6. All other units in the Ground Zero hex, including those above the "Destroyed" Airborne Effects level (yet at or below the "Damaged" level, indicated to the right of the slash), will suffer a number of points equal to the weapon's Base Damage, reduced by the number of points equal to one-half the nuclear weapon's Air Damage Degradation rating (the number to the right of the slash). Other aerospace units outside of the Ground Zero hex and at or below the "Damaged" level will suffer a number of points equal to the weapon's Base Damage, reduced by the number of points equal to the nuclear weapon's Air Damage Degradation rating (the number to the right of the slash) times the number of hexes away from the Ground Zero Hex (airborne units should add one-half their current altitude to the number of hexes away from Ground Zero they are, rounding all fractions up).

Protecting Terrain: Outside of the Ground Zero Hex and the Crater Area, only intervening hills (or buildings strong enough to withstand the damage) may block the effects of a nuclear ground burst. To gain the protection of such terrain, the "hiding" unit must be directly adjacent to the hill or building, and the hill or building must be taller than the "hiding" unit's height and cannot be destroyed by the effects of the weapon's blast damage. If all these conditions are met and the "hiding" unit makes a 2D6 roll of 9+, the unit is successfully protected against the damage effects of the attack.

No terrain protects against a nuclear airburst.

Salvage: All units destroyed by a nuclear weapon attack (be they on the ground, in atmosphere or in space), whether located

in the Ground-Zero Hex, a Crater Area, or damaged to the point of destruction within the Blast Area, are always considered to be unsalvageable.

Terrain Damage: Beyond the Crater Area, damage to terrain reduces all Woods and Jungle hexes by one level (from Super-heavy to Heavy to Light) for every 20 full points of damage inflicted against the hex (this is different than the Terrain Conversion rules in *Total Warfare* and *Tactical Operations* due to the fact that nuclear blasts send out a far more concentrated wave of heat, followed by a shock wave, than any conventional weapons). Woods or Jungle reduced below Light become Rough terrain, as does any non-water hex that suffers 200 points of damage or more; all terrain in a Crater Area is annihilated. Water terrain within a Blast Area—but not within a Crater Area—is reduced by one level for every 3,000 points of damage. Any "partially destroyed" water features immediately refill their lost space in the following turns based on the volume of water left to fill the area (and the gamemaster's discretion).

Any non-crater, non-water hexes within the Blast Area occupied by woods, buildings or units prior to a nuclear attack may be set aflame per the rules for Fire (see p. 43, *TO*); units set aflame are considered to be the target of a successful inferno missile attack, with a duration lasting until the end of the scenario, or until the unit is submerged, which ever comes first. For purposes of this effect, consider this an attack on the terrain/building by an energy weapon. Non-Woods/non-Building hexes that qualify for this effect have a modifier of 0 for the roll.

Secondary Effects: The radioactive and electromagnetic effects of a nuclear attack disperse even farther than the blast and fire. To reflect these combined effects, all units and structures within twice the radius of the blast damage (and that are not already destroyed by the initial blast; see *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*, p. 194) must make a 2D6 roll and consult the *Secondary Nuclear Effects Table* on p. 194. Regardless of the outcome, all units within the secondary effect radius will suffer electromagnetic interference (EMI) for the remainder of the scenario, including a +2 to-hit modifier for all Ranged Weapon Attacks and a -2 modifier to all Missile Hits Table rolls. No terrain protects against secondary nuclear effects, and all airborne units within the same radius and which are at or below the "Damaged" Airborne Effects level are also affected.

Heat and Fire: Nuclear explosions within an atmosphere also include a significant thermal component, which can start flash-fires at great ranges and significantly heat up other, non-flammable objects within the effects radius. A nuclear detonation raises the heat level (of any unit that tracks heat) by 1/10 the standard damage inflicted by the explosion, to a maximum of +15 (and extending to the "Damaged" Airborne Effects level); so, if *Jimmy's Atlas* was standing 40 hexes away from a Type II nuclear weapon detonation, it would suffer 80 points of standard damage, and would also receive 8 heat points from the explosion, while his Thunderbird flying at altitude 7 and 31 hexes away would suffer 126 points of damage and receive 13 extra heat points).

Flammable terrain (including non-hardened buildings) within the Blast Radius that hasn't been destroyed by the nuclear explo-

sion may catch fire (see p. 43, *TO*). Roll 2D6 and add the number of heat points that would be added to any combat unit in that area; on a result of 5 or greater, the terrain catches fire. Additionally, roll 2D6 for each hex of flammable terrain within the range of Secondary Effects; on a result of 9 or greater, the terrain catches fire.

Multiple Attacks: Multiple nuclear weapon attacks against a target area are resolved separately, and do not stack for purposes of determining Blast Area and secondary effects. In the wake of a nuclear attack, additional effects may be imposed on the affected region, including continuous EMI as well as the effects of Toxic Atmosphere (Radiation) within the same area and all terrain “downwind” of the attack, for a number of kilometers equal to 2D6 x the weapon’s kiloton yield. (see p. 56, *TO* for detailed rules on Toxic Atmosphere effects; determine “downwind” using the Spreading Fires rule on p. 45, *TO*.)

Nuclear Weapons in Space: In space, nuclear weapons must make actual contact to deliver their damage, as the effects of vacuum and the radiation shielding carried by all spacecraft sharply reduces their effectiveness. Furthermore, they must penetrate the target’s armor sufficiently to make up for the loss of most of their yield in order to inflict any major damage. To reflect these effects, a successful nuclear attack against any aerospace unit in space inflicts the weapon’s Capital Scale Damage value against the target. However, as with a capital missile hit, all nuclear weapons may inflict additional damage on a successful critical hit. The chances for a critical hit from each nuclear weapon are noted on the table in parentheses next to the Capital Scale Damage value; this critical chance replaces that of any similar capital missile on which the weapon may be based.

Instead of inflicting a critical hit as listed on the damage location table, a critical hit from a nuclear weapon delivers ten times the weapon’s normal Capital Scale Damage directly to the target’s structural integrity (SI). However it is inflicted, damage to structural integrity by nuclear weapons is never halved. Additional critical hit effects resulting from damaged structural integrity are resolved normally.

Any target fortunate enough to survive the damage from a nuclear strike must make an immediate Control Roll with a +4 target modifier, but suffers no additional effects. Additionally, all units within space hex in which a nuclear weapon was detonated will suffer electromagnetic interference (EMI) for the remainder of the scenario, including a +2 to-hit modifier for all Ranged Weapon Attacks and a –2 modifier to all Missile Hits Table rolls. No other nuclear weapons effects apply in space.

Nuclear Weapons at High Altitudes: On the High Altitude map, nuclear attacks against an aerospace unit use the same rules as those in space, but the attack receives a –2 penalty to the to-hit roll, and any nuclear attack that hits its target automatically destroys it. If the attack occurs within eighteen kilometers of the planetary surface (the Ground Row of the High Altitude Map), consider the attack an airburst and follow all standard rules for a nuclear attack (above).

Special Conditions: As demonstrated between the space, atmospheric and surface-burst effects described above, nuclear

weapons have different effects based on the environment in which they are used. Underwater units may be caught in the blast radius; likewise, combat in caverns underground may lead to sub-surface detonations that can affect other battlefield units in the vicinity. While these rules do not specifically cover the numerous additional effects of underground or underwater detonations, the *Alternate Environments Table* lists the modifiers for existing nuclear weapon effects based on such conditions as underground detonations, effects on underwater units and variable atmospheric pressures. Additional effects, such as those for alternative atmospheric compositions, may occur at the discretion of the gamemaster or with player agreement.

Targeting Nuclear Ground Attacks: Nuclear attacks using Type Ia, Type Ib and Type II weapons are resolved as standard *Artillery* rules (see p. 179, *TO*) and/or *Bombing* attacks (for Type II weapons, see p. 245, *TW*) and as modified by the specific rules for each weapon (given below).

Type III and IV weapons are missiles that may be launched from the ground (in which case they follow a ballistic trajectory) or from space. Nuclear attacks made with Type III and Type IV weapons are resolved as *Orbit-to-Surface Fire* (see p. 103, *SO*). Type III and IV weapons launched from the ground travel at a speed of 20 map boards (10 kilometers) every standard (ground) turn (or 60 kilometers every space turn), but have a minimum flight time of 6 standard turns (one minute). The range for ground-launched weapons is indicated on the *Standard Nuclear Weaponry Table*, below.

Standard Nuclear Weapons

The following rules outline the five most common types of tactical nuclear weapons used in the *BattleTech* universe.

Type Ia: The versatile and compact Type I (known as the Davy Crockett in later centuries) weapon is manufactured in two different versions. The Type Ia is the infantry support model. Somewhat unpopular, as its range is too limited to keep the attackers out of harm’s way, it is a one-shot artillery weapon that includes a special launcher system and booster rockets to give the weapon respectable range. Only one may be deployed per conventional infantry platoon, which must be a motorized platoon (reflecting the mobile launcher, which adds three tons to the base platoon weight). Platoons reduced to fewer than seven troopers may not operate the weapon. In all other respects, the Type Ia attacks as an artillery weapon, including shell-flight time and scatter rules.

The Type Ia always attacks as a ground burst.

Type Ib: Both versions of the Type Ib (later known as the Davy Crockett-M) deliver the same damage. Essentially designed as the farther-reaching artillery version of the infantry model, the Type Ib is a warhead upgrade for Long Tom and Arrow IV munitions. This version gains the same range and attack methods as its relevant weapon system (range dependent on launcher used), including shell flight times and the scatter effects of standard artillery ordnance. The modified munitions are heavier than standard Long Tom shells or Arrow missiles, but otherwise function in the same way.

The Type Ib always attacks as a ground burst.

WMD ACQUISITION MODIFIERS

Nuclear Weapon Base Availability	TNs	Force Size/Rating*	Modifiers	Force Affiliation/ Equipment*	Modifiers
Type Ia	19	Elite	-2	SLDF or Taurian Concordat	-3
Type Ib	18	Regular	+2	Other Periphery (Non-Taurian)	-2
Type II	17	Green	+3	Combine or FedSuns	-1
Type III	18	Fanatical*	-2	Capellan, Free Worlds or Lyran	+2
Type IV	20	Questionable*	+4	Equipment A*	-1
		Per Full 'Mech Regiment	-1 (max -3)	Equipment D-F*	+2
		Unit Smaller than Regiment	+3	Era: 2866-3067	+2

*Only for units that track loyalty and/or equipment rating

STANDARD NUCLEAR WEAPONRY TABLE

Weapon (Nuclear Yield)	Base Standard Damage at Ground Zero	Capital Damage (Crit. Chance)	Degradation By Hex (Ground/Air)	Secondary Radius (Ground/Air)	Airborne Effects (Destroyed/Damaged)	PSR Mod	Crater Depth	Range (Ground/Aero)	Weapon Mass
Type Ia (0.5 Kiloton)	100	1 (11+)	5 / 50*	40 / 4*	2 / 7	+0	0	2* / NA	3 tons
Type Ib (0.5 Kiloton)	100	1 (11+)	5 / 50*	40 / 4*	2 / 7	+0	0	As Launcher** / NA	1 ton
Type II (5 Kilotons)	1,000	10 (10+)	23 / 290*	86 / 6*	5 / 9	+1	1	20* / Medium†	5 tons
Type III (50 Kilotons)	10,000	100 (9+)	109 / 1400*	184 / 14*	9 / 10	+4	3	10,000* / As White Shark†	40 tons
Type IV (500 Kilotons)	100,000	1,000 (8+)	505 / 6400*	396 / 30*	9 / Row 1‡	+10	5	20,000* / As Killer Whale†	50 tons

*In ground mapsheets/low-altitude map hexes (1 mapsheet = 17 ground hexes)

**Type Ib weapons are launched only by Long Tom or Arrow IV artillery units; use the base range as indicated by the launcher

†Range in aerospace game play (Type II uses Detailed Weapon Range as AC/10; Type III and Type IV as indicated capital missile)

‡ Effects extend into Row 1 on the High Altitude Map

NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONSTRUCTION DATA TABLE

Item	Base	Rating	Date	Cost (C-Bills)	(Tons)	M	P	CV	SV	F	SC	DS	JS	WS	SS	MS
Type Ia	IS	E/X-X-F	2412	1,000,000 / 500,000	+3*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Type Ib	IS	E/X-X-F	2480**	† / 500,000	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	NA	NA	NA	†
Type II	IS	E/X-X-F	2200	† / 1,000,000	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡	‡
Type III Launcher††	IS	E/X-X-F	2300	250,000 / 15,000,000	160	NA	NA	NA	15	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1
Type IV Launcher††	IS	E/X-X-F	2300	500,000 / 40,000,000	210	NA	NA	NA	20	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1

*Mass includes that for the launch equipment and weapon, and must be added to the mass of the infantry unit that operates the weapon

**Intro date for Long Tom warhead; a prototype Arrow IV warhead becomes available in 2595 for use with Star League Arrow IV-P launchers

† As per the launcher (Long Tom or Arrow IV)

SECONDARY NUCLEAR EFFECTS TABLE

Roll*	Results
2-4	Unit is Destroyed (crew/pilot/troopers all killed; engines shut down; all applicable unit types suffer 1D6 critical hits**)
5-6	Unarmored infantry outside buildings are killed; armored infantry/infantry within buildings suffer 50% casualties (round up); Conventional and support vehicles suffer two critical hits, plus one automatic Crew Killed critical hit; 'Mech and fighter units suffer two critical hits and must make a Shutdown Avoid Check at 10+ (Pilots of these machines suffer four hits).**
7-10	Unarmored infantry outside buildings suffer 50% casualties (round up); armored infantry and infantry within buildings suffer 25% casualties (round up); conventional and support vehicles suffer one critical hit, plus one automatic Crew Stunned critical hit; 'Mech and fighter units suffer one critical hit and must make a Shutdown Avoid Check at 6+ (Pilots of these machines suffer two hits).**
11+	Unit sustains no damage

*Add +2 to the roll for combat vehicles, 'Mechs, battle armor and aerospace craft, as well as an additional +2 for any unit within a hardened structure.

**Critical hits are resolved randomly, the locations determined for each by rolling on whichever side of the unit faces the Ground Zero Hex.

Type II: The Type II (later codenamed Alamo) missile is a special fighter-carried space-to-space (or air-to-ground) nuclear ordnance designed for use by aerospace and conventional fighters. It is powerful and fairly lightweight, occupying the place of 10 bombs (and imposing a corresponding loss of 2 Thrust Points for every Type II carried). The Type II may not be fired from space into atmosphere or vice versa. As a space-to-space or air-to-air weapon, the Type II has the range profile of an Autocannon/10 (both in standard-scale and Detailed Weapon Ranges), but it may be “fired” from an aerospace fighter at other targets in flight like a capital missile (and may be affected by *Advanced Point Defense Weapons* fire (see p. 96, *SO*) as appropriate). Resolve space-to-space Type II attacks as indicated in the rules for *Nuclear Weapons in Space* (see p. 193), and air-to-air Type II attacks as per *Airborne Units in Blast Area* (see p. 191). Type II attacks used in air-to-ground fire are treated as an offboard artillery attack with the base range equivalent of a Long Tom, using the equivalent off-board location corresponding to where the fighter ends its turn in the air (that is, a fighter 3 low altitude hexes away from the target mapsheet treats the Type II attack as artillery fire from 3 boards away). Type II missiles in flight move faster than artillery shells, however, and can traverse 10 boards per standard turn (rounded down). Type II missiles fired in this fashion may not be targeted by ground-based anti-aircraft or anti-missile systems. Type II missiles may be targeted by Point Defense Weapons (see p. 96, *SO*) as if it was a Barracuda missile with 2 points of capital scale-armor.

At the moment of firing, the attacker designates whether the Type II missile will deliver an airburst or a ground burst.

Type III: The Type III (known as the Santa Ana in later years) is effectively a White Shark ship-to-ship or ship-to-surface missile

modified to carry a nuclear warhead. It may be launched per the normal capital missile rules from any White Shark or AR10 launcher, and follows the same profile as the White Shark for determining heat and range. It may be fired ship-to-ship, ship-to-surface and both surface-to-orbit and surface-to-surface (from special multiple use, purpose-built silos or dedicated vehicular mobile launcher) per standard rules, except as modified above.

The Type III may be fired surface-to-surface to deliver a ground attack, carried out as if by a standard orbit-to-surface launcher. This attack may deliver a ground burst or an airburst at the attacker’s discretion (declared upon firing). Type III weapons have a maximum atmospheric range of 5,000 kilometers (10,000 boards).

Type III weapons can be launched from aerospace craft, buildings and mobile structures that can fire White Shark missiles. Type III weapons can also be launched from support vehicles that mount a Type III missile launcher; this launcher has a mass of 160 tons (including the mass of the missile), is a one-shot weapon, and occupies one slot (additional construction information is included on the *Nuclear Weapons Construction Data Table*). Type III missiles may be targeted by Point Defense Weapons (see p. 96, *SO*) as if it was a White Shark missile with 3 points of capital scale-armor.

Type IV: The largest of the tactical nuclear weapons, the Type IV (sometimes known as the Peacemaker) is a bigger missile based upon the Killer Whale missile that shares much in common with the Type III weapon. It may be launched per the normal capital missile rules from any Killer Whale or AR10 launcher, and follows the same profile as the Killer Whale for determining heat and range. It may be fired ship-to-ship, ship-to-surface and both surface-to-orbit and surface-to-surface (from special multiple use, purpose-built silos or dedicated vehicular mobile launcher) per standard rules, except as modified above.

ALTERNATIVE ENVIRONMENTS TABLE

Defending Unit is underwater and within the blast radius of...*

(Nuclear Airburst)

Divide damage to submerged targets by their current depth x 10 (based on pre-blast depth levels)*

(Nuclear Ground Burst)

Divide Damage Degradation Rate by 2**

Nuclear Explosion is Subterranean...*

(At/Within Max. Crater Depth)†

Use standard rules for ground-burst attack, centered over ground zero.

(Over 1x to 2x Max. Crater Depth)†

Treat blast as standard ground-burst attack, using only 10% of base damage at ground zero (damage degrades normally, centered over ground zero).

(Over 2x to 5x Max. Crater Depth)†

Treat area above the weapon’s normal cratering area (radius of 2x crater depth, centered over ground zero) as a severe earthquake, imposing a +5 penalty on all rolls for the turn of detonation.

(Over 5x Max. Crater Depth)†

No effect.

Atmospheric Pressure‡

Vacuum

Multiply Damage Degradation Rate by 10

Trace

Multiply Damage Degradation Rate by 3

Thin

Multiply Damage Degradation Rate by 1.5

Standard

Multiply Damage Degradation Rate by 1

High

Multiply Damage Degradation Rate by 0.67

Very High

Multiply Damage Degradation Rate by 0.5

*Units underwater and units subjected to the effect of subterranean explosions at deeper than 1x the weapon’s maximum crater depth do not suffer secondary effects.

**Underwater units add 1 hex of distance from ground zero count for each full 5 levels of depth. A “ground burst” is considered to be any nuclear attack that occurs at or near the water’s surface.

†Crater depth for Type I weapons is considered 1.

‡Relative to Terran standard; round up fractions.

Type IV missiles may be fired surface-to-surface to deliver a ground attack, carried out as if by a standard orbit-to-surface launcher. This attack may deliver a ground burst or an airburst at the attacker's discretion (declared upon firing). They have a maximum range of 10,000 kilometers (20,000 boards).

Type IV weapons can be launched from aerospace craft, buildings and mobile structures that can fire Killer Whale missiles. Type IV weapons can also be launched from support vehicles that mount a Type IV missile launcher; this launcher has a mass of 210 tons (including the mass of the missile), is a one-shot weapon, and occupies one slot (additional construction information is included on the *Nuclear Weapons Construction Data Table*). Type IV missiles may be targeted by Point Defense Weapons (see p. 96,SO) as if it was a Killer Whale missile with 4 points of capital scale-armor.

BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Biological and chemical weapons encompass a wide array of different agents, delivered through a variety of means, designed to impair, injure or kill opponents without the accompanying mass devastation caused by heavy weapons fire. Throughout recorded history, combatants have employed poisons and disease against their enemies in an attempt to reduce their ability to attack or defend without risking their own soldiers in combat, though the use of these special weapons did not begin to mature until the early decades of the 20th century, when the first truly effective chemical weapons were deployed on the battlefield. In the centuries since, biological and chemical weapon technologies—as well as those designed to defeat the effects of these weapons—have advanced even further.

Of course, so too have the rules and conventions on the use of biological and chemical weapons advanced. By the end of the 20th century, research and development efforts had split down two very different paths: development of non-lethal weapons meant to subdue (especially unruly populations) and development of highly lethal weapons designed solely to kill and inflict suffering. The former became accepted tools that could be used by military and civil authorities alike throughout the centuries and across the stars, and could even be utilized by civilians in limited fashions (the same technologies that brought about “tear gas” also produced the non-lethal personal defense spray weapons, like “mace”, for the civilian markets). The latter soon became classified as weapons of mass destruction, the use of which would bring the enmity of every “civilized” nation—despite the fact that each one of these so-called civilized nations developed and deployed their own versions of these weapons.

The Age of War saw widespread use of WMDs throughout the Inner Sphere, prompting the adoption of the Ares Conventions. But like so many similar treaties in the past, the Ares Conventions only made the use of these weapons a crime; every nation continued the development and construction of biological and chemical weapons (just as they did with nuclear weapons)—both as a deterrent against their future use as well as to give them the ability to retaliate in kind, if necessary.

Biological and chemical weapons come in many different types, and many cause similar effects upon their targets, though the treatment and/or response to each will vary widely. In general, biological weapons include viruses, germs, pathogens and other living organisms (some naturally occurring, and some genetically engineered in a laboratory) that attack humans (among other animals), compromising and destroying their immune systems and/or damaging vital organs; biological agents are typically slow to act, but require a specific vaccine to be generated (often only after closely observing the effects of the weapon upon several hapless test subjects—few of whom survive the ordeal). Chemical weapons, on the other hand, are non-living compounds, often non-organically synthesized, that are designed to induce one or more physiological responses in victims (including such traditional weapons as “tear gas” and mustard gas, as well as sedatives and nerve gasses); chemical agents can be fast- or slow-acting, and it is often necessary to formulate counter-agents only after observing their effects upon victims, though the more generalized nature of chemical weapons means that some simple counters may be readily available based on the effects induced by the weapon.

Detailed descriptions of the many different types of biological and chemical weapons employed during the Reunification War, and their individual game effects, is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead, we will provide a simple framework that will allow gamemasters and players to incorporate the limited use of various biological and chemical weapons in their games. The weapons themselves are grouped into five broad classes described below, each with different characteristics, delivery methods, availabilities and even legalities.

General Rules

Gamemasters and players should use the following rules if they wish to incorporate the use of biological and chemical weapons into their Reunification War games. These rules are primarily meant to simulate their use in standard *BattleTech* games, though some basic information is provided that may be applied also to *A Time of War* role-playing game campaigns.

Before using biological or chemical weapons, all players involved must agree to their use. Further, each player must determine if any such weapons are even available for use (see *Acquisition*, below), and then ensure that he or she has an appropriate delivery method available.

Note: The rules below refer to individuals. For ease of gameplay, players may roll for saves and apply effects to entire crews/infantry platoons rather than determine the results for each individual member of each. Additionally, in the case of the most potent weapons, the effects may potentially impact massive populations in the millions, which is out of the scope of the rules as outlined over the next several pages; gamemasters and players are thus cautioned when choosing to employ these weapons within their games.

Acquisition: Each weapon has a different Target Number listed on the *Biological and Chemical Weapons Table*. Any player wishing to acquire a biological or chemical weapon must play the listed

cost (this is in addition to the cost of any munitions) and then roll 2D6 against the TN, modified by the same affiliation and unit standing modifiers listed on the *WMD Acquisition Modifiers* table (see p. 194). Each success gains the player's unit one "dose" of that weapon (enough to equip one ton of ammunition, fifty grenades (or other pieces of ordnance), or to make one non-weapon delivery (see *Delivery Method*, below); players acquiring Class I weapons will have access to up to 2D6 times this amount—the player may take less—but also must pay for each acquired "dose"). Players may only make one attempt to acquire a chemical or biological weapon per week.

The price listed on the *Biological and Chemical Weapons Table* is for chemical (or radiological) weapons; the cost for a biological weapon is ten times the listed price.

Description: Each of the general classes of weapons is described below.

Time to Effect indicates how long it takes, in game terms, before individual crews and personnel exposed to the given weapon begins displaying the affects of the weapon.

Persistence indicates two different periods of time; the first number indicates how long each individual exposed to the weapon displays its affects. The second indicates how long the original agent remains dangerous (anyone coming into contact with the agent during this time must make an Effects Resist Roll; targets that suffer the full effects of the agent must wait the full persistence duration, after which they only suffer the partial effects; targets suffering the partial effects of the agent no longer suffer after the full persistence has expired (thus, targets suffering the full effects must recuperate for two complete persistence periods before recuperating).

TN is the Target Number of an Effects Resist Roll that each unprotected unit's crew/unprotected personnel within the area of effect must succeed at or suffer the weapon's effects (this number is modified as follows based on the experience of the crew: Green +1, Regular +0, Veteran -1, Elite -2; *AToW* characters should instead make a BOD + WIL double Attribute Check, with a penalty of the listed TN minus 4 to the roll or be affected). Two TNs are listed for each weapon. Any unit that rolls a modified Effects Resist Roll less than the first TN are subject to the full effects of the weapon; a unit whose roll is equal to or greater than the first TN, but less than the second TN, are subject only to the partial effects of the weapon. Any unit that rolls equal to or greater than the second TN avoid all effects of the weapon. (Thus if three regular-experience units are subject to a Class I agent and roll 11, 4 and 9 respectively, the first unit avoids all effects, the second unit is subject to the weapon's full effects, and the third unit suffers only partial effects.)

Game Rules provide a detailed description of how the agent affects any individuals exposed to the weapon.

Countermeasures describe the specific measures that those potentially affected by the weapon can use to counter the weapon's effects.

Delivery Method: Biological and chemical agents may be delivered in a variety of manners. Agents that will be utilized on a battlefield will typically be delivered via a missile or artillery shell that explodes over a target location and disperses a gas or a fine

mist; agents that can be delivered in this way indicate a "yes" under "Weapon Delivery" on the *Biological and Chemical Weapons Table*.

Any heavy weapon that can fire smoke munitions (including artillery, vehicular grenades, missiles, and mortars) can fire chemical munitions instead. Chemical munitions behave just like their smoke round equivalents, except for the following:

All hexes affected by chemical munitions are treated as Light Smoke for the purposes of line of sight and targeting modifiers, even if the corresponding smoke munitions would deliver Heavy Smoke. Smoke delivered by chemical munitions is called Chem Smoke.

Chem Smoke is designed to disperse over a broader area and so will cover one more hex in radius than smoke munitions of equal size. Regardless of radius, Chem Smoke rises three levels above the underlying terrain.

All units entering or moving through a Chem Smoke hex must follow the rules appropriate to the chemical weapon's type as described in the Chemical Weapons Effects Table.

These agents can also be delivered in the form of a grenade (or other *AToW* class A to E ordnance), though the area of effect is 1.5 times the normal area for that ordnance class (see *AToW*), while their "cloud" extends to twice the normal height.

Ranged weapons are not the only way to deliver some of these agents, and most biological agents in fact require that they *not* be delivered by a ranged weapon. Agents that can be delivered through different methods indicate a "yes" under "Non-Weapon Delivery." These delivery methods can be as varied as poisoning a reservoir to infecting several individuals and setting them loose within a population in an attempt to infect a much larger group (the specific means are left up to the gamemaster or player consensus to determine).

Protective Gear: In general, the modern battlefield ensures that many of its combatants are protected against the most common biological and chemical weapons they might encounter. BattleMech and aerospace pilots, and crews of combat vehicles, all remain protected from the immediate effects of biological and chemical weapons—so long as they keep their cockpits and crew compartments sealed (for support vehicles, this requires Environmental Sealing). Likewise, regular infantry and other ground combat personnel all typically possess gear that can easily protect them against such attacks, though only given enough warning to don that gear (which is bulky—it takes 1D6 standard turns to don the gear; any personnel in protective gear suffer a +1 penalty to the target numbers of all skill rolls, including to-hit rolls; *AToW* characters in this gear are also Encumbered).

Breeches of vehicle armor (the destruction of all the armor on one or more vehicle locations) or 'Mech/aerospace cockpits (the destruction of all head/nose armor) while that unit is within an agent's area of effect immediately expose that unit's crew/pilot to the agent.

Decontamination: Even if a unit is unaffected by a biological or chemical attack because of protective gear, the pilot, crew or soldiers may yet be susceptible to the effects of these weapons

unless they decontaminate their 'Mech, vehicle, aerospace craft or protective gear before exiting the unit or doffing their protective gear. Decontamination is performed by specialized Engineer (or Combat Engineer) squads in XCT protective gear (see p. 351, *TO*), and requires only a successful Maintenance Check appropriate to the unit type being treated (no check is required for treating buildings and terrain), with failure simply forcing the clean up process to take double the normal maintenance cycle.

Pilots, crews and infantry that exit contaminated units/doff contaminated protective gear (units that have not decontaminated) may potentially suffer the effects of the weapon if they do so within the *Persistence* (the number to the right of the slash) of the weapon. All pilots/crews/platoons must make an Effects Resist Roll, per the class of weapon that attacked the protected unit, at a -2 to the TN, or be affected by the weapon.

Class I

Class I weapons are legal, non-lethal chemical weapons that are commonly used by police and other security forces when dealing with disruptive groups, and when those persons must be dispersed or subdued without injuring or killing them. The two most common Class I agents include "tear gas" and "knock-out gas", each of which has different effects—"tear gas" causes affected targets to begin coughing and vomiting uncontrollably and all exposed skin (as well as the eyes, nose, mouth and lungs) to feel as if they are burning and itching intensely; "knock-out gas" causes targets to lose consciousness temporarily.

Time to Effect: Immediate (start of next turn)

Persistence: 1D6+2 turns / 3D6+6 turns

TN: 7 / 10

Game Rules: Full "tear gas" effects include a +4 penalty to all skill check TNs, the target is blinded and unable to speak or hear clearly, and targets without military (or other suitable) training must immediately make a morale check at a +4 to the TN or panic and move as fast as possible in a random direction out of the area of effect; partial "tear gas" effects include a +2 penalty to all skill check TNs, and targets without military (or other suitable) training must make a morale check at +2 or panic and move as fast as possible in a random direction out of the area of effect.

Full "knock-out gas" effects include all so-affected targets to immediately lose consciousness for the duration of the persistence, and targets immediately fail any PSRs, Control Rolls or active Skill/Attribute Checks; partial effects include a +2 penalty to all skill check TNs, and targets that can suffer pilot/crew hits temporarily act as if they have suffered two such hits (for the persistence of the effects; a "Crew Killed" result because of these temporary hits simply result in unconsciousness until the effects wear off).

Countermeasures: Personnel must don protective gear or be within a sealed environment to completely avoid the effects of Class I agents. A simple "gas mask"/filter mask will not be sufficient, as the agent is also able to enter the body through pores in the skin; wearing a filter mask without a complete environment suit or environmental sealing will grant a -1 bonus to the TN.

Class II

Class II agents are the lowest level of agents classified as WMDs. They are typically fast-acting chemical agents designed to injure or otherwise incapacitate their targets, and leave their targets with either horrible external injuries or widespread internal damage. Those that survive Class II attacks are rarely ever the same again physically.

Time to Effect: Immediate (start of next turn)

Persistence: 1D6 days / 3D6+6 turns

TN: 9 / 11

Game Rules: Full Class II effects leave targets completely incapacitated within 1D6 turns, and subject to a +4 penalty to all skill check TNs before incapacitation (treat incapacitated targets as killed), and any targets that can suffer pilot/crew hits immediately four such hits; after the battle, targets so affected must make a second roll against the partial Effects Resist Roll with a -4 bonus to the TN or are killed.

Targets affected by partial Class II effects are subject to a +2 penalty to all skill check TNs, and any targets that can suffer pilot/crew hits immediately suffer two such hits.

Any targets that survived and suffered any effects of the agent must make one final Effects Resist Roll, against either the full or the partial TN (depending on whether they suffered full or partial effects), at a -4 to the TN. If they succeed, they suffer no further effects, but if they fail they suffer an immediate and permanent -1 to all skill levels and Initiative rolls.

Countermeasures: Personnel must don protective gear or be within a sealed environment to avoid the effects of Class II agents.

Class III

Class III agents are fast-acting and designed to kill their targets immediately. Such agents include "nerve gas" and other highly toxic poisons. Those that survive Class III attacks are often left with severe physical impairments and other lasting health problems.

Time to Effect: 1D6 turns

Persistence: 4D6 days / 2D6+3 turns

TN: 8 / 10

Game Rules: Any personnel exposed to a Class III agent must immediately make an Effects Resist Roll. Any targets subject to the full Class III effects will die within 1D6 turns (the Time to Effect) unless administered a counter-agent within that time; between the time of exposure and death, targets suffer partial Class III effects.

Targets affected by partial Class III effects are subject to a +3 penalty to all skill check TNs, -2 to all Initiative rolls, and any targets that can suffer pilot/crew hits immediately suffer three such hits.

Any targets that survived and suffered any effects of the agent must make one final Effects Resist Roll, against the partial TN, at a -2 to the TN; if they succeed, they suffer no further effects, but if they fail they suffer an immediate and permanent -1 to all skill levels and Initiative rolls.

Countermeasures: Personnel must don protective gear or be within a sealed environment to avoid the effects of Class III agents.

The effects of Class III agents can potentially be countered through the immediate injection of a counter-agent; these counter-

agents are typically a mixed “drug cocktail” designed to counteract the worst effects of Class III weapons, but are not issued to troops in the field unless a WMD attack is expected as they have limited “shelf lives” and, if injected in a person not affected by a Class III agent, could in fact cause serious medical problems above and beyond any inflicted by WMD use. One Class III counter-agent dose (enough for one person) costs 100 C-bills, and if not continuously stored in a controlled environment, is only good for seven days. If a person exposed to a Class III agent is injected with a Class III counter-agent between exposure and the randomly rolled Time to Effect, that individual immediately makes a second Effects Resist Roll at a –3 modifier to the TN, applying the effects of the second roll (regardless of the first result).

An individual administered a counter-agent without first being exposed to the agent suffers the partial effects of a Class II agent.

Class IV

Class IV agents are slow-acting and either biological agents (typically a specially engineered virus) or chemical poisons that are ingested over a relatively lengthy period. They cause illness in almost anyone that comes into contact with them, but do not break down quickly, which means they are very difficult to direct against specific targets. They are most commonly delivered through covert operations—tainting a city’s drinking water or infecting a small group of prisoners and then releasing them into a population. Delivery through a weapon strike is possible, but such an attack without immediate results often gives the supposed targets the time to deploy countermeasures before the weapon takes effect.

Time to Effect: 1D6 + 2 days

Persistence: 1D6 days / 2D6 days

TN: 7 / 10

Game Rules: Prior to deploying the Class IV agent, the controlling player must determine if this is a poison attack or a biological (virus or germ) attack. Poison agent attacks follow all standard rules listed here. Biological agent attacks are made at a –1 to the listed TNs, but any unprotected individual that comes into contact with someone infected by the agent after the first 1D6 x 8 hours must make an Effects Resist Roll at a total of a –2 to the TNs (including the –1 because it is a virus); unprotected individuals must make this roll every time they come into contact with an infected target (rolling for each target they come into contact with); once infected, the target cannot be subject to more serious effects.

Targets affected by the full effects of a Class IV agent suffer a cumulative +1 penalty to all skill check TNs, –1 to all Initiative rolls, and one pilot/crew hit (if they can suffer such hits) for each 24-hour day of Persistence (the cumulative effects at the start of the first day are –1 & 1 hit, on the second day –2 & 2 hits, on the third day –3 & 3 hits, etc.); on the sixth day, the target must succeed at one final Effects Resist Roll, with a TN of 10 (modified as normal) or die.

Targets affected by the partial effects of a Class IV agent suffer a cumulative +1 penalty to all skill check TNs, –1 to all Initiative rolls, and one pilot/crew hit (if they can suffer such hits) for each 48 hours of Persistence (at the start of the first, third and fifth days).

Any targets that survived and suffered any effects of the agent immediately begin to recover; for every full 24-hour day after the agent’s Persistence expires, that target reduces the penalty to all skill checks and Initiative rolls by one and recovers one pilot/crew hit.

Countermeasures: Personnel must don protective gear or be within a sealed environment to avoid the effects of Class IV agents.

There are no “generic” counter-agents capable of counteracting the effects of a Class IV agent. Each individual Class IV agent has its own unique counter-agent that must be researched, developed, synthesized and then distributed, which typically takes weeks of time—or longer—if the agent has never been encountered before, though every major nation maintains some stockpiles of counter-agents that can fight the effects of the most common weapons its enemies might use. It is beyond the scope of these rules to provide guidelines on researching and developing counter-agents. For simplicity’s sake, roll 2D6; on a result of 2-10, the Class IV agent is “known” and has an already-researched counter-agent; on an 11 or 12, the agent is “unknown” and a counter-agent must be created.

It will take 1D6 days after exposure to determine whether a Class IV agent is “known” or “unknown.” Counter-agents for “known” weapons can be synthesized and/or shipped to the battlefield within 1D6 days and costs 500 C-bills per dose; counter-agents for “unknown” weapons require 5D6 days for R&D and then synthesis, and costs 1,000 C-bills per dose (thereafter the Class IV agent is “known”).

A counter-agent can only be administered in a medical setting (first aid station, MASH, hospital, etc.). A person exposed to a Class IV agent and injected with its counter-agent between exposure and the randomly rolled Time to Effect immediately makes a second Effects Resist Roll at a –3 modifier to the TN, applying the effects of the second roll (regardless of the first result). If the counter-agent is administered after the effects set in, the target makes a second Effects Resist Roll, this time at a –1 modifier to the TN, applying the effects of the second roll (regardless of the first result).

Class V

Class V agents are slow-acting but extremely vicious weapons. They include bio-engineered viruses designed to kill their targets, as well as makeshift radiological weapons that spread radioactive debris over a wide area. Areas affected by Class V weapons are often made uninhabitable by the weapon, at least until significant cleanup efforts are expended. Worse, those affected by Class V agents—at least those that survive their immediate effects—live out their shortened lifespans with serious health problems.

Time to Effect: 2D6 x 12 hours

Persistence: 2D6 days / 4D6 months

TN: 8 / 11

Game Rules: Prior to deploying the Class V agent, the controlling player must determine if this is a radiological attack or a biological attack. Radiological agent attacks follow all standard

rules listed here. Biological agent attacks are made at a -1 to the listed TNs, but any unprotected individual that comes into contact with someone infected by the agent after the first 1D6 x 8 hours must make an Effects Resist Roll at a total of a -1 to the TNs; unprotected individuals must make this roll *every* time they come into contact with an infected target (rolling for each target they come into contact with); once infected, the target cannot be subject to more serious effects.

Targets affected by the full effects of a Class V agent will die within 1D6 days of the onset of effects; before then, they suffer a cumulative +1 penalty to all skill check TNs, -1 to all Initiative rolls, and one pilot/crew hit (if they can suffer such hits) for each 24 full hours until they die.

Targets affected by the partial effects of a Class V agent suffer a cumulative +1 penalty to all skill check TNs, -1 to all Initiative rolls, and one pilot/crew hit (if they can suffer such hits) for each 48 hours of Persistence (at the start of the first, third, fifth, etc. days). On the eleventh day, the target must succeed at one final Effects Resist Roll, with a TN of 10 (modified as normal) or die.

Any targets that survived and suffered any effects of the agent *may* begin to recover. 48 hours after the agent's Persistence expires, the target must make an Effects Resist Roll against a TN of 10. If this roll fails, the target does not improve and may make another Effects Resist Roll in 48 hours against a TN of 9; if that one fails, the target may make one final Effects Resist Roll against a TN of 8; if that one fails, the target dies. A success means recovery; for every full 48 hours after recovery begins, that target reduces the penalty to all skill checks and Initiative rolls by one and recovers one pilot/crew hit.

Countermeasures: Personnel must don protective gear or be within a sealed environment to avoid the effects of Class V agents. Decontamination requires a standard maintenance check by a decontamination squad with a +2 modifier to the TN.

There are no Class V counter-agents.

Note: The Class V weapon's Area of Effect is three times the normal. All terrain affected by a Class V weapon is considered either *Tainted* or *Toxic Radiological/Poisonous* (see p. 56, *TO*). Roll 1D6: on a result of 1-4 that area is Tainted; on 5-6 it is Toxic.

BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS TABLE

	Weapon Delivery	Non-Weapon Delivery	Effects TN	C-Bill Cost	Acquisition TN
Class I	Y	N	7 / 10	1,000	4
Class II	Y	N	9 / 11	10,000	9
Class III	Y	N	8 / 10	250,000	16
Class IV	Y	Y	7 / 10	1,000,000*	18
Class V	Y	Y	8 / 11	5,000,000*	20

*Cost indicated is for a chemical (or radiological) weapon; cost for a biological weapon is 10x greater

IRREGULAR TROOPS

Much of the Reunification War was fought by professional soldiers, but each of the Periphery realms made use of militias and irregular troops to one extent or another. Representing those in *BattleTech* games requires a few modifications to the infantry rules.

There are three groups of irregular troops: militias, insurgents and mobs.

MILITIAS

These are organized units (albeit not professional infantry) and use the standard infantry rules. They are less effective in combat than line infantry but may still be an effective battlefield force.

Composition: Roll on the Random Irregular Platoon Composition Table, below, referencing the Militia column to determine the type.

Skills: Apply a -1 penalty to the Random Experience Level roll when generating militia units.

INSURGENTS

These are paramilitary forces, often small units (squad-sized), trained in non-standard combat techniques. Unless the scenario specifically prevents it, they may begin a battle as *Hidden Units* (see p. 256, *TW*) or *Dug In* (see p. 108, *TO*).

Insurgent "platoons" may be foot or motorized infantry, and may be armed with either ballistic rifles or SRMs (roll on the Random Irregular Platoon Composition Table, below, referencing the Insurgent column to determine the type). Insurgent platoons may contain no more than 15 members and may not wear additional armor or protective gear.

Size: To randomly determine the size of an insurgent platoon, roll 2D6 and add three; the resulting number is the total number of insurgents in the platoon

Skills: Apply a -2 penalty to the Random Experience Level roll when generating insurgent units.

Special Weapons

Each insurgent platoon may employ a number of special weapons in a secondary role; the controlling player may choose one for each insurgent platoon before the start of the game:

Molotov Cocktails: An insurgent platoon may make up to two attacks with Molotov cocktails in any scenario. Molotov cocktails have a range of one hex and attacks are made with a +2 penalty to the to-hit number (attacks made against targets in a lower hex are made normally, attacks against targets one level higher than the platoon are made with an additional +1 penalty to-hit, while attacks against targets more than one level higher are impossible). A successful attack requires a roll on the Cluster Hits table; divide the result by four (rounded normally) to determine the actual number of Molotov cocktails that hit. Each Molotov cocktail that hits automatically eliminates two infantry troopers, increases the heat level of a 'Mech (or other unit that tracks heat, except DropShips or WarShips, which are immune to the effect) by 1 point, and/or inflicts 2 points of damage to a building or woods hex. Units attacked by Molotov cocktails must make a morale check as if they were attacked by Infernos, albeit at a +1 bonus.

RANDOM IRREGULAR PLATOON COMPOSITION TABLE

1D6	Militia Platoon Type	Insurgent Platoon Type
1	Foot Ballistic Rifle	Foot Ballistic Rifle
2	Foot Ballistic Rifle	Foot Ballistic Rifle
3	Foot Laser Rifle	Foot SRM
4	Foot SRM	Foot SRM
5	Motorized Rifle (Roll: 1-4 ballistic, 5-6 laser)	Motorized Ballistic Rifle
6	Motorized SRM	Motorized SRM

Booby traps/IEDs: Insurgents may place booby traps and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). These are command-detonated minefields (see p. 209, *TO*) that inflict damage equal to the number of troopers in the insurgent unit. Each insurgent platoon so equipped may place a single IED within 5 hexes of their starting position prior to the start of the game. Additionally, each insurgent platoon may make one Leg Attack or Swarm Attack during the game.

Snipers: Insurgent sniper units cause little damage but can devastate an opposing unit's morale. Provided they make no other attacks and are hidden, the sniper-unit may nominate any enemy unit within 5 hexes and require it to make a Morale check (see pp. 211-212, *TO*) in the end-phase. The modifiers of the sniper attack and any other attack modifiers from that turn apply. (See Additional Morale Modifiers, below).

ADDITIONAL MORALE MODIFIERS

Other Modifiers Modifier	Target Modifier
Unit is Militia	+1
Unit is Insurgent	+1
Unit is Mob	+2
Target of a sniper attack	-4

MOBS

Violent and unruly, mobs are chaotic *ad hoc* formations, comprising massive numbers of ill-trained combatants. There is little or no leadership for such units and their actions are as likely to harm their allies as their friends. The rules for using them vary from the infantry norm as follows:

- A mob always has an experience level of Green.
- A mob may not use armor.
- A mob suffers 3x the normal damage when attacked.
- A mob may frenzy.
- A Mob may not use armor, vehicles, mounts or extreme environment modifications

Forming a Mob

Any battle that takes place in a city (or other area that includes a large number of people in a relatively small area, including a prison, refugee camp or a sporting event) can potentially include one or more mobs.

If a given scenario does not indicate whether a mob may be included, each side that controls a group of 100 or more civilians or other untrained non-combatants on or in close proximity to the battlefield (within 1 kilometer) should roll 2D6, applying the modifiers indicated on the table below; on a modified roll of 10 or greater, that side forms one or more mobs.

MOB FORMATION TABLE

Situation	Modifier
A mob has previously formed on this battlefield	+1
Battle occurring in a city populated by your citizens	+1
Defender in a scenario	+2
Opposing side has used WMDs on this world	+2
Opposing side has used WMDs against this location	+2 additional

Size of a Mob

The size of a mob depends upon the situation.

Each mob hex may contain up to 100 members, and is called a mob unit. An overall mob is the sum total of all of the individual mob units.

Mob in a City: If a mob forms within a city, the total size of the overall mob will be 1D6 x twice the total number of building hexes on the map.

Mob Elsewhere: If the mob forms in a facility such as a prison, a refugee camp or any other location with large numbers of people in a confined area, divide the total number of persons in the area by ten, and then multiply by 1D6. The product is the total size of the overall mob that can form.

Maximum Size: Divide the total number of overall mob members by 100, rounding up, to determine the total number of mob units. Evenly distribute the members of the overall mob into mob units. A maximum of ten mob units can form per mapsheet used to create the battlefield.

Minimum Size: If a mob contains less than 30 members at the end of a turn, it will immediately disperse.

Changing the Size of the Mob: Mobs may increase or decrease in size during the course of gameplay. As a mob takes damage it will lose members. If one mob unit is adjacent to one or more other mob units in the end phase of any turn, all of the adjacent will "share" members with each other to become equal in size (see *Large Formations*, p. 202). Additionally, a mob unit will grow in size by 1D6 members for every building hex it is adjacent to at the beginning of a turn.

Mob "Tokens": Each player controlling mobs will need a number of tokens that will be used to mark each mob unit on the battlefield maps.

Initiative

Mobs move before any other units in a turn. If each side in a game possesses mobs, the side that lost initiative moves first, alternating with the side that won initiative per standard rules. All mobs must move before any other units move and fire based on which side won or lost the initiative.

Large Formations

Adjacent Mobs: If two or more friendly mob units are adjacent to each other, all mobs will share its members with each other until all are of equal size. This occurs in the end phase of every turn in which two or more friendly mob units are adjacent to each other.

Movement: A mob moves by foot only (it may not use any other form of movement), and has one ground MP. No mob unit will move through a building or a rubble hex (though it will move through wooded and rough hexes, while roadblocks or other similar constructs will likewise not impede movement of a mob). Mobs move before any other units in a turn. A mob does not need to move in a turn unless it is "Frenzied" (see *Frenzy*, below).

Buildings: If a mob unit moves adjacent to a building hex, it will inflict one point of damage to that building per turn that it is adjacent to that hex. There is no limit to the number of building hexes that a mob may damage.

Stacking Units: A mob unit counts as a single infantry platoon for purposes of stacking units. No more than one mob unit may occupy a single hex, regardless of other stacking limits. Infantry, militia or Insurgent platoons that end their movement in the same hex as a friendly mob unit must immediately make a to-hit roll against a TN of +2 or be absorbed by the mob (Battle Armor units are not affected in this way). If the roll is successful, the platoon may operate normally; if the roll fails, the platoon ceases to exist and its members are added to the mob's total strength.

Movement Through Mob Hexes: Any ground unit that moved into a mob hex in a turn, regardless whether it is friendly or enemy or how many ground MPs it possesses, must immediately cease movement (a 'Mech that fell in the current turn may expend MPs to stand up, however).

The Weight of Numbers: Any unit (friendly or enemy) occupying the same hex as a mob suffers a +2 penalty to all to-hit target numbers, while BattleMechs and vehicles also suffer a +2 penalty to Piloting Skill target numbers. Airborne vehicles one or more levels above the mob are not affected. All BattleMechs (friendly or enemy) that move into (or remain standing) in the same hex as a mob must make a Piloting Skill Roll (at the +2 penalty) or fall; the mob takes damage from this fall as if it were swarming a BattleMech that falls (see *Falling/Dropping Prone*, p. 222, *TW*; remember to apply the mob's additional triple damage). A fallen BattleMech may attempt to stand back up so long as it has the movement available to do so, but all standing attempts are made at a total of a +3 penalty.

Starting Location

Unless the starting location(s) of any mobs are indicated, mob units will be distributed evenly on each mapsheet used to form the battlefield. Begin by assigning a mob to the map with the most building hexes, and continuing on in this manner until all of the mobs are assigned to a mapsheet (if no buildings are present, or an equal number of building hexes, roll a die to randomly determine the mapsheet). Mobs will always attempt to form a "blob" whenever possible; in other words, so long as the terrain allows, individual mob hexes must always be adjacent to as many other mob hexes as possible.

Assigned mobs will then be specifically located on each mapsheet. Roll 2D6 and roll 2D6 again; put the two results together to determine the location hex of the mob (for example, if the first roll was 11 and the second roll was 4, the mob will be placed in hex 1104 of that map; if the rolls were 2 and 5, then the mob would be placed in hex 0205). These rolls indicate the "center hex" for the mob; place a "mob token" in that hex, and continue placing tokens in eligible adjacent hexes (clear, pavement, wooded, or rough) until one token has been placed for each hex of the mob. If the rolls indicate an ineligible hex, the controlling player will place the first mob token in an adjacent eligible hex of his or her choice; if there are no eligible adjacent hexes, reroll until an eligible hex is indicated. Only one mob token of any type may occupy any single hex.

Mob Attacks

Mobs attack before any other unit in a turn.

Each mob unit attacks separately according to the standard infantry rules. For every 50 mob members, or fraction thereof, in a hex, the mob deals 1 point of damage. Mobs may only attack targets in their own hex or in adjacent hexes. Enemy infantry attacked by a mob suffer twice the normal damage when in or adjacent to mob hexes.

Attacking a Mob

Each individual hex of a mob must be attacked independently (unless weapon effects state it attacks multiple hexes). Treat the mob elements as a conventional infantry unit but each attack against a mob hex inflicts triple the normal number of casualties (doubled again if in clear terrain). *For example, a large laser striking a mob formation would cause 0.8 casualties (as a direct fire energy weapon—see Non-Infantry Weapon Damage Against Infantry table, p. 216, TW—its damage value of 8 is divided by 10), rounded up to 1 casualty, but as this is a mob triple the result to 3 casualties. Similarly, a machine gun attack against infantry causes 2D6 casualties and if the roll is 7 (indicating 7 casualties) a mob would suffer 21 losses.*

If a mob unit is reduced to less than 50 members, and is not adjacent to another mob unit, that mob unit disbands.

Frenzy

Each time the attack role for a mob is a double (both numbers on the dice are the same), place a marker on its record sheet. Additionally, roll 1D6 for every turn in which a mob takes any damage; on a roll of 6, place a marker on its record sheet. Each marker provides a +1 bonus to the to-hit roll of that mob (as it becomes more agitated). When the third marker is placed on the mob it frenzies.

A frenzied unit suffers 4x the normal number of troop losses when attacked (instead of 3x the normal damage).

A frenzied unit gains +1 ground MP.

A frenzied unit may not be directed by the controlling player; instead all elements must move toward the nearest enemy unit by the shortest possible rout.

If a frenzied unit passes through the hex of a friendly unit (or vice versa), roll 2D6. On a result of 7+ the frenzied mob will attack the friendly unit.

EXPANDED INFANTRY SKILLS TABLE

Warrior/Crew Type	Gunnery Skill	Piloting Skill	Driving Skill	Anti-'Mech Skill
Inner Sphere				
Conventional infantry*	4	—	—	8
Conventional infantry (anti-'Mech)				
Foot	4	—	—	5
Jump/Motorized	4	—	—	6
Irregulars				
Militia	5	—	—	9
Insurgents	6	—	—	9
Mob	7	—	—	—
Battle armor infantry	4	—	—	5
Clan				
Conventional infantry*	5	—	—	8
Conventional infantry (anti-'Mech)				
Foot	5	—	—	5
Jump/Motorized	5	—	—	6
Battle armor infantry	3	—	—	4
Irregulars				
Militia	5	—	—	9
Insurgents	6	—	—	9
Mob	8	—	—	—

*Mechanized infantry cannot make anti-'Mech attacks.

A frenzy continues until the mob is destroyed, is forced to withdraw (see p. 212, *TO*) or runs of enemy targets. (See exception below.)

If a frenzied mob unit moves adjacent to a friendly, non-frenzied mob unit, the non-frenzied unit receives a frenzy marker. If that unit remains unfrenzied, the player "controlling" the frenzied mob rolls 2D6; on a roll of 9 or better, its third frenzy marker is removed and the mob returns to a "normal" state.

RIOT GEAR

Some equipment used by the military and police forces of the Inner Sphere is designed to combat mobs.

Infantry Crowd Control Weapons

Some weapons are designed for managing crowds in a non-lethal manner. In *BattleTech* terms, such casualties are indistinguishable from conventional losses, but in a roleplay or campaign setting it may be more productive to incapacitate rather than kill the mob. The following weapons are considered non-lethal:

- Stun Staff
- Stun Stick
- Dart Gun
- Sonic Stunner
- Tranq gun
- Ceres Arms Crowdbuster
- Gel Gun
- Any projectile weapon equipped with gel or baton rounds
- Tear Gas Grenades

Riot Gear

Riot gear is a mix of padding, armor plates and shields designed to protect the wearer against melee and *ad hoc* weapon attacks. It provides limited protection against military weapons.

Riot Gear

Damage Divisor: 0.5E/2E*

Tech (Rating): Both (B)

Availability: B-B-B

Introduced (Date): PS

Cost (C-Bills): 1000

NEW COMBAT UNITS

Though reliable sources from the early Star League era are few and far between, by comparing those sources and using them to filter the many fictionalized accounts of the Reunification War, a snapshot of the state of military technology within all of the Star League and Periphery nations begins to emerge. This, combined research information gleaned from post-war testing of new technologies on captured and decommissioned equipment, allowed researchers to recreate the technical specifications of some of the least known combat units used by the militaries of the Star League and the Periphery before and during the Reunification War. These units, along with a number of still-used designs common to the era, are described over the next several pages.

PERIPHERY REFITS

The state of technological advancement during the early Star League era was very much like that which exists today—Terra drove the technological race, while the further from Terra one was the lower the average technology he or she would employ. Of course, there were exceptions to this rule, but by and large the Periphery nations lagged behind the Terran Hegemony (and later the Star League) by decades. The Periphery was the last to develop the BattleMech, among other technologies that quickly became essential throughout the Inner Sphere. But where the Inner Sphere came to rely upon their technological advances, the Periphery embraced their low-tech methods. In the years leading up to the Reunification War and throughout that conflict, the various Periphery powers simply retrofitted civilian vehicles and IndustrialMechs with weapons, trusting that would give them an edge over their opponents—in quantity, if not quality.

Note: In some cases, the vehicles and IndustrialMechs indicated below have been established in one or more *BattleTech Technical Readouts* as having been first developed or deployed decades, even centuries, after the events recounted in this sourcebook. In those cases, they are merely representative of similar units, or even earlier-developed models of the same unit.

Additionally, any unit described below as mounting one or more Rocket Launchers utilize the low-tech models described in *Advanced & Prototype Systems*, beginning on p. 176.

Record Sheets: Record sheets for the following vehicle and IndustrialMech refits can be found in *BattleTech Record Sheets: Operation Klondike*.

Vehicle Refits

Even in the early days of the Age of War, the Periphery nations relied heavily upon a hodge-podge of refit civilian vehicles to complement their growing militaries. With the Reunification War looming ahead of them, despite most of them possessing a relatively strong military, they once again looked at the many civilian vehicles that could be easily retrofitted with a hodge-podge of jury-rigged armor and weapons in order to bulk up their militia forces. It may not have been much, but in many cases it was enough.

Flatbed Truck (LRM & RL): Trucks were relatively plentiful, and so was scrap metal. By strapping four forward-facing fifteen-tube rocket launchers to a truck's bed and hanging two tons of armor (typically focused more towards the front and sides), a common truck could be turned into a potentially devastating weapon.

A less common tactic involved a similar principle, only in this case mounting an LRM 10 with one ton of reloads to the truck. Though all-but-unable to stand up to any punishment, a few of these trucks located in strategic spots could change the course of battle among the various warring factions.

Dump Truck (AC & LRM): Dump trucks were the ideal candidate for upgrade with heavy weapons—they are, after all, already heavily armored and have a massive carrying capacity. While some patriots preferred to pack them with explosives and hope to catch as many enemies as possible within the blast radius, most realized

that they needed to keep the maximum number of vehicles operating. Mounting as many heavy weapons as possible on the bed became a common practice. One particularly powerful modification (using the Brunel chassis) saw two AC/10s, each fed by three tons of ammo, mounted in the rear, with just a pair of forward-facing machine guns, fed by one ton of ammo, for additional defense. A different variant replaced the autocannon with five LRM 15 launchers with a total of ten tons of ammunition. Both of these variants mount a basic fire control system and carry some nine and a half tons of armor, typically with additional armor focused on the rear quarters.

IndustrialMech Refits

The IndustrialMech was an invaluable aid to mankind, be it in conquering new worlds or that would come to form the Periphery or in transforming those worlds into interstellar commerce and industry centers. They also became logical bases for makeshift combat platforms. A number of fairly common modifications emerged during the Reunification War, utilized throughout the Periphery in resisting the might of the SLDF armies.

BC Buster XV (AC): Pairing right torso mounted autocannon 5 with an LRM 10 launcher in the left torso, this up-gunned IndustrialMech carried a ton of ammunition of each weapon type. Advanced fire control and five heat sinks were installed and armor protection was doubled.

BC Buster XV (PPC): Armed with a single PPC in an over-the-shoulder mount on the right torso, this version of the *Buster* carried ten heat sinks and a power amplifier. Once again advanced fire control was installed and armor protection was doubled.

CON-1 Carbine (Rocket): Five 15-rocket weapon packs were mounted in the torso and three heat sinks were installed in place of other equipment. Unlike other armed IndustrialMechs, this modification often lacked advanced fire control.

ED-X2 Crosscut (Flamer): Essentially identical to the later ED-X4, the ED-X2 was modified for combat by removing the lift hoist and installing a vehicle flamer and a ton of ammunition in place of its left hand actuator, an extra ton of commercial armor was applied in an *ad hoc* patchwork to provide a degree of extra protection and a heat sink and advanced fire control was added.

ED-X2 Crosscut (Rocket): Cobbled together by Periphery technicians, this version of the ED-X2 employed a patchwork of scavenged military grade armor. Four primitive 10-missile rocket packs were mounted on each arm and three heat sinks and advanced fire control were added.

GTX2 Daedalus (Militarized): Though not nearly as common in the Periphery as in the Star League's core, enough of the *Daedalus* WorkMechs found their way into the Periphery with Terran Hegemony construction concerns to develop a dedicated militia refit. Four machineguns, two mounted in each of the fore legs, provided more than sufficient anti-personnel fire while a pair of center torso-mounted medium lasers, backed up by two twenty-tube rocket launchers on each side torso, could deliver decisive punches to opposing 'Mechs and tanks.

KIC-3 Harvester Ant (MG): Refitted as an anti-infantry platform, the combine units were replaced with machine guns and a half-ton of ammunition in each torso. The internal cargo bay was replaced by an SRM 2 launcher and a ton of ammunition. Advanced fire control and two heat sinks were installed to support the new weaponry.

KIC-3 Harvester Ant (LRM): Used as a fire support unit, this version of the *Harvester Ant* mounted two LRM 5 launchers and a ton of ammunition. Again its cockpit systems were upgraded with advanced fire control and two heat sinks were installed.

SC Powerman XI (Laser): Similar to the modern *Powerman XV*, the *XI* replaced the cargo hoists and cargo bays with two medium lasers—one in each arm, a center torso mounted machine gun and one hundred rounds of ammunition, and six heat sinks. Advanced fire control and a power amplifier were installed to support the new armament. The continued use of commercial armor left the armed *Powerman* vulnerable to heavy autocannon, laser, and PPC fire.

SC Powerman XI (SRM): Another common refit of the *Powerman*, this version mounts an SRM 4 in each arm. The weapons are fed from a shard one-ton magazine in the center torso. Advanced fire control and three heat sinks were also installed.

HIPPARCH CAVALRY TANK

Mass: 30 tons

Movement Type: Hover

Power Plant: Mercury 140

Cruising Speed: 97 kph

Maximum Speed: 151 kph

Armor: Forge 9 Flexweave

Armament:

1 Diplass Optimax Medium Laser

1 Diplass Optimax Small Laser

1 Harvester SRM 2 Missile Rack

Manufacturer: Diplass Technologies

Primary Factory: Apollo

Communications System: DipCon III

Targeting and tracking System: DipTrak X

OVERVIEW

Despite Gregory Amaris' efforts, the military of the Rim Worlds Republic had a relatively small proportion of 'Mech forces and instead relied on armor and infantry. A host of new designs existed across the Periphery but the Hipparch was notable for having been commissioned on the direct orders of the First Consul in 2562. Few in the RWA liked the resulting design (and the crews certainly did not) but Amaris approved the prototype and issued orders for thousands to be produced, the vast sums of Republican cash spent on the program lining the pockets of Amaris' political cronies.

CAPABILITIES

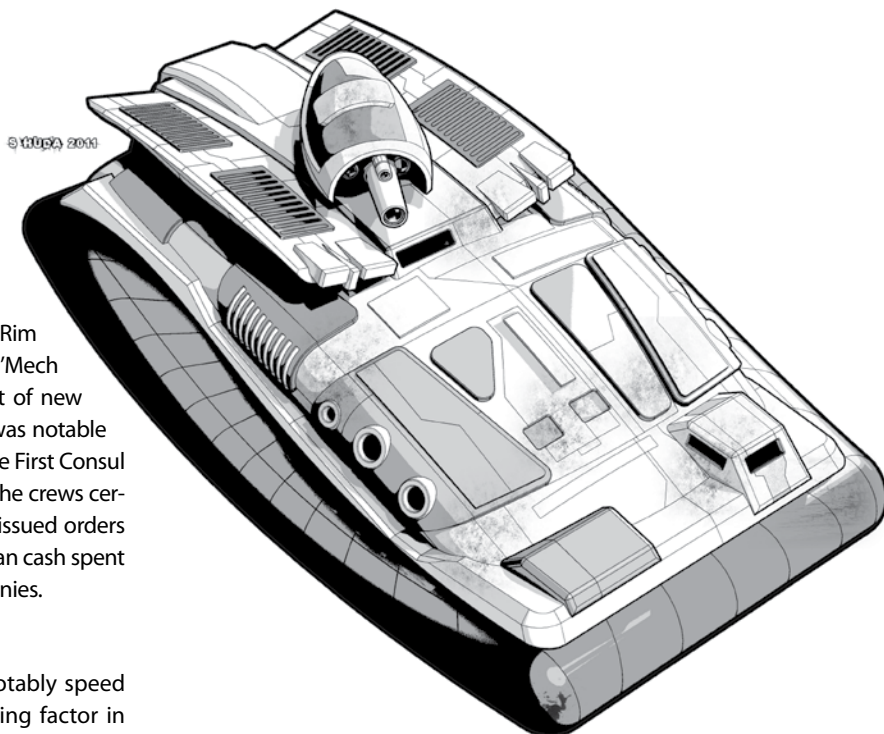
Amaris laid down very specific design criteria, notably speed and endurance, but the less charitable say the deciding factor in Gregory's approval was the vehicle's sleek looks. Though capable of

outrunning (or running down) almost any opposition, the Hipparch paid for this speed with light armor and an anemic weapons load-out. Furthermore, the decision to mount energy weapons—though freeing the Hipparch from logistical constraints—required the installation of additional power conversion and heat dissipation equipment, space that critics of the design felt could have been better served bolstering the designs firepower or defenses. Urban legend has it that designs like the *J. Edgar* came about after Star League technicians saw the Hipparch and wanted to do the cavalry tank concept "right".

A mediocre basic design wasn't the only issue with the tank. Its rushed production and poor quality control resulted in a large number of manufacturing defects and field breakdowns. This was a minor scandal in the pre-war years but little was done to remedy the situation. It was later estimated by the SLDF that up to ten percent of the Republican deaths in Hipparchs during the war were attributable to malfunctions rather than enemy fire.

DEPLOYMENT

More than 7,000 Hipparchs were built but less than ninety survived the conflict. Despite criticism of the design they proved effective against the SLDF, serving as scouts and pickets. They also performed admirably in offensive operations, staging high-speed slashing attacks though enemy formations. As the war in the Republic degenerated, more than one Hipparch found itself the anvil to heavy tank maneuvers, a roll-reversal that stunned the enemy but also accounted for the massive losses among the cavalry formations.



VARIANTS

With a service life of barely thirty years and its production line lost in the coup on Apollo, few variations of the Hipparch existed and those were exclusively battlefield modifications. Some modifications included mounting machine guns to turn the design into an anti-infantry platform (which rather wasted its speed and maneuverability) or increasing the size of the missile payload at the expense of energy weapons. The most insidious modification was nicknamed the Hellhorse and replaced the weapon payload and turret assembly with explosives. These vehicles were then driven into the heart of enemy formations or encampments like the fireships or kamikazes of old, causing considerable damage and loss of life.

Type: **Hipparch**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Hover

Tonnage: 30

Battle Value: 382

Equipment

		Mass
Internal Structure:		3
Engine:	140	10
Type:	ICE	
Cruise MP:	9	
Flank MP:	14	
Heat Sinks:	4	4
Control Equipment:		1.5
Lift Equipment:		3
Power Amplifier:		.5
Turret:		.5
Armor Factor:	64	4

Armor Value

Front	14
R/L Side	13/13
Rear	12
Turret	12

Weapons and Ammo

	Location	Tonnage
Medium Laser	Turret	1
Small Laser	Turret	.5
SRM 2	Turret	1
Ammo (SRM) 50	Body	1

MM-1 DRAGONFLY

Mass: 40 tons

Chassis: Aeroframe A

Power Plant: Magna 120

Armor: Crimson 5

Armament:

2 Blazefire Systems Large Lasers

5 Martell Medium Lasers

Manufacturer: Majesty Metals and Manufacturing

Primary Factory: Canopus IV

Communications System: Magestrix Alpha

Targeting and tracking System: Magestrix Delta

OVERVIEW

For the forty-odd years of its existence prior to the Reunification War the Magistracy of Canopus had had little need for a large military. Instead, it fielded a paramilitary police force whose main task was discouraging bandits and maintaining the rule of law. Aerospace forces were the only arm of the MAF to receive significant technical innovation, being vital to securing the vast space of the Magistracy, with domestic designs like the *Dragonfly* being produced alongside imported models like the Raimei SB-26 *Sabre*.

CAPABILITIES

Fast, durable, hard-hitting and with no ammunition to worry about the *Dragonfly* was a popular tool of MAF patrols. It wasn't elegant but it was effective, particularly in space where its poor aerodynamic characteristics (and slightly under-powered engine) were not a significant disadvantage. In atmosphere a *Dragonfly* relied on brute power and endurance rather than agility and finesse but that did little to hamper its ground-attack capabilities, something that became a mainstay of the MAF during their defense of the Magistracy. However, the MM-1 contained no advanced technology and suffered heat management issues due to its extensive weapon load, a failing the more efficient SLDF fighters exploited.

DEPLOYMENT

In Crystalla's crash armament program prior to the outbreak of hostilities hundreds of *Dragonflies* were produced, being as effective a raider as it was an anti-pirate weapon. Introduced in 2574, the design's reduced reliance on a logistics train made them a good fit for Buquoy's mobile defense strategy, the greatest weakness of which was maintaining supply lines to the scattered formations. Most MAF units had at least some examples of the *Dragonfly* and some even made their way into the SLDF when MAF units capitulated. Unfortunately the *Dragonfly* production line was a casualty of the battle for Canopus and during the Star League era the design became increasingly scarce.

VARIANTS

The MM-2 configuration, first fielded in 2583 shortly before the Battle of Canopus mitigated the heat issues of its predecessor by using newly acquired (from agents in the Hegemony) double heat sink technology. This allowed the fighter to use its full array of lasers to devastating effect and also prompted the replacement of the nose-mounted medium laser with a large-bore version, facilitated by reducing the total number of heat sinks to fourteen which, with the technological upgrades, still increased the MM-2's heat dissipation capabilities by 50 percent. Externally there was almost no difference between the MM-1 and the MM-2 though the new variant benefited from an improved cockpit design and a streamlined HUD system, significantly improving the pilot's experience. Even so, the outdated MM-1 models gained significant respect from opponents who wouldn't know if he was facing a lamb or a lion until battle was joined. The few MM-2 examples that survived to the 31st Century were cannibalized for their advanced technologies, in effect being downgraded to the MM-1 configuration.

Type: **Dragonfly**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Tonnage: 40

Battle Value: 1,112

Equipment

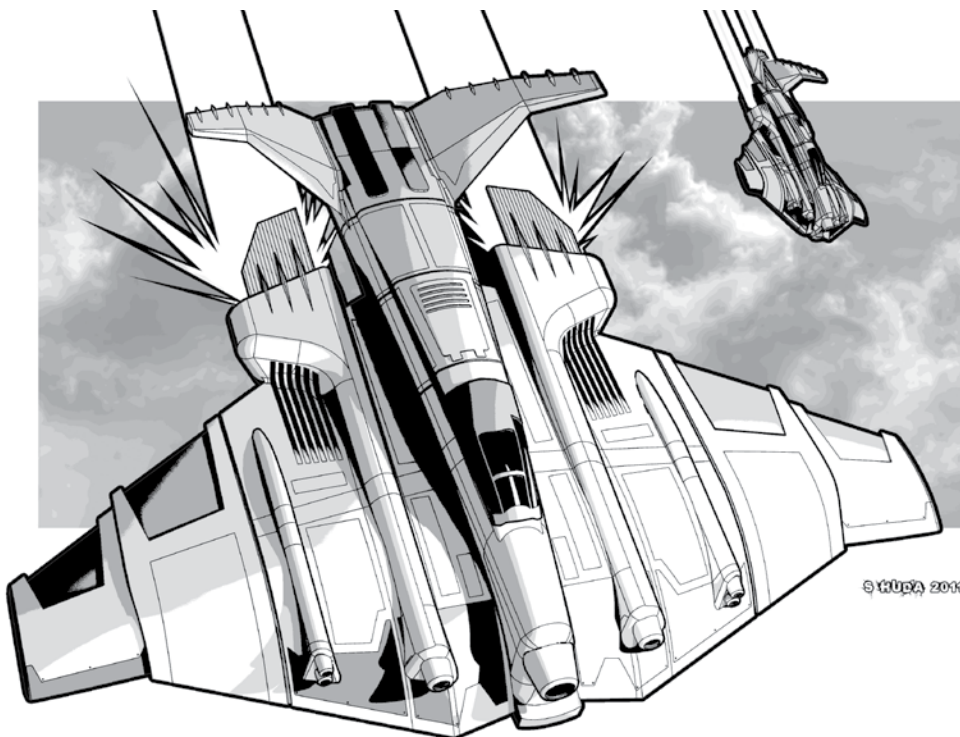
Engine:	120	
Safe Thrust:	5	
Maximum Thrust:	8	
Structural Integrity:	5	
Heat Sinks:	18	8
Fuel:	320	4
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor:	96	6

Mass

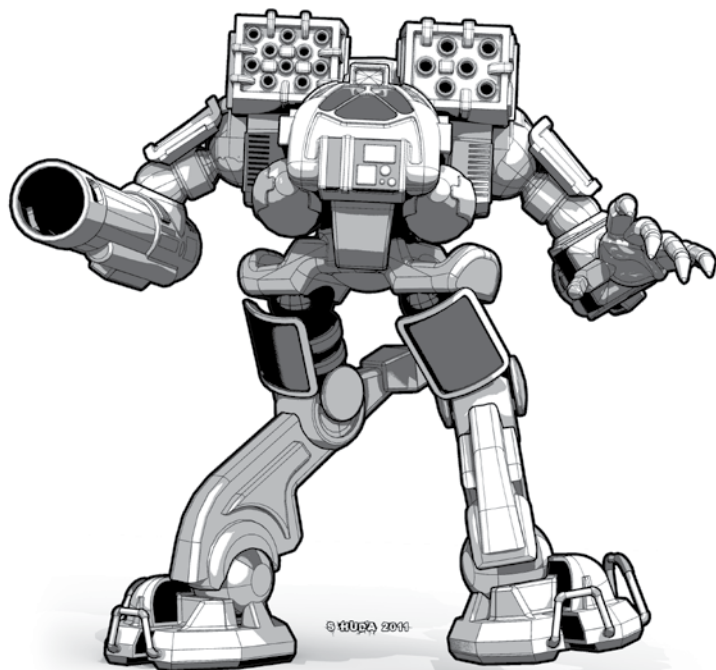
4

Armor Value

Nose	32
Wings	24/24
Aft	16



Weapons and Ammo	Location	Tonnage	Heat	SRV	MRV	LRV	ERV
Medium Laser	Nose	1	3	5	—	—	—
Large Laser	RW	5	8	8	8	—	—
2 Medium Laser	RW	2	6	10	—	—	—
Large Laser	LW	5	8	8	8	—	—
2 Medium Laser	LW	2	6	10	—	—	—



TLS-1B TALOS

Mass: 50 tons

Chassis: Vandenberg Technologies Medium-III

Power Plant: Nissan 200

Cruising Speed: 43 kph

Maximum Speed: 64 kph

Jump Jets: None

Jump Capacity: None

Armor: Hoyt StarPlate 3

Armament:

- 1 Westen Heavy Autocannon class-10
- 2 Delta Dart Long Range Missile-5 Racks
- 1 Delta Bolt-6 Short Range Missile Rack

Manufacturer: Vandenberg MilTech

Primary Factory: New Vandenberg

Communications System: Kensu-Mocom Angelia-II

Targeting and Tracking System: Rushpoint TT2B5

OVERVIEW

The first two decades of the 26th century saw both the Capellan Confederation and the Federated Suns deploy more and more advanced BattleMech designs against each other. The Taurian Defense Force knew it had to expand its own BattleMech forces to be prepared for the day that either or both turned their full attention towards the Concordat, and solicited requirements for a new Taurian 'Mech in 2521. Vandenberg Heavy Industry, one of the Concordat's largest IndustrialMech manufacturers, had recently formed Vandenberg MilTech to produce captured and reengineered Inner Sphere BattleMechs, and was ready to begin producing its own unique designs. Drawing upon the TDF's experience with the *Toro*, as well as its many Inner Sphere "knock-offs," Vandenberg MilTech created a modern BattleMech that was easy to produce, capable of holding its own on the battlefield, and was well-received by the veterans who piloted the prototypes through their trials.

CAPABILITIES

Time and again TDF MechWarriors complained about the poor heat management capabilities of the BattleMechs they had available to them. Though they might have devastating firepower at their fingertips, the price of delivering such decisive fire often left them incapable of exploiting their opponents' losses, or worse left them vulnerable to powerful return fire. At the same time, logisticians and transportation coordinators were looking for lighter designs that required less maintenance and would be easier to move within the limited cargo capacities of the many early space transports available to the Concordat.

Vandenberg MilTech designed the *Talos* with all of these concerns in mind. As a medium BattleMech, it was less expensive and required less maintenance than the heavier designs favored by the Federated Suns and the Terran Hegemony. Moreover, TDF MechWarriors found it a much easier design to learn to pilot. With a top speed of 64 kph, it equaled or exceeded the average speed and maneuverability of most 'Mech designs found on the battlefield, while its short stature made for easier DropShip loading and unloading.

All of those qualities, of course, would have been irrelevant without a powerful arsenal of weaponry. The designers relied upon proven autocannon and missile technologies, arrayed for layered fire, to provide better heat-management capabilities. The Westen Heavy Autocannon, long praised by Taurian armor crews for its accuracy and potency, was the *Talos*' primary weapon. That autocannon was backed up by a battery of both long- and short-range missiles, giving the *Talos* the ability to hit targets at all ranges, though decisive fire at the longest ranges will require the sustained massed fire of an entire *Talos* lance. Given the relative problems with ranged fire accuracy during the Age of War, however, this was never considered a drawback by either the 'Mech's designers or its pilots, though as the Age of War gave way to the Star League era, more and more *Talos* pilots began to demand a better upgrade or replacement.

DEPLOYMENT

The Taurian Defense Force accepted its first *Talos* BattleMechs in spring of 2532, after some eight years of development and prototype testing led to numerous minor design upgrades. By the end of the decade, the *Talos* had made its way into every Taurian BattleMech regiment, and was well on its way to replacing the oldest and least capable 'Mechs still in service.

Vandenberg MilTech continued full production on the *Talos* for nearly five decades, selling just over half of its production runs to the militaries of the Rim Worlds Republic, the Magistracy of Canopus, and even the Outworlds Alliance. As military technology and doctrine matured, however, the TDF found itself looking for even newer and more capable designs, prompting Vandenberg MilTech to rotate the *Talos* out of production shortly after the start of the Reunification War. Nevertheless, with thousands of the hardy 'Mechs already built, the *Talos* remained in service within the Periphery armies, as well as second-line Inner Sphere units, until the early Succession War era.

VARIANTS

Neither Vandenberg MilTech nor the TDF ever produced any official variants of the *Talos*, save from regular upgrades to the 'Mech's subsystems. Nevertheless, given how many of the 'Mechs were in service throughout the Periphery, the *Talos* was one of the most customized designs during the Reunification War.

NOTABLE MECHWARRIORS

Brigadier Rook Esposito: Test pilot for the first *Talos* prototype and later selected as commander of the first Taurian battalion to receive the *Talos*, Rook Esposito built and led one of the most elite—and unorthodox—units in the TDF. First Battalion of the First Pleiades Hussars developed a reputation as hard fighters who would just as easily stage an orbital drop into the middle of a Capellan encampment as they would travel a hundred kilometers underwater before breaking through an ice sheet and attacking a Davion supply column. Off-duty, they were also hard-drinkers and gifted pranksters. Approaching ninety years of age when the SLDF hit New Vandenberg, Esposito climbed into the cockpit of his *Talos* one last time, leading a company deep into I Corps' lines and nearly destroying the SLDF Third Brigade's headquarters before he and his MechWarriors fell to a Star League air assault.

Type: **Talos**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Tonnage: 50

Battle Value: 924

Equipment

Internal Structure

Engine:

Walking MP:

Running MP:

Jumping MP:

Heat Sinks:

Gyro:

Cockpit:

Armor Factor:

200

4

6

0

10

2

3

136

Internal
Structure

Armor
Value

Head

3

9

Center Torso

16

22

Center Torso (rear)

5

R/L Torso

12

20

R/L Torso (rear)

4

R/L Arm

8

10

R/L Leg

12

16

Weapons and Ammo

Location

Critical

Tonnage

AC/10

RA

7

12

Ammo (AC) 20

RT

2

2

2 LRM 5

RT

2

4

Ammo (LRM) 24

RT

1

1

SRM 6

LT

2

3

Ammo (SRM) 15

LT

1

1

AL-A1 ALFAR

Mass: 55 tons

Chassis: Coventry AL Endo Steel

Power Plant: CoreTek 275

Walking Speed: 54 kph

Maximum Speed: 86 kph

Jump Jets: Luxor Load Lifters

Jump Capacity: 90 meters

Armor Type: Coventry Industries Ferro-Fibrous

Armament:

1 Magna Hellstar PPC

3 Magna Mark II Medium Lasers

1 Shannon Six-shooter SRM 6

Manufacturer: Coventry Metal Works

Primary Factory: Coventry

Communications System: Field Ranger Wanderer

Targeting & Tracking System: Martial Ranger Series 6

OVERVIEW

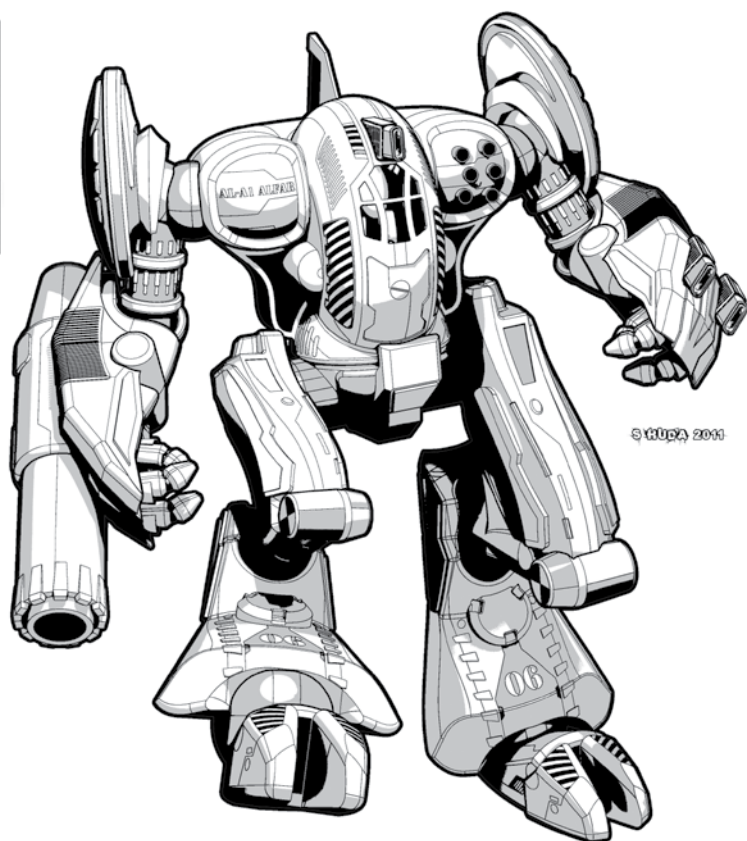
Like the modern LAAF, the LCAF of the Reunification War had a tendency toward heavy 'Mechs in their formations. Most Lyran units were incapable of fighting a mobile campaign—the Tamar Tigers were the exception—but efforts were underway during the reign of Archon Tracial Steiner to diversify the Steiner forces. A series of lighter designs was proposed and tested, among them the *Alfar* (or more correctly the *Álfar*) which entered service in 2573. Named for the elves of Germanic legend, the design was intended as a homegrown alternative to the *Griffin* and *Shadow Hawk*, both of which had similar performance profiles.

CAPABILITIES

Highly maneuverable and heavily armored for its weight class, the *Alfar* nonetheless managed to pack a significant punch thanks to the massive particle projection cannon that formed its right arm and the array of lasers and missiles in its left arm and torso. The *Alfar* was at home in both offensive and defensive roles, able to keep up with all but the lightest 'Mechs and vehicles yet able to stand a significant beating in defense of its charges. Its ninety-meter jump capability was particularly prized, allowing the BattleMech to maneuver quickly in even the roughest terrain and to negate most conventional fortifications. The design won pilot praise for its heat management abilities but also its firepower; the pilot could continue to use his PPC throughout the fight, varying the number of lasers used to keep heat levels within acceptable levels.

DEPLOYMENT

Only the LCAF fielded the *Alfar* in significant numbers, though several dozen found their way into the SLDF. Most of the former group did not see action in Reunification War (the Tamar Tigers fielded two *Alfar* lances in the Rim Worlds Campaign) and so it fell to the handful of SLDF models to demonstrate the abilities of the design. It proved to be a popular ride for pilots, blending speed, resilience and firepower, but was less well liked by the technical



crews. Many of its fittings were of a non-standard type and so keeping an *Alfar* in working order proved time consuming and a logistical challenge. Only three SLDF examples survived the war in operational condition, but of the remainder only two-thirds were destroyed by enemy action. The other third were scrapped or abandoned when maintaining them proved impractical. The same fate would ultimately befall the LCAF *Alfars*—as the SLDF pushed for a standardization of fittings and equipment it proved more cost effective to scrap the troublesome (though respected) *Alfar* than to refit them to Star League standards. Most were replaced by upgraded *Griffins*, *Shadow Hawks* and *Dervishes*, the very designs the *Alfar* had been intended to supplant. Two remained in private hands but were believed lost during the devastation of the First Succession War.

VARIANTS

Only one official variant of the *Alfar* existed—the *Dökkálfar* or *Dark Elf*—that dropped the laser and missile systems in favor of a second PPC. Described as a “baby *Warhammer*” this configuration was popular among some Steiner formations as a cheap fire support platform but though better at long-range combat than its more common cousin, was generally viewed as an inferior brawler and more troublesome for heat management.

Type: **Alfar**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Tonnage: 55

Battle Value: 1,447

Equipment

		Mass
Internal Structure:	Endo Steel	3
Engine:	275	15.5
Walking MP:	5	
Running MP:	8	
Jumping MP:	3	
Heat Sinks:	15	5
Gyro:		3
Cockpit:		3
Armor Factor (Ferro):	179	10

	Internal Structure	Armor Value
Head	3	9
Center Torso	18	27
Center Torso (rear)		9
R/L Torso	13	19
R/L Torso (rear)		6
R/L Arm	9	17
R/L Leg	13	25

Weapons and Ammo	Location	Critical	Tonnage
PPC	RA	3	7
Medium Laser	H	1	1
SRM 6	LT	2	3
Ammo (SRM) 15	LT	1	1
2 Medium Lasers	LA	2	2
Jump Jet	RL	1	.5
Jump Jet	CT	1	.5
Jump Jet	LL	1	.5

T-12 TIGER MEDIUM TANK

Mass: 55 Tons

Movement Type: Tracked

Power Plant: Veridian 220 ICE

Cruising Speed: 43 kph

Maximum Speed: 64 kph

Armor: Quantum Heavy Plate

Armament:

1 Federated Autoloader/10-B Autocannon

1 Archer SRM-4 Pack

1 Grizzly-3 Minigun

2 Borman-A5C Heavy Machineguns

Primary Manufacturer: Veridian Dynamics

Primary Factory: Torrence

Communications System: Tordar Communications Model C

Targeting and Tracking System: Sabik Microsystems Model K7-Ta

OVERVIEW

The development of the BattleMech during the Age of War signaled a profound change in not only military technology but tactical doctrine as well. Conventional armor was no longer the king of the battlefield, but neither was it ready to be relegated to obsolescence. So-called primitive technologies were rapidly giving way to more advanced systems, and with that dawned a new transformation of the battlefield. While many were content to allow these advances to render moot centuries of armored corps tradition, the die-hards were not yet ready to allow armor to die just as mounted cavalry had over five centuries earlier.

Eschewing the standard set by most of the other Inner Sphere, House Davion directed its military industry to design a new main battle tank, in the process developing an armored vehicle that would inadvertently set a standard throughout the Human Sphere.

CAPABILITIES

Designed in an era when medium autocannons were the primary armament of most main battle tanks, the Tiger mounts a heavy caliber gun capable of delivering tremendous damage to any target—and completely defeating the armor of older combat vehicles. This was a vitally important consideration to designers, who tested a number of different configurations before settling on the T-12 model, a design that cost less than half that of prototypes featuring fusion power plants and energy weapons. Two tons of ammunition supply a more than adequate number reloads for the main gun, at least for most typical battles.

A Grizzly minigun, capable of delivering a devastating amount of fire to infantry and other similar soft targets, is mounted coaxially with the main gun while a turret-mounted four-tube SRM launcher gives the Tiger's crew additional options for engaging armored targets at mid and close ranges (though with only a single ton of ammunition available most crews chose to carry standard high-explosive armor piercing missiles). Two more heavy machineguns, one mounted each fore and aft, provide above average anti-infantry fire and allow the Tiger to excel in close-quarters engagements.

If the Tiger had any weakness, it is its armor protection. The Tiger's designers devoted over a third of the tank's mass to its overwhelming arsenal, conversely leaving slightly more than ten percent of its mass available for armor. While this was adequate enough to protect the tank against multiple hits from its own autocannon on all but the rear quarters, several competing tank designs carried far tougher armor.

DEPLOYMENT

The Tiger was an inexpensive and relatively tough tank with a powerful punch, and that alone was enough for the Armed Forces of the Federated Suns to select it as its primary main battle tank to carry it through the latter years of the Age of War and throughout the Reunification War. Its success prompted House Davion to expand production on numerous worlds to meet demands in the late 25th century.

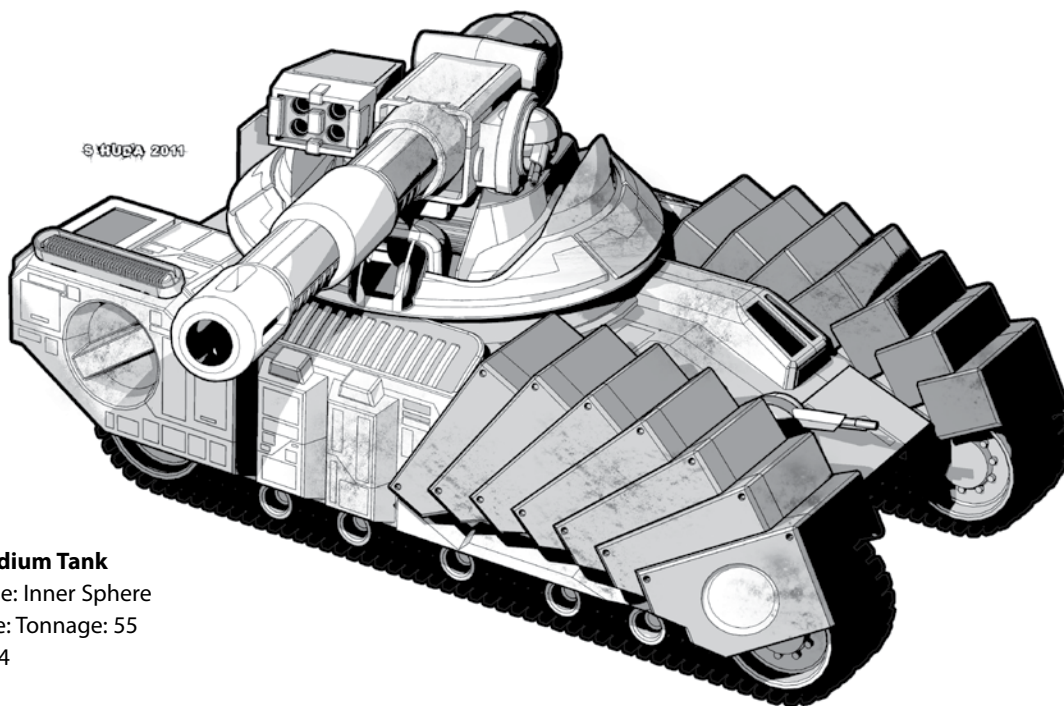
Of course, it wasn't long before samples of the T-12 Tiger found their way throughout the Inner Sphere and even the Periphery. Thanks to the Davions' ongoing political alliance with House Steiner, the Lyran Commonwealth began to build Tigers in the 2480s, while the Tiger proliferated to each of those nations' enemies by the early 26th century. Every industrialized power built their own version of the Tiger to one extent or another, making it and its clones clearly the most popular tank of the age. The design was showing its age by the start of the Reunification War, though, and had largely been phased out of front-line service by the end of the war. Still, many militaries looked back toward the successful Tiger at the height of the Succession Wars, placing the tank back into limited production to reinforce their lagging numbers.

VARIANTS

Outwardly, the Tiger saw very few changes throughout its history, but during its Federated Suns lifetime the design received numerous minor upgrades, not counting the scores of slightly different models used throughout the Inner Sphere and Periphery. The Tiger utilized three different heavy autocannons, each more reliable than the one before, while its coaxial minigun was ultimately replaced with a third Borman machinegun that was less prone to breakdowns and could feed from a common ammunition bin. Likewise, the communications and targeting systems each received numerous upgrades throughout the Tiger's life.

NOTABLE CREWS

Colonel John Gordon: Commanding the First Avalon Dragoons at the outset of the Davion Civil War, Colonel Gordon was the first officer to pledge his loyalty to Alexander Davion. He and his regiment formed the core of what would ultimately become Davion's army. Though Gordon served as Davion's key military advisor, he was also the Prince's primary field commander, leading the action on dozens of Crucis and Capellan March worlds from the cupola of his modified Tiger tank. He fought his last battle on Jaipur, having been captured by Cassandra Varnay's after springing an unsuccessful that backfired; Gordon and his men were executed, prompting Davion to embark on the bloodiest stage of the civil war.



Type: **Tiger Medium Tank**
 Technology Base: Inner Sphere
 Movement Type: Tonnage: 55
 Battle Value: 574

Equipment

Internal Structure

Mass

Engine: 220

20

Type: ICE

Cruise MP: 4

Flank MP: 6

Heat Sinks: 0

Control Equipment: 3

Lift Equipment: 0

Power Amplifier: 0

Turret: 1.5

Armor Factor: 96

0

3

0

0

1.5

6

Armor

Value

Front 20

R/L Side 20/20

Rear 16

Turret 20

Weapons and Ammo

Location

Tonnage

AC/10 Turret 12

Ammo (AC) 20 Body 2

SRM 4 Turret 2

Ammo (SRM) 25 Body 1

Machine Gun Turret .5

Machine Gun Front .5

Machine Gun Rear .5

Ammo (MG) 100 Body .5

GALLANT URBAN ASSAULT TANK

Mass: 70 tons

Movement Type: Wheeled

Power Plant: Pitban 190

Cruising Speed: 32 kph

Flank Speed: 54 kph

Armor: Star Slab/7 with CASE

Armament:

1 Kali Yama Class 10 Autocannon

4 Scatter Gun Light Machine Guns

1 Harvester SRM 2 Missile Rack

1 Light Crossbow LRM 10

Manufacturer: Freeport Armorworks/Kallon Industries

Primary Factory: Helm, Loyalty

Communications System: Kallon Secure Net I

Targeting and tracking System: Kallon Set C

Overview

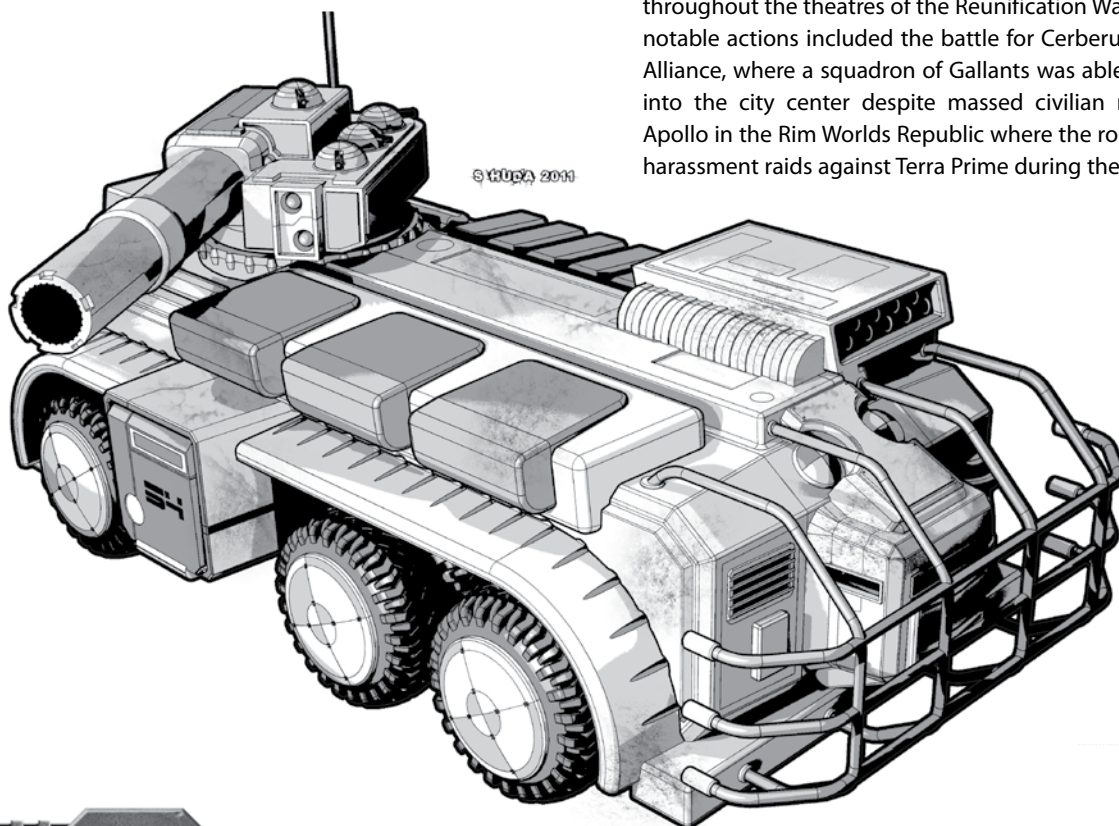
The oldest Inner Sphere nation, predating the rebirth of the Terran Alliance as the Hegemony by half a century, the Free Worlds League has established a strong military presence. The century following its development saw BattleMechs rise to become masters of the battlefield, like the knights of old reserved for the elite. That left the bulk of the Inner Sphere militaries still comprised of armor and infantry. Development on such technologies continued and vehicles like the Gallant, first fielded by the FWLM shortly before the Third Andurien War, sought to marry new technologies with a half-millennia-old concept of the Tank.

Capabilities

Bulky and menacing, the low-slung Gallant was designed with a specific role in mind—combat in the cramped confines of an urban setting. Though the Ares conventions prohibited conflicts in civilian districts, the rules were less clear-cut concerning industrial complexes. The Second Andurien War had seen several bloody clashes in such environs and the High Command wanted a vehicle that could operate in support of infantry assaults. Budget constraints almost killed the project, resulting in the use of an ICE engine rather than the planned fusion power plant as well as forgoing advanced armor and structural composites. Nonetheless, the resulting vehicle was well armored and adequately (but not spectacularly) armed, satisfying the brass. The most notable innovation on the Gallants employed in the Reunification War (though not a feature of the earliest models) was the inclusion of Cellular Ammunition Storage (CASE) that meant an ammunition explosion, though catastrophic for the vehicle, would allow the crew to be rescued and the chassis salvaged. Less spectacularly, self-inflating tires (which also used a cellular technology to maintain integrity) allowed the vehicle to remain mobile save after the most catastrophic damage; the Gallant's use of wheels rather than tracks was unusual for a large front-line combat vehicle.

Deployment

Distribution of the Gallant among FWLM forces was patchy and the Captain-General's adherence to the Ares Conventions meant few were used in the role for which they were intended. Too slow to pursue the agile MAF forces, most were relegated to escorting supply convoys. Thanks to the Star League Defense Protocols, many Gallants found their way into the SLDF and thus saw action throughout the theatres of the Reunification War. Among the most notable actions included the battle for Cerberus in the Outworlds Alliance, where a squadron of Gallants was able to force their way into the city center despite massed civilian resistance, and on Apollo in the Rim Worlds Republic where the robust design staged harassment raids against Terra Prime during the long siege.



Though many Gallants survived the Reunification War the niche role of the vehicle—and the difficulty in upgrading its technologies—led to it being superseded by several new, high-tech vehicles. By the early 27th century most examples had been relegated to reservist units. No complete Gallants survived the Succession Wars, though several damaged copies are in the possession of museums and private militaria collectors.

Variants

The original Gallants fielded in the Third Andurien War were very similar to the Reunification War model but did not feature CASE (which was added in the 2570s after the Free Worlds joined the Start League in lieu of armor). Several SLDF Gallants were fitted with Fusion Power Plants, gaining a notable performance boost as well as energy weapons to bolster their firepower. The modification was never an official model, however, and most were decommissioned after the war.

Type: **Gallant**

Technology Base: Inner Sphere

Movement Type: Wheeled

Tonnage: 70

Battle Value: 1,056

Equipment

		Mass
Internal Structure:		7
Engine:	190	15
Type:	ICE	
Cruise MP:	3	
Flank MP:	5	
Heat Sinks:	0	0
Control Equipment:		3.5
Rotor Equipment:		0
Power Amplifier:		0
Turret:		1.5
Armor Factor:	280	17.5

Armor Value

Front	60
R/L Side	55
Rear	60
Turret	50

Weapons and Ammo

	Location	Tonnage
AC/10	Turret	12
Ammo (AC10) 20	Body	2
4 Machine Guns	Turret	2
Ammo (MG) 200	Body	1
SRM 2	Turret	1
Ammo (SRM) 50	Body	1
LRM 10	Front	5
Ammo (LRM) 12	Body	1
CASE	Body	.5

WAYLAND MOBILE BASE

Mass: 150 tons

Movement Type: Tracked

Power Plant: LTV Industrial Fusion

Cruising Speed: 32 kph

Maximum Speed: 54 kph

Armor: Bergan Commercial Plate

Armament:

4 Martell Medium Lasers

Manufacturer: Bergan Industries

Primary Factory: New Earth

Communications System: Garret Type 3

Targeting and Tracking System: OP/911

Overview

The Hegemony Armed Forces had the advantage of training and technology but their combat doctrine played a key role too. Logistics and maintenance were integrated into the art of war, maximizing up-time and minimizing the time needed to repair and rearm. A key factor in this was avoiding the need to return to hangars for such procedure and while compact mobile gantries and scissor-lifts allowed for simple maintenance work, they lacked the (literal) support of a full-size repair gantry. A solution to this was found in the Wayland series of mobile base units. Produced by Bergan Industries of New Earth, the first Wayland entered service in 2541 and examples would remain in service for almost two hundred years.

Capabilities

Though not the first maintenance support unit, the Wayland was the first to be militarized. Equipped with significant armor to protect its crew (albeit mainly designed to counter small-arms fire) and a quad-laser array to discourage harassment, the Wayland was intended to operate in harm's way, bringing the technical capabilities of a base to the troops rather than the other way round. The integral hoist allowed the maintenance crew to lift and install all bar the largest components without external assistance, though the limited cargo capacity of the Wayland meant it relied on other support vehicles to carry the necessary materials.

In peacetime, the massive vehicles were seen as luxuries, providing little advantage over fixed bases, but in operational conditions they proved their worth by allowing 'Mechs to be repaired and re-armed quickly, allowing the HAF (and later SLDF) to maintain a significantly higher operational tempo.

Deployment

Around half of the HAFs 'Mech regiments were equipped with a Wayland when the Star League formed, but the rapid and massive growth of the SLDF forced many Royal units to give up their exclusive use of the machines, instead allowing them to become brigade (and in some cases division) assets to be deployed as needed. Bergan continued to produce the design at the rate of two-dozen a year but some years of the Reunification War that barely kept up

with losses and so their spread to new units was limited. Only in the postwar years did they become a ubiquitous part of the SLDF, a series of upgrades and refits allowing them to remain a valuable part of the military well into the 28th century. A handful remained in service with the Great Houses even after the design's official retirement in 2715 but none survived the apocalypse of the First Succession War.

Type: **Wayland Mobile Base**

Chassis Type: Tracked (Large)

Tonnage: 150

Equipment Rating: D/C-E-X/E

Battle Value: 953

Equipment

Chassis:

Engine/Controls: Fusion

Cruise MP: 3

Flank MP: 5

Heat Sinks: 12

Turret: .5

Armor Factor (BAR 7): 277

Mass

37.5

49

12

.5

12.5

Internal Structure

Front

15

Front R/L Side

15

Rear R/L Side

15

Rear 15

38

Turret

15

Armor Value

42

41

39

37

Weapons and Ammo

4 Medium Lasers

Location

Turret

Advanced Fire Control

Body

Mass

4

.5

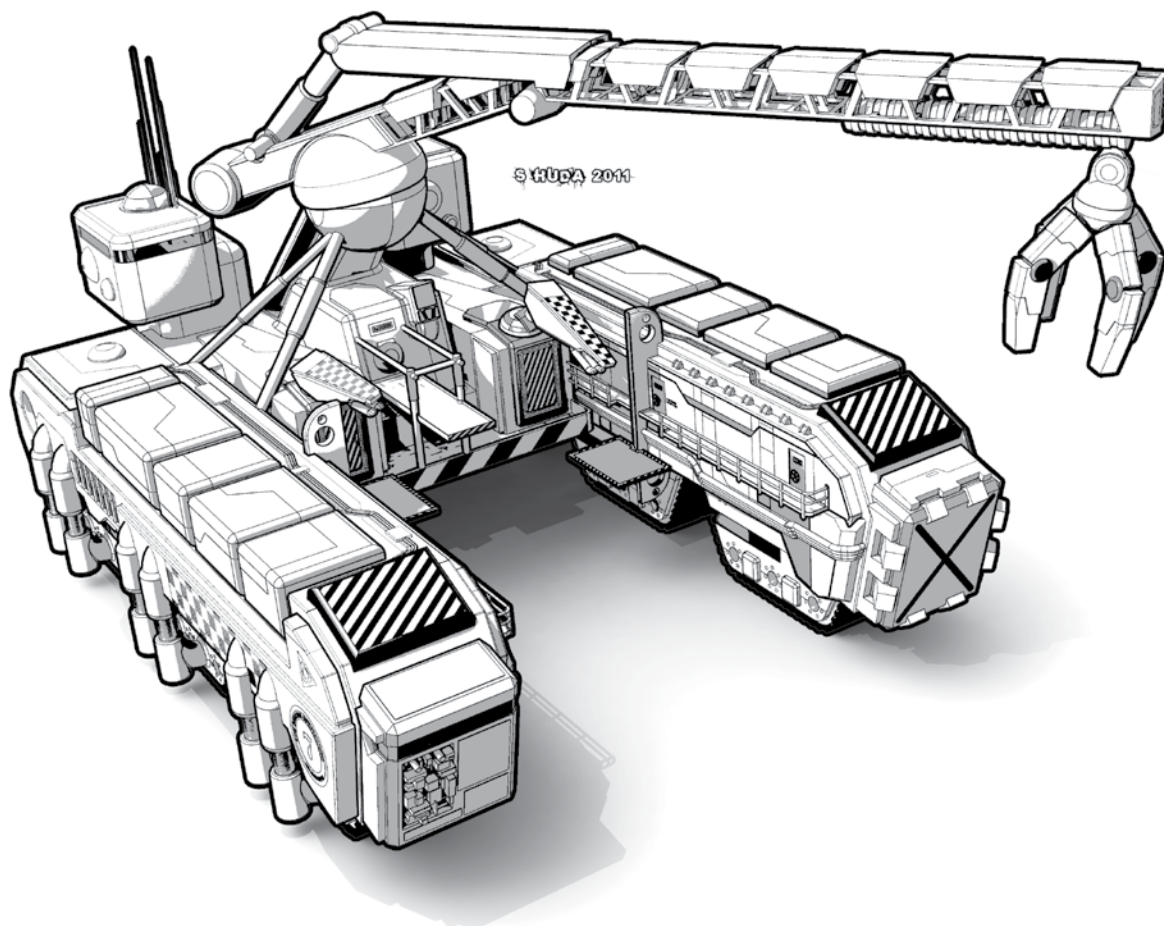
Crew: 15 (3 officers, 8 enlisted, 4 gunners)

Cargo

Standard (11 tons)

1 Door (Rear)

Notes: Features Mobile Field Base (20 tons) and Lift Hoist (3 tons, Rear).



DROST IIA-CLASS LIGHT BULK TRANSPORT

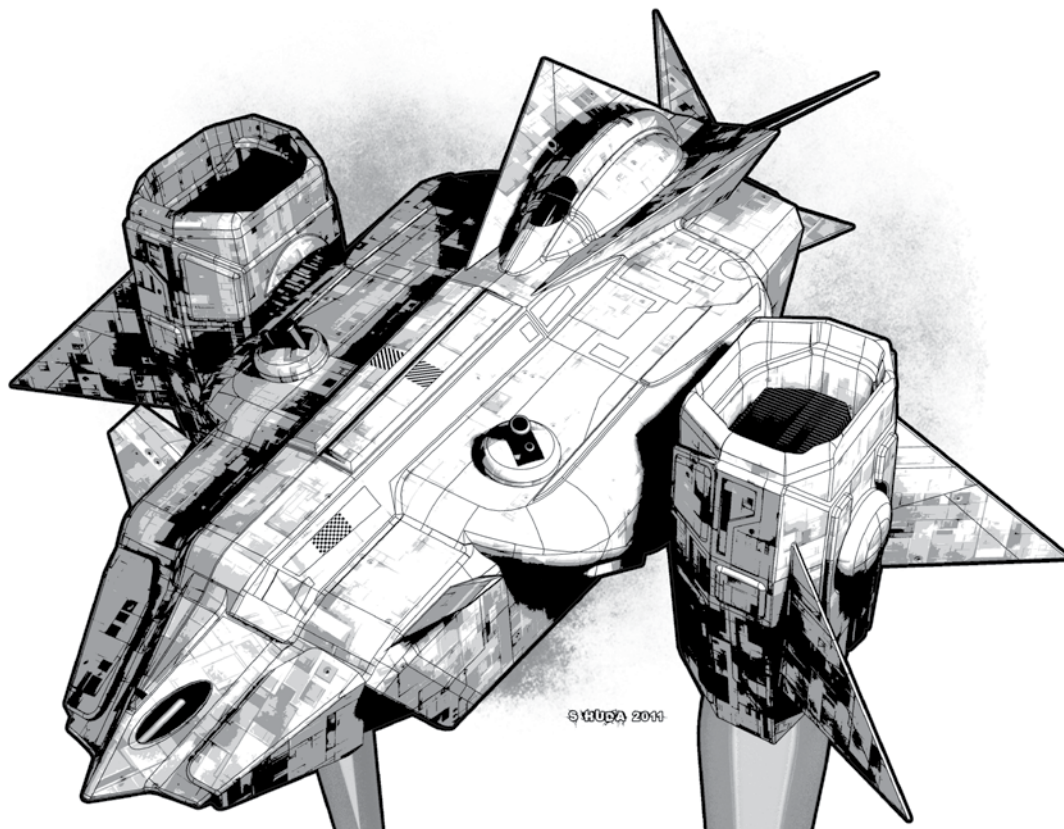
When Fleet Admiral James McKenna formed the Terran Hegemony in the early 24th century, he embarked on a campaign that aggressively reunited scores of worlds with Terra, in the process creating the need for fleets of landing craft and DropShips to carry his armies to the stars. The Hegemony commissioned dozens of different DropShip classes throughout the 24th century, many of which were all-but-disposable ships that could rarely be used for more than a few combat landings before the combined stress of high-G insertions and combat damage relegated them to the scrap heaps or sale as surplus. As military technologies matured in the Age of War, the Hegemony Armed Forces started looking for DropShip designs that were hardy enough to last through decades of combat operations. The Drop Ship-Tank—or DroST—series of ships was the answer in the early 25th century.

The DroST Ila was the continuation of the popular Series-I ships. Utilizing an aerodyne configuration both for the ease of piloting as well as loading/off-loading operations using large fore and aft combination roll-on/roll-off ramps/bay doors, it could carry two companies of heavy armor or a battalion of light armor (or up to 2,200 metric tons of cargo), as well as crew, support personnel and supplies. The boxy interior cargo bay is divided into two stacked decks, with access to the top deck provided by ramps at either end of the deck; unfortunately, deploying an upper-level ramp cuts off access to the lower level, and there is no easy way to transfer cargo between decks without opening the bay doors. Moreover, there are no dedicated vehicular maintenance bays, while quarters for

vehicle crews and mechanics are little more than tightly packed infantry bunk cubicles set into the sides of the cargo bays, while their recreation, mess and common areas for these personnel were whatever space they can clear. Meanwhile, the ship's ten-person crew, and up to ten passengers, occupy the two decks above the cargo bays.

Uniquely for the time period, the ship utilizes a pair of combination drives mounted outboard that rotate through 90 degrees depending upon whether accelerating for intra-system transit or maneuvering tactically. The first series-II ships suffered numerous problems with the original Kapesen engines, leading to the Series-Ila ships which corrected those fatal flaws. The Hegemony built thousands of these hardy ships, each expected to serve twenty good years of hard military use, selling the majority to civilian markets after they reached their service dates (it was politically and economically more expedient to build new ships rather than overhaul existing ones). This gave the Series-Ila ships new lives in civilian service, where their resilient structure and heavy armor proved they could survive literally centuries longer through the efforts of a competent crew ("treat her proper, she'll be with you for the rest of your life" was a not-untrue common sales pitch, despite the obvious and oft-repeated comeback "because she's a deathtrap").

The Hegemony stopped DroST production during the Reunification War, instead favoring the more capable dedicated 'Mech and vehicle carriers that debuted shortly thereafter. The DroST-series ships refused to die out, though; a handful of original Ila ships, as well as countless clones of this venerable design, still ply the shipping lanes throughout known space.



DROST IIA

Type: Military Aerodyne

Use: Cargo Transport

Tech: Inner Sphere

Introduced: 2442

Mass: 5,300 tons

Battle Value: 2,429

Dimensions

Length: 77 meters

Width: 80 meters

Height: 31 meters

Fuel: 200 tons (6,000 points)

Tons/Burn-Day: 1.84

Safe Thrust: 5

Maximum Thrust: 8

Heat Sinks: 86

Structural Integrity: 16

Armor

Nose: 160

Wings: 160

Aft: 120

Cargo

Bay 1: Small Craft (2) 2 Doors

Bay 2: Cargo (1,000 tons) 3 Doors

Infantry (5 foot platoons)

Bay 3: Cargo (1,211 tons) 3 Doors

Infantry (5 foot platoons)

Life Boats: 2

Escape Pods: 1

Crew: 2 Officers, 5 Enlisted/non-rated, 3 Gunners, 10 Second Class Passengers, 290 Bay Personnel

Ammunition: 60 rounds AC/5 ammunition (3 tons).

Notes: Equipped with 33.5 tons of standard armor.

Weapons		Capital Attack Values (Standard)				
Arc (Heat) Type	Heat	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme	Class
Nose (12 heat)						
AC/5 (20 rounds)	1	1 (5)	1 (5)	—	—	Autocannon
Large Laser	11	1 (13)	1 (8)	—	—	Laser
Medium Laser						
RW/LW (12 heat)						
AC/5 (20 rounds)	1	1 (5)	1 (5)	—	—	Autocannon
Large Laser	11	1 (13)	1 (8)	—	—	Laser
Medium Laser						
RW/LW Aft (3 heat)						
Medium Laser	3	1 (5)	—	—	—	Laser
Aft (3 heat)						
Medium Laser	3	1 (5)	—	—	—	Laser

"JUMBO"-CLASS DROPSHIP

The "Jumbo" represents not so much an individual design than it does an entire class of DropShip designs. The race to space and the colonization boom in the 22nd and 23rd centuries gave rise to the basic naval technologies and design philosophies still employed today, while the 24th century saw those concepts rapidly mature with the general technological boom. More and more ships were needed to transport more and more cargo to more and more worlds. In an era of relatively small DropShips with limited cargo capacities, the "Jumbo" was the answer to out-of-control shipping costs.

Unsurprisingly, it was the Terran Hegemony that debuted the first "Jumbo"-class DropShips—each massive spheroids capable of carrying some ten thousand metric tons of cargo—in the early decades of the 25th century. But as soon as these first "Jumbo" ships started plying the interstellar shipping lanes, DropShip manufacturers in every nation began designing and building their own "Jumbos."

In their day, the "Jumbos" were the pinnacle of civilian shipping, and in fact moved more than their share of military cargo during the final decades of the Age of War and throughout the Reunification War. They all had massive cargo capacities and were also all relatively hardy ships built to survive rough handling as well as limited combat operations. The two small craft bays were very much a hold-over from older design paradigms that saw a majority of a ship's cargo transferred using shuttles, but did give "Jumbo" operators additional flexibility.

When they debuted, the "Jumbos" were revolutionary DropShips that changed the face of interstellar shipping. They ruled the space lanes for more than two centuries before advances in naval design and automation made newer designs with smaller crews and more reliable engines far more cost effective to operate. In the 28th century, the reliable *Mule* took the place of the "Jumbo" in most large shipping concerns, and ultimately replaced many more as worn out "Jumbos" were scrapped. Nonetheless "Jumbos" continued to remain in service throughout the Succession Wars and some even today.

JUMBO-CLASS DROPSHIP

Type: Civilian Spheroid

Use: Cargo Ship

Tech: Inner Sphere

Introduced: 2423

Mass: 14,800 tons

Battle Value: 1,857

Dimensions

Length: 94 meters

Width: 82 meters

Height: 89 meters

Fuel: 400 tons (12,000 points)
Tons/Burn-Day: 4.22
Safe Thrust: 3
Maximum Thrust: 5
Heat Sinks: 67
Structural Integrity: 12

Armor

Nose: 135
Sides: 134
Aft: 100

Cargo

Bay 1: Small Craft (2) 2 Doors
 Bay 2: Cargo (1,331 tons) 4 Doors
 Bay 3: Cargo (4,400 tons) 2 Doors
 Bay 4: Cargo (4,400 tons) 2 Doors

Life Boats: 4

Escape Pods: 2

Crew: 9 Officers, 36 Enlisted/non-rated, 7 Gunners, 8 Second-class Passengers, 10 Steerage Passengers, 10 Bay Personnel

Ammunition: 80 rounds AC/5 ammunition (4 tons)

Notes: Equipped with 32.5 tons of standard armor.

Weapons		Capital Attack Values (Standard)				
Arc (Heat) Type	Heat	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme	Class
Nose (8 heat)						
2 AC/5 (40 rounds)	2	1 (10)	1 (10)	—	—	Autocannon
2 Medium Lasers	6	1 (10)	—	—	—	Laser
FR/FL (7 heat)						
AC/5 (20 rounds)	1	1 (5)	1 (5)	—	—	Autocannon
2 Medium Lasers	6	1 (10)	—	—	—	Laser
AR/AL (6 heat)						
2 Medium Lasers	6	1 (10)	—	—	—	Laser
Aft (6 heat)						
2 Medium Lasers	6	1 (10)	—	—	—	Laser

CONCORDAT (FRIGATE)

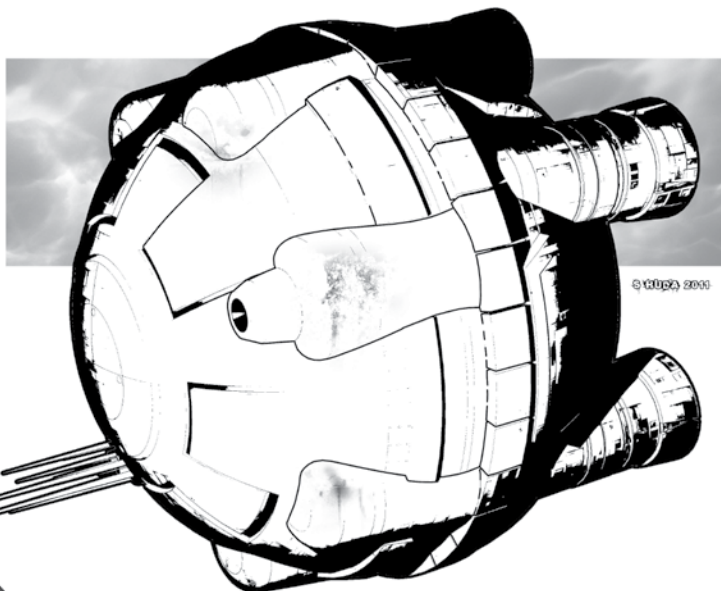
The Taurian Concordat began work on the TCS *Concordat* in the early 26th century as both the Capellan Confederation and the Federated Suns aggressively expanded their borders outward. Meant as a bridge between corvette and destroyer, the *Concordat* frigate was designed both to patrol the Periphery space lanes, where it would serve as command ship to a task force, as well as to directly engage invading enemy WarShips. The *Concordat* relied upon a combination of heavy naval lasers, arrayed to the fore to engage targets at maximum range while closing the distance, as well as medium-caliber naval autocannons, capable of ravaging even Star League battleships, for primary anti-WarShip fire. Multiple LRM and laser turrets, covering each quarter in overlapping arcs, defend the ship against fighters and DropShips alike while four screen launchers give ship captains additional options in both offensive and defensive operations.

The *Concordat* was meant to anchor naval task forces comprised of WarShips as well as assault and fighter-carrier DropShips alike, which is why its designers did not provide for a large flight deck. Only a single squadron of fighters and/or small craft can operate from the *Concordat*, though up to four DropShips, at least two of which would typically carry fighters, can dock with the WarShip. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the *Concordat* would carry at least four shuttles or other small craft capable of delivering its two platoons of marines to conduct routine inspections or boarding actions.

The *Concordat* served its home nation, as well as the Magistracy of Canopus, well throughout the 26th century, forming the backbone of each nation's WarShip fleet. The Taurian navy possessed the largest WarShip fleet in the Periphery, operating more than four dozen of these frigates, but despite achieving several incredible successes in naval action against Inner Sphere fleets during the Reunification War, the Taurian navy could not hold out against the Star League. No more *Concordats* were built after war's end, but the last few survived until the First Succession War.

CONCORDAT (FRIGATE)

Tech: Inner Sphere
Introduced: 2506
Mass: 440,000 tons
Length: 485 meters
Sail Diameter: 1,220 meters
Fuel: 2,500 tons (6,250 points)
Tons/Burn Day: 39.52
Safe Thrust: 4
Maximum Thrust: 6
Sail Integrity: 4
KF Drive Integrity: 10
Heat Sinks: 1,495
Structural Integrity: 60
Battle Value: 80,754



Armor

Nose: 44

Fore-Sides: 44

Aft-Sides: 40

Aft: 35

Cargo

Bay 1: Small Craft (8) 4 Doors

Bay 2: Cargo (25,004 tons) 4 Doors

Bay 3: Cargo (25,003.5 tons) 4 Doors

DropShip Capacity: 4

Grav Decks: 1 (130-meter diameter)

Life Boats: 35

Escape Pods: 25

Crew: 61 Officers, 164 Enlisted/non-rated, 62 Gunners, 5 First-Class Passengers, 10 Steerage Passengers, 60 Marines, 40 Bay personnel

Ammunition: 360 rounds NAC/20 ammunition (144 tons), 640 rounds LRM 15 ammunition (80 tons)

Notes: Equipped with 527.5 tons of standard armor.

Weapons

Arc (Heat) Type **Heat**

Nose (423 heat)

2 NAC/20 120
(50 rounds)

3 NL 55 255

4 LRM 15 20
(80 rounds)

2 Large Lasers 28
4 Medium Lasers

FR/FL (308 heat)

2 NAC/20 120
(50 rounds)

2 NL 45 140

4 LRM 15 20
(80 rounds)

2 Large Lasers 28
4 Medium Lasers

RBS/LBS (228 heat)

3 NAC/20 180
(75 rounds)

4 LRM 15 20
(80 rounds)

2 Large Lasers 28
4 Medium Lasers

AR/AL (108 heat)

NAC/20 60
(20 rounds)

4 LRM 15 20
(80 rounds)

2 Large Lasers 28
4 Medium Lasers

Aft (108 heat)

NAC/20 60
(20 rounds)

4 LRM 15 20
(80 rounds)

2 Large Lasers 28
4 Medium Lasers

Capital Attack Values (Standard)

Short Medium Long Extreme Class

40 40 40 — Capital AC

17 17 17 17 Capital Laser
4 (36) 4 (36) 4 (36) — LRM

4 (36) 2 (16) — — Laser

40 40 40 — Capital AC

9 9 9 9 Capital Laser
4 (36) 4 (36) 4 (36) — LRM

4 (36) 2 (16) — — Laser

60 60 60 — Capital AC

4 (36) 4 (36) 4 (36) — LRM

4 (36) 2 (16) — — Laser

20 20 20 — Capital AC

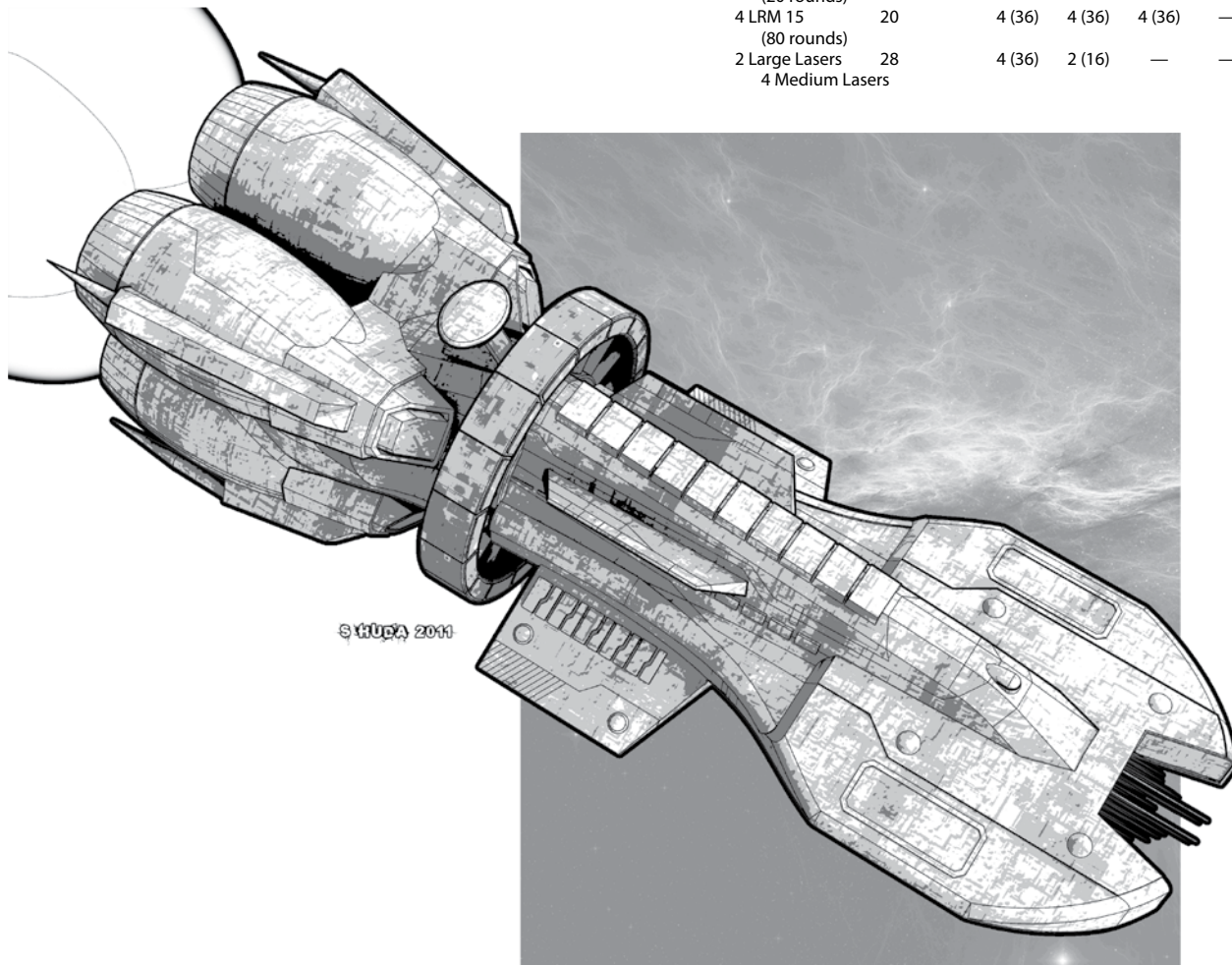
4 (36) 4 (36) 4 (36) — LRM

4 (36) 2 (16) — — Laser

20 20 20 — Capital AC

4 (36) 4 (36) 4 (36) — LRM

4 (36) 2 (16) — — Laser



NEW SYRTIS (CARRIER)

The *New Syrtis*-class carrier was born in the years immediately following the Davion Civil War, a war that had left both the Federated Suns' military as well as its national pride in shambles. Though rebuilding his nation's army was First Prince Alexander Davion's priority, he also recognized that his WarShip fleet was languishing behind those fielded by his enemies. He initiated a program in 2546 that led to the development of the Block II *Davion*-class destroyer and the *New Syrtis*-class carrier (as well as the *Robinson*-class transport).

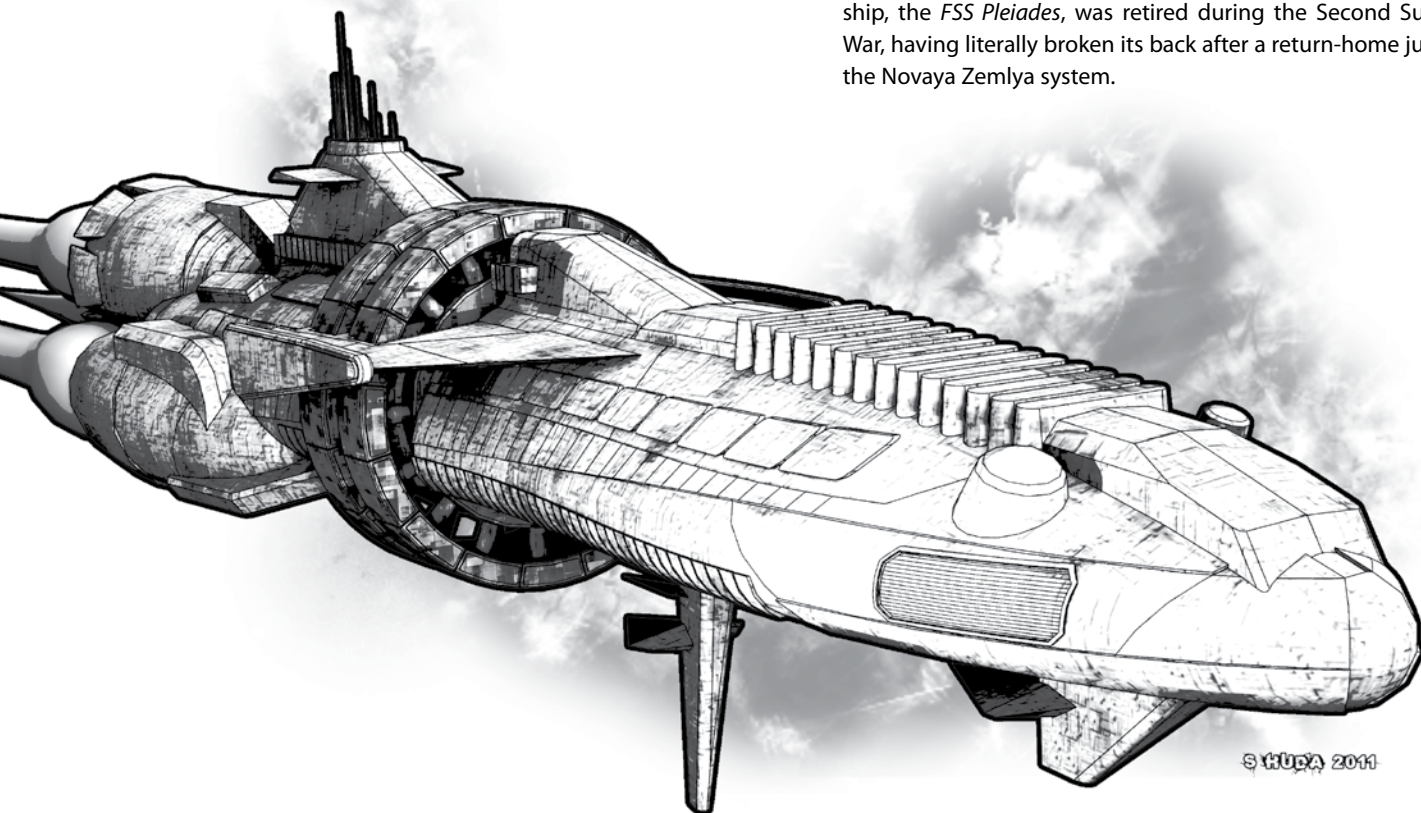
A WarShip dedicated to operating large aerospace fighter formations was unheard of, despite the fact that naval battles fought during the Age of War had often been decided based on which side possessed the superior fighter force. Likewise, the success or failure of an invasion was just as often decided by aerospace superiority. Yet, with the typical capital ship carrying just two squadrons of fighters for self-defense, fleets often relied upon a screen of DropShips converted to carry fighters to provide the aerospace superiority necessary to carry a battle.

The *New Syrtis* was clearly designed to project House Davion's power and immediately assume control of local space, be that a jump point or a planet's orbit. Six full wings of aerospace fighters—120 total ships—as well as four squadrons of small craft—typically a mix of shuttles, marine assault craft and heavy escorts—ensure absolute domination of local space. Those fighters are meant to both defend their mother ship as well as engage and destroy any enemy DropShips and WarShips encountered, but the *New Syrtis* also mounts relatively powerful anti-ship and local

defensive armaments. Its heavy weaponry—a concession to the fact that the *New Syrtis* would likely not be able to always remain out of the range of enemy fire—consists of a mix of naval lasers, PPCs, autocannons and missiles that can engage targets at the longest of ranges. Close-in defensive turrets likewise combine a mix of missiles, lasers and machineguns to provide a heavy layering of fire to shred inbound fighters and DropShips.

Despite hosting a crew in excess of two thousand—almost half of whom belong to the ship's aerospace group—accommodations on the *New Syrtis* are relatively spacious. Enough berths are provided so that two full crews are available for each fighter and small craft carried, as well as full technical crews, ensuring that the *New Syrtis* can conduct 24-7 flight operations. Likewise, the ship's bunkers carry enough fuel for more than eight days of constant combat operations. A four-platoon marine company is permanently assigned to the ship, while an additional battalion of marines, or engineers to construct temporary airfields, can also be accommodated.

The *New Syrtis* carriers entered service in the years just before the formation of the Star League, and saw limited action—primarily shows of force—before the Reunification War. Their first true action came during Case AMBER; though one *New Syrtis* was destroyed, another one scuttled and a third captured (of the five that saw combat), in general the carriers acquitted themselves admirably (the *FSS Chesterton*, captured by Taurian forces at Panpour, was the target of a surprise attack while its entire aerospace group, and much of its crew, was off-ship), but also proved that the ship could long last against directed naval gunfire. *New Syrtis* carriers served the Federated Suns' navy throughout the Star League era; the final ship, the *FSS Pleiades*, was retired during the Second Succession War, having literally broken its back after a return-home jump in to the Novaya Zemlya system.



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NEW SYRTIS (CARRIER)

Tech: Inner Sphere

Introduced: 2557

Mass: 920,000 tons

Length: 718 meters

Sail Diameter: 1,600 meters

Fuel: 20,000 tons (50,000 points)

Tons/Burn Day: 39.52

Safe Thrust: 4

Maximum Thrust: 6

Sail Integrity: 5

KF Drive Integrity: 19

Heat Sinks: 2,451

Structural Integrity: 60

Battle Value: 84,483

Armor

Nose: 80

Fore-Sides: 80

Aft-Sides: 80

Aft: 70

Cargo

Bay 1: Fighters (60) 4 Doors

Small Craft (12)

Bay 2: Fighters (60) 4 Doors

Small Craft (12)

Bay 3: Infantry (10 platoons) 2 Doors

Bay 4: Cargo (50,310 tons) 6 Doors

Bay 5: Cargo (50,310 tons) 6 Doors

DropShip Capacity: 2

Grav Decks: 2 (145-meter diameter)

Life Boats: 200

Escape Pods: 90

Crew: 173 Officers, 634 Enlisted/non-rated, 125 Gunners, 20 First Class Passengers, 60 Second Class Passengers, 450 Steerage Passengers, 120 Marines, 640 Bay personnel

Ammunition: 180 rounds NAC/20 ammunition (72 tons), 200 rounds NAC/10 ammunition (40 tons), 160 Barracuda missiles (480 tons), 480 rounds LRM 20 ammunition (80 tons), 1,600 rounds Machinegun ammunition (8 tons).

Notes: Equipped with 1,084 tons of standard armor.

Weapons Arc (Heat) Type Nose (481 heat)	Heat	Capital Attack Values (Standard)				Class
		Short	Medium	Long	Extreme	
3 NAC/20 (60 rounds)	180	60	60	60	—	Capital AC
3 NL 55	255	17	17	17	17	Capital Laser
3 LRM 20 (60 rounds)	18	4 (36)	4 (36)	4 (36)	—	LRM
2 Large Lasers	28	4 (36)	2 (16)	—	—	Laser
4 Medium Lasers						
4 Machine Guns (200 rounds)	0	1 (8)	—	—	—	Point Defense
FR/FL (126 heat)						
2 NAC/10 (40 rounds)	60	20	20	20	—	Capital AC
2 Barracuda (40 rounds) Capital Missile		20	4	4	4	4
3 LRM 20 (60 rounds)	18	4 (36)	4 (36)	4 (36)	—	LRM
2 Large Lasers	28	4 (36)	2 (16)	—	—	Laser
4 Medium Lasers						
4 Machine Guns (200 rounds)	0	1 (8)	—	—	—	Point Defense
RBS/LBS (676 heat)						
2 Heavy NPPC	450	30	30	30	30	Naval PPC
3 NAC/20 (60 rounds)	180	60	60	60	—	Capital AC
3 LRM 20 (60 rounds)	18	4 (36)	4 (36)	4 (36)	—	LRM
2 Large Lasers	28	4 (36)	2 (16)	—	—	Laser
4 Medium Lasers						
4 Machine Guns (200 rounds)	0	1 (8)	—	—	—	Point Defense
AR/AL (126 heat)						
2 NAC/10 (40 rounds)	60	20	20	20	—	Capital AC
2 Barracuda (40 rounds) Capital Missile		20	4	4	4	4
3 LRM 20 (60 rounds)	18	4 (36)	4 (36)	4 (36)	—	LRM
2 Large Lasers	28	4 (36)	2 (16)	—	—	Laser
4 Medium Lasers						
4 Machine Guns (200 rounds)	0	1 (8)	—	—	—	Point Defense
Aft (106 heat)						
2 NAC/10 (40 rounds)	60	20	20	20	—	Capital AC
3 LRM 20 (60 rounds)	18	4 (36)	4 (36)	4 (36)	—	LRM
2 Large Lasers	28	4 (36)	2 (16)	—	—	Laser
4 Medium Lasers						
4 Machine Guns (200 rounds)	0	1 (8)	—	—	—	Point Defense

DREADNOUGHT-CLASS WARSHIP

The TAS *Dreadnought*, launched in 2300, was the first true combat vessel, the first of a seven-ship class. At first perceived as little more than James McKenna's playthings, they quickly proved their worth in the birthing of the Terran Hegemony. With the lead vessel TAS *Dreadnought* as his flagship, McKenna staged several firepower demonstrations that convinced the fragmented Terran Alliance to accept his leadership. Several of the *Dreadnought*-class were bloodied in the conflict though none were destroyed and the most serious damage came from navigation accidents. Two vessels were lost during the Age of War and another was scrapped after a series of engineering mishaps. Four ships remained with the Hegemony Navy when the Star League was formed, albeit as reserve vessels (or in TAS *Dreadnought's* case, a floating exhibit at the Luna Air, Space and Stars Museum) having been superseded by the *Monsoon* and *Farragut* classes. The venerable design—nearing its third century of service—was vastly outclassed by newer designs fielded by the belligerents but as the Reunification War turned from a nightmare into a reality, even these last three functional battlewagons were pressed into service.

Originally designed to operate independently, the huge vessels carried massive numbers of naval autocannons, both naval-grade and fighter-scale. It was this last array of retrofitted weaponry that attracted the SLDF's attention to the ancient behemoths; unlike the latest generations of vessels, many of which abandoned anti-fighter weapons in favor of fighter screens and escort vessels, the *Dreadnought* was quite capable of repulsing a fighter assault, a capability bolstered by its capability to carry up to two dozen of its own fighters or other small craft. Even with over 100,000 tons of cargo capacity the heavy-bore cannon of the warship ate through ammunition and required frequent re-supply.

Though they performed admirably in the campaign, the Reunification War was the last huzzah of the *Dreadnought* class which was formally retired in 2602, the remaining vessels scrapped or gifted to Inner Sphere museums. Only the SLS *Dreadnought* remained in operational condition, going out in a blaze of glory during the Amaris Coup, escorting a flotilla of refugee vessels out of the occupied Hegemony before being scuttled after taking catastrophic damage.

DREADNOUGHT (BATTLESHIP)

Tech: Star League

Introduced: 2300

Mass: 960,000

Length: 890 meters

Sail Diameter: 1,050 meters

Fuel: 5,000 tons (12,500 points)

Tons/Burn-day: 39.52

Safe Thrust: 3

Maximum Thrust: 5

Sail Integrity: 5

KF Drive Integrity: 19

Heat Sinks: 2,048

Structural Integrity: 60

Battle Value: 104,949

Armor

Nose: 85

Fore-Sides: 85

Aft-Sides: 80

Aft: 80

Cargo

Bay 1: Small Craft (12) 2 Doors

Bay 2: Small Craft (12) 2 Doors

Bay 3: Cargo (132,316.5 tons) 4 Doors

Bay 4: Cargo (40,000 tons) 2 Doors

DropShip Capacity: 0

Grav Decks: 2 (both 150 meter diameter)

Life Boats: 60

Escape Pods: 60

Crew: 146 Officers, 518 Enlisted/non-rated, 98 Gunners, 20 First-Class Passengers, 50 Second-Class Passengers, 270 Marines, 128 Bay Personnel

Ammunition: 240 rounds NAC/10 ammunition (48 Tons), 360 rounds NAC/20 ammunition (144 tons), 1,440 rounds AC/2 ammunition (32 tons), 1,280 rounds AC/5 ammunition (64 tons)

Notes: Equipped with 1,147.5 tons of standard armor

Weapons:

Arc (Heat) Type Heat

Nose (376 Heat)

3 NAC/20 180

(45 rounds)

3 NAC/20 180

(45 rounds)

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

FR/FL (136 Heat)

4 NAC/10 120

(60 rounds)

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

RBS/LBS (376 Heat)

3 NAC/20 180

(45 rounds)

3 NAC/20 180

(45 rounds)

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

Capital Attack Values (Standard)

Short Medium Long Extreme Class

60 60 60 — Capital AC

60 60 60 — Capital AC

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

60 60 60 — Capital AC

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

60 60 60 — Capital AC

60 60 60 — Capital AC

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

Weapons:

Arc (Heat) Type Heat

AR/AL (136 Heat)

4 NAC/10 120

(60 rounds)

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

Aft (376 Heat)

3 NAC/20 180

(45 rounds)

3 NAC/20 180

(45 rounds)

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/5 (80 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

4 AC/2 (90 rounds) 4

Capital Attack Values (Standard)

Short Medium Long Extreme Class

60 60 60 — Capital AC

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

60 60 60 — Capital AC

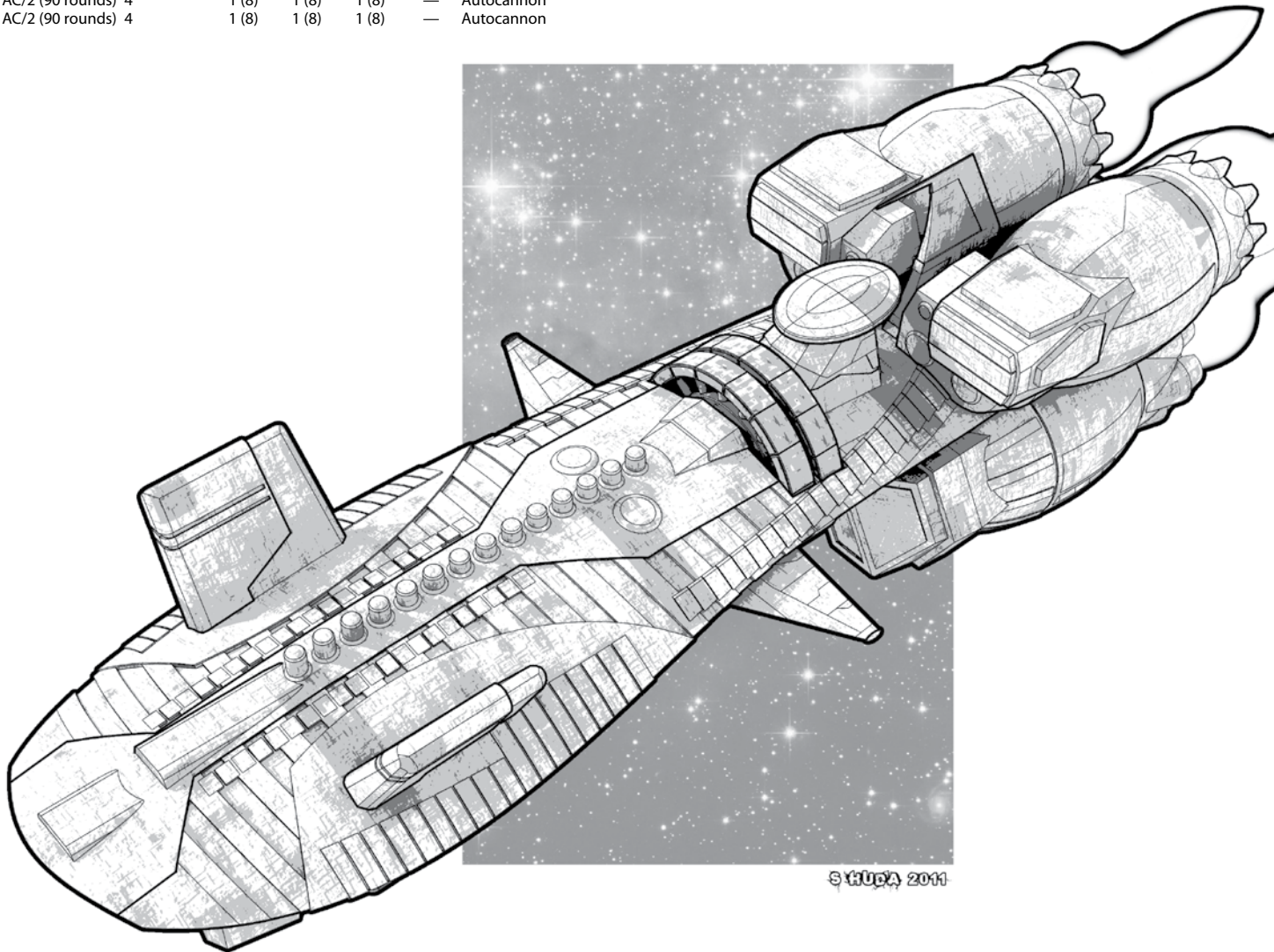
60 60 60 — Capital AC

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

2 (20) 2 (20) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon

1 (8) 1 (8) 1 (8) — Autocannon



BATTLETECH™

BATTLETECH ERAS

The *BattleTech* universe is a living, vibrant entity that grows each year as more sourcebooks and fiction are published. A dynamic universe, its setting and characters evolve over time within a highly detailed continuity framework, bringing everything to life in a way a static game universe cannot match.

However, the same dynamic energy that makes *BattleTech* so compelling can also make it confusing, with so many sourcebooks published over the years. As people encounter *BattleTech*, get hooked and start to obtain sourcebooks, they need to know where a particular sourcebook is best used along the *BattleTech* timeline.

To help quickly and easily convey the timeline of the *BattleTech* universe—and to allow a player to easily “plug in” a given sourcebook—we’ve divided *BattleTech* into six major eras. (For those that own the *BattleTech Introductory Box Set*, the year dates in parentheses following each era’s title correspond to the maps found in the *Inner Sphere* at a Glance sourcebook.)

STAR LEAGUE (2570)

Ian Cameron, ruler of the Terran Hegemony, concludes decades of tireless effort with the creation of the Star League, a political and military alliance between all Great Houses and the Hegemony. Star League armed forces immediately launch the Reunification War, forcing the Periphery realms to join. For the next two centuries, humanity experiences a golden age across the thousand light-years of human-occupied space known as the *Inner Sphere*. It also sees the creation of the most powerful military in human history.



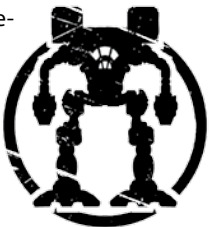
SUCCESSION WARS (3025, 3030, 3040)

Every last member of First Lord Richard Cameron’s family is killed during a coup launched by Stefan Amaris. Following the thirteen-year war to unseat him, the rulers of each of the five Great Houses disband the Star League. General Aleksandr Kerensky departs with eighty percent of the Star League Defense Force beyond known space and the *Inner Sphere* collapses into centuries of warfare known as the Succession Wars that will eventually result in a massive loss of technology across most worlds.



CLAN INVASION (3052, 3057)

A mysterious invading force strikes the coreward region of the *Inner Sphere*. The invaders, called the Clans, are descendants of Kerensky’s SLDF troops, forged into a society dedicated to becoming the greatest fighting force in history. With vastly superior technology and warriors, the Clans conquer world after world. Eventually this outside threat will



forge a new Star League, something hundreds of years of warfare failed to accomplish. In addition, the Clans will act as a catalyst for a technological renaissance.

CIVIL WAR (3062, 3067)

The Clan threat is eventually lessened with the complete destruction of a Clan. With that massive external threat apparently neutralized, internal conflicts explode around the Inner Sphere. House Liao conquers its former Commonality, the St. Ives Compact; a rebellion of military units belonging to House Kurita sparks a war with their powerful border enemy, Clan Ghost Bear; the fabulously powerful Federated Commonwealth of House Steiner and House Davion collapses into five long years of bitter civil war.



JIHAD (3067, CURRENT)

Following the Federated Commonwealth Civil War, the leaders of the Great Houses meet and disband the new Star League, declaring it a sham. The pseudo-religious Word of Blake—a splinter group of ComStar, the protectors and controllers of interstellar communication—launch the Jihad: an interstellar war that will ultimately pit every faction against each other and even against themselves, as weapons of mass destruction are used for the first time in centuries while new and frightening technologies are likewise unleashed.



DARK AGE (3132+)

Under the guidance of Devlin Stone, the Republic of the Sphere is born at the heart of the *Inner Sphere* following the Jihad. One of the more extensive periods of peace begins to break out as the 32nd century dawns. The factions, to one degree or another, embrace disarmament and the massive armies of the Succession Wars begin to fade. However, in 3132 eighty percent of interstellar communications collapses, throwing the universe into chaos. Wars almost immediately erupt and the factions begin rebuilding their armies.



SOURCEBOOKS

As Catalyst Game Labs continues to publish new *BattleTech* products (and reprint previously published products), easy reference logos—corresponding to those above—will be printed directly on their back covers. This will allow retailers and players alike to know at a glance what eras are covered by a given product. For additional ease of reference, era logos will also appear on product’s sell sheet, on-line products page and so on.

Note that if a Catalyst Game Labs *BattleTech* product does not contain an era logo, then it is considered a core rulebook or supplement to be used across all eras, such as the *Introductory Box Set*, *Total Warfare* and so on.