

NORTHERN LEAGUEBOOK TWO

DP9-051

UNITED MERCANTILE

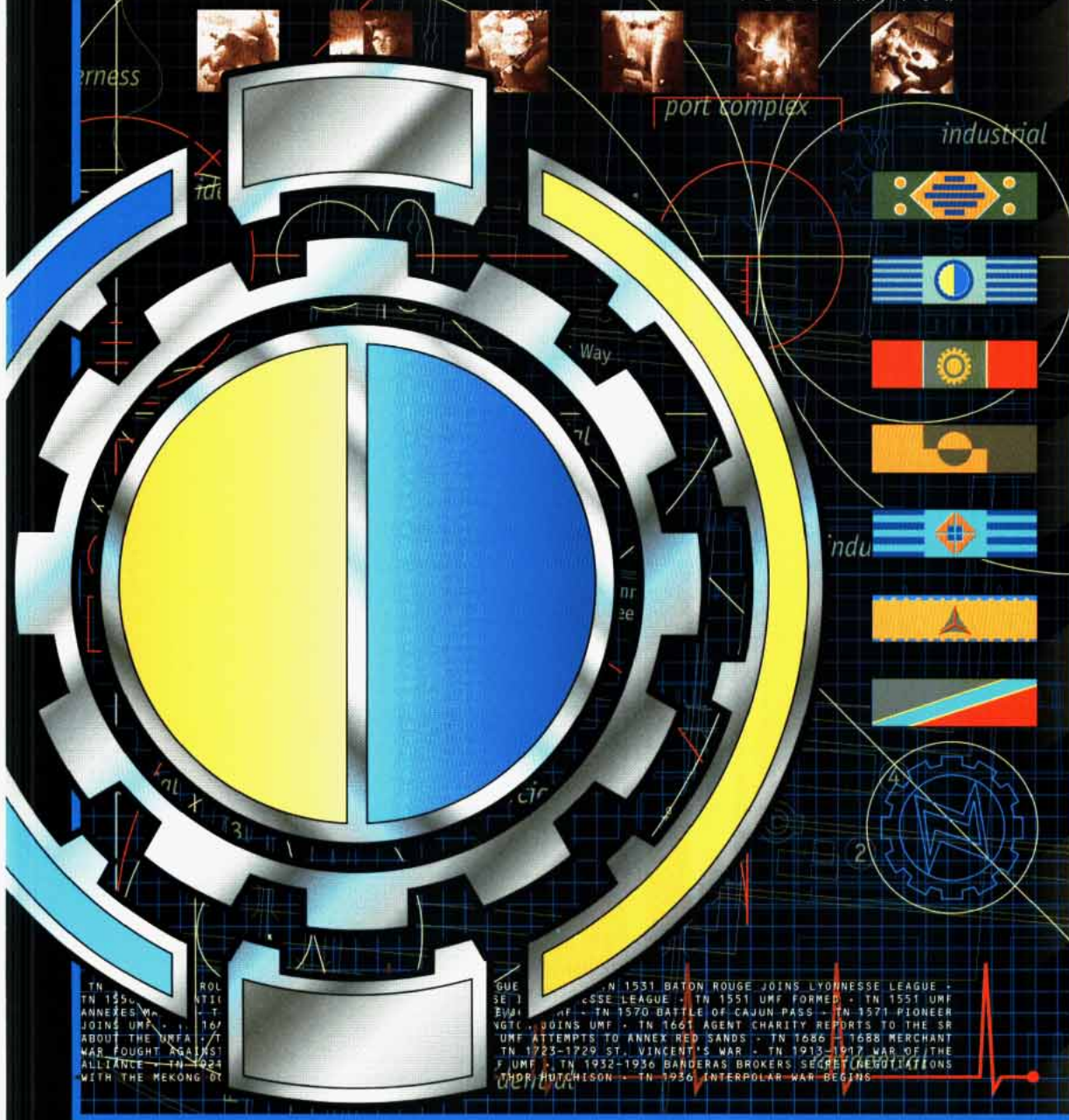
FEDERATION



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UMF ATTEMPTS TO ANNEX RED SANDS - TN 1686 - 1688 MERCHANT
TN 1723-1729 ST. VINCENT'S WAR - TN 1913-1917 WAR OF THE
F UMF - TN 1932-1936 BANDERAS BROTHERS SECRET NEGOTIATIONS
UMF HUTCHISON - TN 1936 INTERPOLAR WAR BEGINS

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NORTHERN LEAGUEBOOK TWO

UNITED MERCANTILE

Natalya Horolov spun the pen round her fingers as she thought. Opportunities like this were few and far between. It was too late to stop the chaos her erstwhile ally had already wrought when he chose to strike off on his own, including this Mamoud-forsaken war, but she could limit future damage. He was a fool if he thought his newfound friends in Valeria could protect him. It was a delicious irony that the emergency powers that ensured his continued tenure would soon strengthen her position.

"You're right, chief. This is too good to pass up; but I want to maintain plausible deniability." She traced a line on the map before her, crossing the Downing Range somewhere north of Ashington. "I hope the Treasurer has a pleasant flight."

Anton Rozam, her security chief, nodded. "Yes ma'am." He thought for a moment. "Of course the Grand Marshal will be unhappy with Director, sorry, Treasurer Davi for allowing Republican aircraft so far into Mercantile territory."

A thin smile crept onto Horolov's lips before her comm-line buzzed. "Yves Banderas on the line for you, ma'am."

Terra Nova is engulfed in war and the United Mercantile Federation is, quite literally, looking to profit from the situation. The dominant economic power of the CNCS is using the conflict to make itself wealthy; Mercantile factories churn out equipment to replace that lost on the battlefield while the league's corporations use the chaos to crush their rivals. Meanwhile, the balance of power has tipped, allowing shadowy organizations to influence the war effort against the league's enemies.

Beneath the league's cosmopolitan veneer lies a ruthless heart that seeks to dominate allies and enemies alike. All's fair in love and war, and in the UMF, business is war. This sourcebook includes:

- A complete history of the United Mercantile Federation
- Information on the league's unique government and the role of corporations
- Details of Swanscombe Jerusalemism
- Information on underworld groups like the Forzi Cartel and Zagreb's Rodinist terrorists.
- Full write-ups and maps for all eleven Mercantile city-states.
- Sample campaign set-ups
- New character archetypes
- New equipment

**HEAVY
GEAR™**

1936

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DREAM POD 9

United Mercantile Federation — Behind the Scenes

The United Mercantile Federation (or UMF for short) is a prime example of the Heavy Gear technique of social design. We take a basic social model and subject it to a wide variety of stresses and challenges, extrapolating from the basic idea to create a complex and hopefully — credible society. One with both good and bad sides.

The original concept of the UMF was an extrapolation of neo-conservative theories that are popular today. Many people (in the West at least) complain about taxes being too high, government being too big and inefficient, and people abusing the welfare state. The UMF is one possible answer to these problems: a state run like a business and by business-people. A small and efficient state — with no taxes at all — that makes the trains run on time and keeps incomes high.

Like all radical solutions, however, the UMF model creates a wide variety of brand new problems, and it is these problems that make it an interesting place to set campaigns and tell stories. In the Mercantile Federation, capitalism runs rampant and money is king. The economy thrives, but the right to vote must be paid for. Major corporations effectively run the league. Those who are their employees benefit from this rule; those who are not form a permanent underclass with little hope of gaining access to the benefits of their "efficient" society.

The capitalist model of the UMF also clearly means that money is what counts. Principals of universal rights and justice, although not entirely absent, are certainly up for sale. Bribery and blackmail (called *Kompromat*) are accepted parts of the business of government. Corporate executive can and do get away with murder, despite the best efforts of an aggressive media. Mercantile citizens would argue that they are just more honest than their neighbors, that money always provides power. At least in their league, they would say, the lines of influence are clear. They would quite possibly be right.

By its own standards, the powerful and prosperous UMF is undoubtedly a success. But success always has its price.

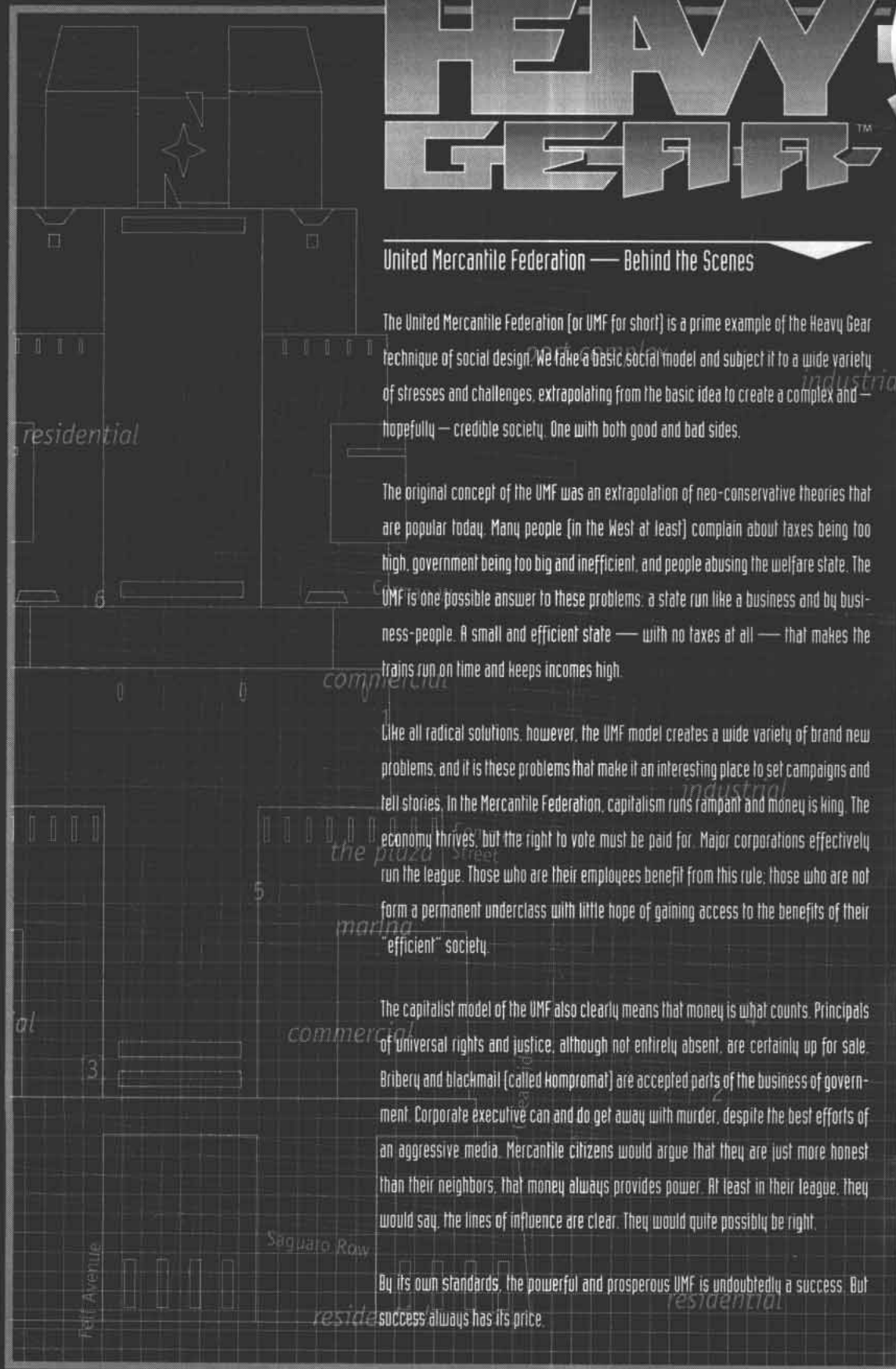


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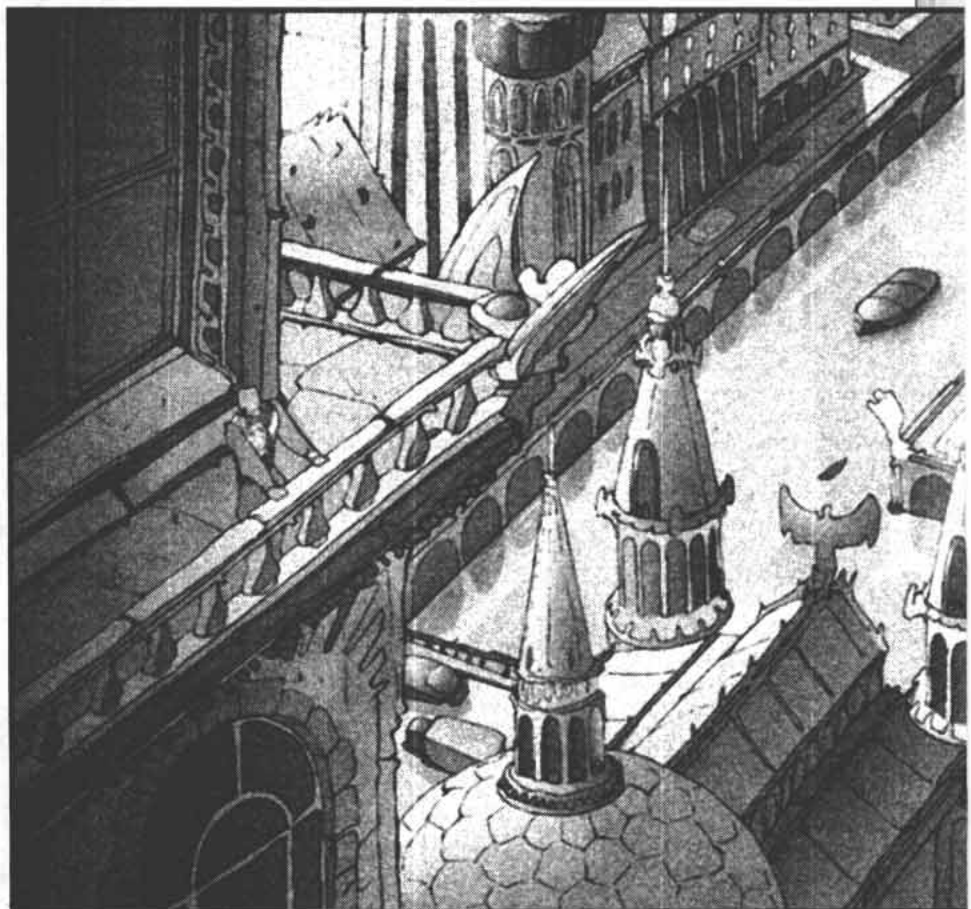
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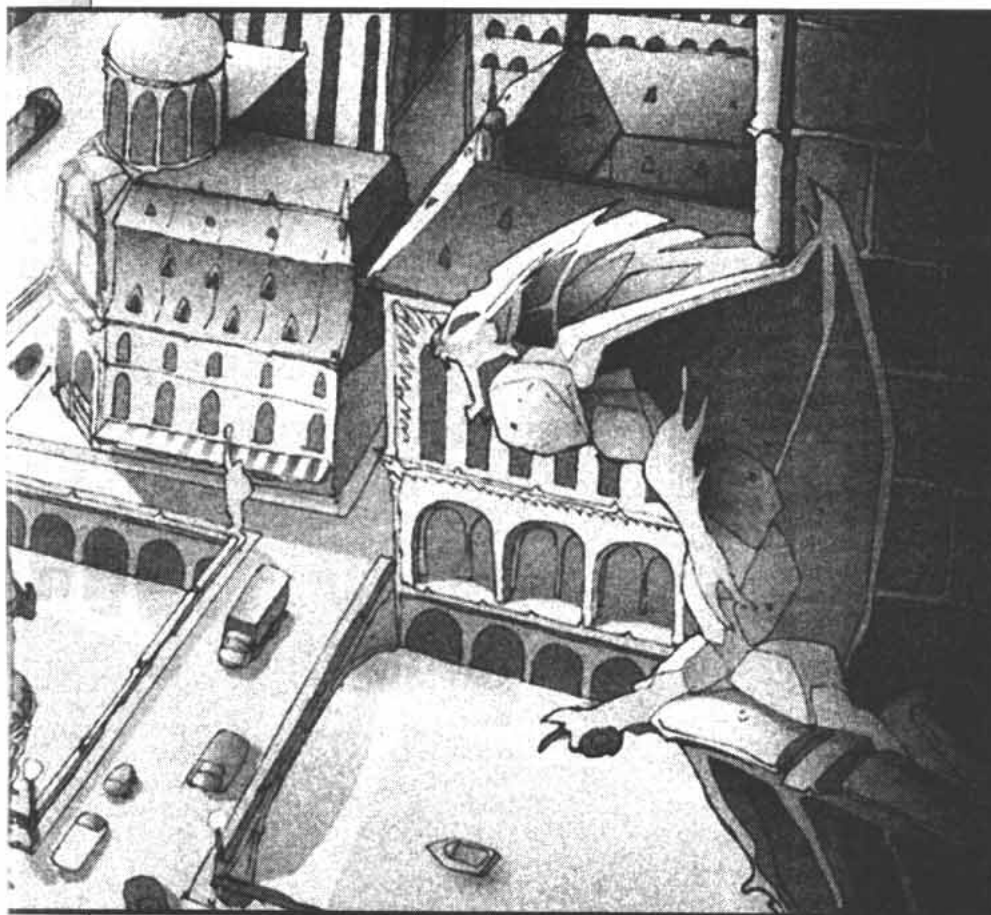
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SHADOW GOVERNMENT

The boardroom was two floors down, and a private elevator brought Natalya Korolov out into its hospitality suite. Another quick check of her appearance and she strode into the room. She shook hands with several of those present, the heads of the Federation's major corporations. Many were rivals of Northco, but for this meeting and others like it they put aside their differences. Well, most of them.

Taking her place at the head of the table, she gestured for them to sit. Several of them glanced at the empty chair to her right. Natalya chaired the meeting as first among equals, but everyone present knew that was a fiction. Northco was the most powerful corporation in the UMF, if not the CNCS, and she dominated the Corporate Council as Northco dominated the Federation's economics.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being so prompt. I hereby bring this special session of the Corporate Council to order. As you know, the war we have expected for so long is upon us." She paused momentarily, taking in the resigned looks of her colleagues. "We all know what that means. The CNCS Grand Marshal has exercised her right to direct the member-state governments. As of 27-hundred hours tonight, military transports and equipment have priority in the distribution chain. We are at the mercy of the CNCS."

"So you'll sit by and let her ruin us all?"

Natalya sighed. "The Federation and CNCS are committed to this war and things are too far advanced to block them now. Northco will aid the war effort to the best of our abilities."

"You mean Northco will reap the rewards of the arms race. What about the rest of us?"

"We work to ensure we win, and quickly. We do not want a repeat of the counter-economy strikes of the last war." That was Sara Wright of Abaline Research, cool and collected. Like Korolov, she'd risen to power in the aftermath of the War of Alliance.

"The AST have no interest in shattering our economy. No matter what they claim, they rely on global trade as much as we do. They might target key weapons plants, but they should leave us alone for the most part. No, what we must consider is using this conflict for our own aims, dealing with our rivals and ensuring the Federation dominates the post-war economy."

"For Mamoud's sake Korolov, you don't know what you're talking about!" As if a food magnate knew better than the CEO of the CNCS' largest arms manufacturer. "Given the Grand Marshal's dictatorial powers, we can't ensure our own holdings are sufficiently well protected, let alone influence the CNCS' war aims."

"You might be surprised how far my arm reaches, Mister Moran." She keyed the intercom. "Christopher, send my guest in". The door behind her opened. There was a collective gasp from those assembled.

"Our friend here has always had the right to sit in on our councils, but has rarely exercised the right to do so. He does now and I hope you'll make him welcome".

Solomon Davi, commander in chief of the United Mercantile Federation Army and the UMF's Secretary of Defense, eased himself into the empty chair next to Korolov, the gold disc on his uniform glinting in the artificial light.



1.1 PROFIT MOTIVE

The economic and industrial powerhouse of the Arctic, the United Mercantile Federation has earned a reputation for aggressive and merciless acquisition of wealth. Since deposing the Lyonesse League which preceded the UMF, the corporations have been the power behind the throne in the Federation, steering it towards their convoluted and often contradictory goals. To the casual observer it would seem the UMF, without the social mores of the Mekong Dominion to curb constant infighting, should fly apart under the weight of its own internal politics.

Nominally a democracy, money is the true measure of power in the Federation, with voting rights directly proportional to spending power. As such, it is the corporations rather than the citizens who truly control the fate of the league. Yet the diversity of the Federation is its greatest strength. The perpetual competition within and between corporations drives Mercantile citizens to excel. Even more than money, personal accomplishment is a mark of success in the league, with competition fostered from a very early age. Such advancement can be by fair means or foul, with espionage and blackmail, known in the league as *Kompromat*, a part of everyday life. More so than in any other league, the media is inextricably linked with society, playing a major role in making — or breaking — the reputations of companies and individuals.

Surprisingly, loyalty, albeit guarded, plays a major role in UMF society. Loyalty to the company is everything, and forms a vital part of Mercantile culture. Corporations provide many of the resources normally expected of governments; individual companies handle all health care, education and retirement benefits, both directly and through partnerships and strategic alliances. Children born to corporate employees are educated by the company, and in all likelihood will be employed by them and see their children follow the same cycle. The largest corporations are nations within the nation, each reflecting the UMF in miniature. Each suffers from constant infighting, with factions pulling in different directions, but despite individual ambitions, the members work together for the good of the league.

The truism “money makes the world go round” originated on pre-ice age Earth, but nowhere is it more true than in the UMF. Money is an essential pre-requisite for participation in the democratic process, with electoral vouchers considered legal property to be bought and sold. Indeed, the more money an individual or company is prepared to spend, the more votes they have and the greater their influence on the political situation. Furthermore, greasing the wheels of business is an accepted part of daily life, with bribes and the like as prevalent as the latest product advertising. Indeed, without such gifts or financial bonds known as ransoms, few corporate employees can expect their career to progress.

The search for profits dominates the companies, and by extension the UMF. The quest for new markets and resources plays a major role in this and has repeatedly brought the Federation into conflict with its neighbors. Almost every war fought by the UMF has at its core financial considerations, as has the league’s alliances. Indeed, the ill-fated “alliance” with the Mekong Dominion grew from Treasurer Banderas’ ambitions to form an economic super-power to rival the CNCS and AST. It remains to be seen if the UMF, unlike the Treasurer, can survive his mistake.



1.1.1 CONTENTS

The **United Mercantile Federation Leaguebook** details the structure and practices of the North’s dominant economic power. Divided into seven chapters, this sourcebook provides insights into both Mercantile philosophy and culture, providing a rich background for campaigns set in the league.

Chapter Two: League Overview explains the physical and economic landscape of the Federation, including details of its achievements since the founding of the Lyonesse League in TN 1528. Likewise, *Chapter Three: Internal Politics* details the political landscape of the UMF, providing information on the Federation’s political system and describing the power structures and major players. *Chapter Four: Foreign Relations* continues this theme, examining the historically antagonistic relationship between the UMF and its neighbors.

Chapter Five: Regions of the Federation elaborates on the material provided in **Life on Terra Nova, Second Edition**, detailing the diverse geography and economy of the league’s city states and surrounding regions, ranging from the arid plains surrounding Ashington to the high arctic of Pioneer. *Chapter Six: Culture and Society* examines the culture of the league, giving an overview of everyday life and delving into the Mercantile psyche. *Chapter Seven: Gamemaster Resources* provides material valuable to any Gamemaster’s running campaigns in or involving the UMF, including characters, creatures, equipment and scenario ideas.

STICKS AND STONES

Agnes wished she'd listened to the Mother Superior's warnings. She could feel their eyes on her as she walked down Hope Avenue toward St. Justine's. She should have gone down the Golden Prospect. The way was longer, but more public. Safer. The groups of youths made her uncomfortable, but there was a time when her novice's habit would have guaranteed her protection. That hadn't been true since the Day of Peace in Sorrento.

"Well, what d'we have here". A youth stood in her path. She could smell the alcohol even from here. "A poor lost little lamb." She attempted to step around him, but he blocked her path again. "I didn't say you could go, Jerusalemite. Your kind have a lot to answer for."

"I don't know what you mean." Attempts to keep the quiver from her voice failed miserably. Seeing how frightened she was made the youth even braver. He advanced on her menacingly until her back was up against the wall. Then he loomed over her, outstretched arms blocking her escape.

"Don't play innocent. Your church looks down its nose at everybody, especially us!" He was almost screaming as he gestured to the groups of young men down the street. Many wandered over and began to form a crown around the group. They were no friendlier to Agnes than her captor. Others, overhearing the commotion, came out of the buildings and joined the gathering throng. "I'll bet you gloated when the Reverend was killed. In fact, I wouldn't put it past you lot to have arranged it. Well, we're gonna make an example of you," he leered, moving to caress her face. She batted the hand away but he tried again, more forcefully, pressing her against the wall. She looked to the crowd for help, but none was forthcoming.

Then, a movement in the crowd filled Agnes with hope. A police car was nudging its way through the throng. A short burst of the siren and the crowd parted like the Red Sea before Moses. *I'm saved!* she thought. A police officer got out of the car, her dark hair drawn up under her cap, and immediately drew her stun baton. Inside the vehicle the other officer spoke into the radio, no doubt summoning backup. "Leave her alone, boy!"

"But she's one of them." His words were slurred, but many in the crowd murmured their support.

The police officer's eyes narrowed, anger glinting behind them. Carlyle, her name tag said. "I don't care if she's Oliver Masao's sister. *She* has more right to be here than you do, boy." The stun baton flicked dismissively. "Now are you going to leave or do I have to call your Housemother?"

The youth's temper snapped. He lunged for the cop, but she sidestepped his exaggerated swing, her cap coming off and her long hair flying loose. He never had the chance for a second lunge. Even as he started his attack Carlyle thumbed the stun-baton, jabbing it into his armpit as he passed. The device's capacitor discharged almost thirty thousand volts into the thug, and he suddenly lost control of his muscles and flopped to the asphalt. With a practiced movement Carlyle knelt on his back, pulling his arms back and securing them with plastic cuffs.

"That's it, show's over. Go home," her partner called from the car, one hand resting on the holster of her pistol. Agnes watched the first police officer recover her cap and stand. A flash of silver caught her eye. Someone near the front of the crowd also saw the small cross hanging around the police officer's neck. "She's one of them too!"

And that's when the violence truly began.



2.1 GEOGRAPHY

The United Mercantile Federation covers some 150 degrees of longitude and 80 of latitude and is a land of contrasts. The terrain ranges from deserts and broad savannah in the south to lush forests and arctic wasteland in the north. The Mercantile climate is similarly varied, with the southern regions frequently buffeted by Badlands-born tempests while the Marathon Basin and northern expanses are protected from the worst of these storms by five broad mountain ranges. These mountain ranges also divide the land into distinct regions, each of which has its own microclimate, influencing the range of flora and fauna. Each of these regions plays a major role in the UMF's society, shaping the industry and economy of its city-states and settlements. The regions all present wide ranges of both resources and challenges, and a well-known Mercantile proverb states: "There are no such things as obstacles to be overcome. Rather, there are opportunities we have yet to decide how to exploit".

2.1.1 DESERT AND PLAINS

The harsh conditions of the Badlands slowly give way to the Ashington, Zagreb and Cajun plains. This arid region, a mix of broad savannah and wasteland, is ill-suited to the mechanized farming methods more common further north, but is dotted with small communities willing to work hard to raise small crops of johar or herds of cattle. Although the involvement of big business in such communities is minimal, they do typify the Federation in other ways. Groups who may be at odds with each other for most of the cycle work together to gather the harvest or drive cattle. Indeed, many communities band together to form cooperatives, allowing them to share capital expenditure and to allow collective bargaining when selling goods to the city-state based corporations.

The rolling terrain of the Marathon Basin and, to a lesser degree, the Northern Plain around Swanscombe, have a temperate climate and see more rainfall than the borderlands; the deep loam is considerably more fertile. Furthermore, the mountains surrounding the Marathon Basin provide a measure of protection from Badlands storms. Forests were once widespread in the area, though broad tracts have been felled for timber and to clear land for farming. The area is dotted with massive corporate farms on which planting and computer-controlled vehicles do harvesting. Indeed, at harvest time each of the massive machines is capable of harvesting, processing and packing produce, be it johar, wheat or sand beet.

► Flora and Fauna

As one travels north from the Badlands, the changes in vegetation are clearly apparent. Scrub vegetation and lichen dominate the border region but are replaced by wild johar where water from the McAllen network percolates to the surface. Sand-beet originated on the Badlands fringe, but this nutritious (although bland) distant relative of the johar family has become the focus of large-scale commercial exploitation in the more fertile northern regions where it competes with genetically modified Terran cereals. The regions of highest precipitation, notably the northern reaches of the Marathon Basin, the Byerst Plain and the upwind flanks of most mountain ranges, are blanketed with dense woodland. In the taiga woodland of the high latitudes this is principally Terranovan pine, but saguaro is more common in the drier regions on the Badlands fringe.

Small, insect-like flappers are accepted as a vital part of the arable region, serving as the principal vector for pollinating plants. They are, however, capable of wiping out entire crops. Johar worms and wheat-jackets are the target of major pest control programs. Larger fauna such as grassrunners are common in wilderness regions but are less tolerated in farmsteads and are trapped and shot. Most farmers cannot understand the desire of city folk to keep domesticated 'runners as pets. Springers are the staple of many ranches and wild varieties roam throughout the UMF, though pack hunters like dawgs and prairie jackals keep their numbers down. Barnabus Iguanas are also commonplace, both in the wild and domesticated. The many northern lakes provide the ideal home for lakewasps and their swarms are regarded as the bane of the tourist industry.

► Climate

The summer season provides the region with its greatest rainfall, with the amount gradually increasing closer to the poles. The mountainous terrain has a major impact on precipitation, however, with increased rainfall on the upwind (generally western) sides of the chains and a pronounced area of reduced precipitation, a "rain shadow," downwind. The most pronounced of these is the Zihl Salt Flats in the lee of the Downing Range though, ironically, the southern region of the basin contains a large number of rivers and lakes, fed by the McAllen network and run-off from the mountain range. The highest levels of rainfall occur around Lyonesse, with rain-bearing winds funneled between the northwestern tip of the Downing Range and the western spur of the Quinn mountains.

Temperatures on the Badlands fringe average about 35°C during the summer, falling to around 25°C during in winter. This pattern holds true throughout the savannah and plains region, with temperatures falling by about 3.75 degrees for every ten degrees further north. Local microclimates, caused by mountains and large bodies of water, can produce more pronounced variations.



2.1.2 MOUNTAINS AND LAKES

The Federation's mountain ranges play a major role in shaping climate and vegetation patterns, but they also serve as major barriers to movement and contain significant mineral deposits. The Westridge Range forms the border with the WFP and delineates the Western edge of the Marathon Basin and Cajun Plains, while the Downing Range serves as the region's eastern boundary. Only four major passes cross the Westridge Range and one of these, the Cajun Pass west of Mainz, has been closed since it became the target of UMF chemical weapons in the WFP's abortive invasion of TN 1570. The Downing range also forms the border between the Ashington and Zagreb Plains and the Sangar Basin, while the broad expanse of the Southern Spur separates the Eastern Marathon Basin from both the Badlands and the Ashington Basin. Mount Alban, in the Downing range between Marathon and Lyonesse, is the highest peak in the UMF and the site of many outdoor pursuit centers. The Quinn Range forms the other two sides of the basin though much of the northern span, south of Rapid City and bounding the Zihl Salt Flats, is little more than hills. The area immediately north of the Quinn Range is known as the Byerst Plain and forms part of the gently rolling polar basin. The northern tip of the Pacifica Range divides the Zagreb and Northern Plains before curving around to merge with the western tip of the Tershaw Range. The Pacifica range contains one of only two volcanoes in the UMF, Mount Lowen. The other, Mount Mosvari, is located in the far southern tip of the Downing Range's Southern Spur, though several Badlands volcanoes, most notably those at the heart of the Great White Desert, occasionally erupt and spew ash into the UMF.

The McAllen network serves as the UMF's primary source of water, though a number of rivers flow in the Marathon and Sangar Basins as well as on the Tudor Plain that extends south from the Arctic Basin. A number of lakes feed and are fed by these rivers, many of which result from the region's high precipitation, though others are fed by the McAllen network. Almost 800 kilometers long, Lake Tristan is the Federation's largest body of fresh water and is the principal site of the league's fishing industry. The fisheries based on Lake Windermere on the Tudor Plain west of Djakarta Point and the salt-water lakes of the Southern Sangar Basin are less developed, but nonetheless play a vital role in the region's economy.

2.1.3 THE HIGH ARCTIC

The Polar Basin comprises the most northerly expanse of the Federation, a mix of tundra, taiga forest and lakes. Though much of the high arctic is unsuited to any form of industry save logging, the region is dotted with vacation resorts that cater to the sports of fishing and sailing. In the frigid extreme north, the city-state of Pioneer exploits cycle-round snow and ice to become the CNCS' principal winter-sports venue. Indeed, with snow and ice a rarity on Terra Nova, many regard a trip to Pioneer as the ultimate holiday.

Scorched Earth



The UMF has repeatedly shown itself willing to use extreme measures to defend against outside threats. Strategic weapons play a major role in this policy, with the Mercantile government willing to sacrifice land in exchange for time to prepare. In TN 1570, the UMF Army used nerve gas to halt an assault by troops of the WFP, not only killing the defenders and the Mercantile rear-guard, but also poisoning the landscape and rendering the area unsafe for human beings. Indeed, even now some 360 cycles after the incident, the Cajun Pass remains closed to the public.

This all fades into insignificance, however, when compared to the War of Alliance. In grave danger of seeing the UMF overrun by the Colonial Expeditionary Force's GREL shock troops, the Caucus authorized the use of strategic weapons to stem the tide and give the UMFA and Northern Guard time to respond. Use of both chemical and nuclear weapons was widespread along the Badlands border and the southern reaches of the Marathon Basin. Tracts of once-verdant farmland were turned into a radioactive wasteland and remain uninhabitable. In addition to those areas directly affected by the weapons, a number of down-wind areas received trace doses of chemical weapons and nuclear fallout. Though they are at far from dangerous levels, CNCS and Mercantile environmentalists fear that these toxins will accumulate in the food chain and pose a threat to human and animal life in the area.

The diseased land has been put to good use by the military, who use the site to conduct live fire exercises and final NBC training and qualification under true conditions. A few officers have scoffed at the economic folly of exposing perfectly good troops to possible contamination, but most agree that the element of danger present increases the effectiveness of the training. In general, only a small portion of the UMFA undergoes these extensive NBC drills because of their cost. There are other benefits to the presence of troops in the area: the samples and measurements they take daily for their safety are made available to biologists monitoring the ecology of the region.

Over the cycles, some of the affected areas have begun to recover, with the hardiest species of johar grass attempting to regain a foothold on the exposed soil. The elements have started to wash away the most obvious signs of damage, and most craters have been reduced to shallow depressions in the ground. This has not diminished their danger, however, and people traveling through the region are advised to carry Geiger counters and chemical sniffers for safety. Trekking by foot is also inadvisable; a vehicle, even a lowly truck, offers at least marginal protection against radiation.

2.2 UNITED MERCANTILE FEDERATION HISTORY

The origins and history of the United Mercantile Federation begin with commerce, following a bloody path of greed, ambition and treachery. Indeed, most of the cities of the league trace their origins to mining, farming and manufacturing companies established by the Human Concordat. When the Concordat abruptly severed links with the colonies in TN 1454, these companies and their townships were abandoned to their fate. Many were destroyed in the chaos that followed, sacked by bandits or brought low by the collapse of the planetary economy. Others fought for their freedom, forming ad-hoc militias to impose order within the towns and the land that surrounded them. Heavily fortified, these company enclaves became city-states, but it soon became apparent that alone, none would survive beyond the first generation. Following the sack and razing of Salisbury by bandits in TN 1525, the leaders of four other city-states banded together.

2.2.1 RISE AND FALL OF THE LYONNESSE LEAGUE (TN 1528-1551)

It was Yvgeny Corman, Administrator of Lyonesse, who brought the cities of Lyonesse, Rapid City, Marathon, Canterbury and Baton Rouge to the peace table. Throughout the Summer and Autumn of TN 1527 the negotiations raged, balancing demands and working to settle deeply ingrained prejudices and feuds. Brandal Finch of Baton Rouge walked out of the talks on 23 Autumn 1527, but the remaining parties presented a draft to the public on 6 Spring 1528. On 2 Summer of that cycle, the document was signed and the Lyonesse League came into existence.

The return of intercity trade provided a huge influx of capital, prompting a major improvement in the standard of living. By TN 1531 the league was thriving and Baton Rouge was faced with a choice: economic ruin or joining the alliance. Swallowing his pride, Finch chose the latter, though the terms were less favorable than those he walked away from four cycles earlier. In TN 1532 the league integrated its diverse militaries into the League Guard, and formalized relationships between banking, taxation, and other financial institutions. The league also established a comprehensive education system, providing schooling for any who desired it up until the age of twenty cycles. Graduates were guaranteed at least two cycles of vocational training with one of the large companies, and many later went on to become full time employees. The system created a well-trained workforce and low unemployment, but it ultimately doomed the Lyonesse League.

• THE APPRENTICESHIP RIOTS

Funding the program of apprenticeships placed a major drain on the league's finances, a situation not helped by large-scale corruption and inefficiency. Nearing bankruptcy, the government both cancelled the program and raised taxes in the summer of TN 1550. Faced with this double blow, workers young and old poured onto the streets. The government overreacted, sending out the League Guard to quell the protest. When crowds in Rapid City began pelting them with stones, the troops were ordered to open fire, killing many civilians. This act of brutality shattered what remained of the central government and civil war loomed.

The region's major corporations decided enough was enough and on 17 Autumn chose to act. Using economic clout and well-trained security forces, they took control of the government and forced the disarmament of the League Guard. The corporate leaders arrested Administrator Genardy Corman, son of founder Yvgeny, and his associates before sweeping away the unwieldy bureaucracy that surrounded them. In its place they created a streamlined administration, headed by a nine-person Caucus, election to which was by a league-wide plebiscite. With the league's old name tarnished, the new corporate-dominated nation was renamed the United Mercantile Federation.

2.2.2 BEAR MARKETS (TN 1551-1670)

The new government sought external challenges to distract the populace from the troubles at home. The Federation launched itself on a massive armaments program and began to eye its neighbors' territory. By the end of the cycle the troops struck, seizing the city-state of Fort Charles (later renamed Mainz) with the tacit approval of the Northern Lights Confederacy. The Western Frontier Protectorate, however, also claimed Fort Charles and its annexation merely served to sour relationships between the two leagues. The Westerners lacked the resources to retake the city, and instead spent the next twenty cycles destabilizing the UMF's eastern districts with a series of vicious border raids.

The UMFA continued to grow over the next few cycles, its troops constantly relocating within the league to keep its neighbors off balance. In TN 1566 they struck, driving eastward into the Tershaw Cooperative Alliance, a small league straddling the present-day UMF and NLC, and quickly overrunning Djakarta Point. A rich source of gold and silver, Djakarta Point was a major prize, but rather than imposing their will in the city as had been done at Fort Charles, the Federation allowed the city to retain its own cultural institutions and method of government, provided that it accepted the Federation as its overlord. Meanwhile, the matriarchal city-state of Swanscombe, also part of the TCA, was the target of aggressive diplomatic efforts. Seeing advantages in siding with a growing power, they petitioned for membership in the UMF that same cycle. Deprived of two of its principal cities, the Tershaw Cooperative Alliance collapsed. The Federation's success proved its undoing, however, driving the remaining TCA cities (and neighboring communities) into the NLC.

● WAR TO THE KNIFE

In TN 1570 the simmering feud between the WFP and the UMF finally exploded. The Protectorate launched a massive preemptive invasion of the Federation, driving toward Mainz. With the bulk of their troops still occupied in the former TCA, the UMF was caught flat-footed and could not react to the threat. A small force succeeded in holding the Protectorate forces at bay in the Cajun Pass for three days, and when the force was about to be overrun their commander, Tony Kim, called in fire on his position. The UMFA's Strategic Rocketry Command fired four tactical missiles into the pass, saturating the area with Kesran nerve gas. There were few survivors, and with its offensive shattered, the WFP sued for peace.

Border clashes continued, but it wasn't until the 1650s that the Federation embarked upon another program of expansion. The UMFA backed the so-called Tricity fuel embargo, a successful attempt by three petroleum rich communities in the Badlands to force a price increase on the WFP, their main client. Encouraged by the poor Westerner response, the Federation continued its military build-up and in TN 1667 invaded both the WFP and NLC. The invasions targeted key sites — Kossuth in the NLC and Fort William in the WFP. Kossuth fell to the UMFA in short order, but a spirited counterattack by the Norlight forces forced a withdrawal to Swanscombe; the siege of Fort William was abandoned around the same time.

Horried by their near defeat, the NLC and WFP decided to ally against the "Mercantile threat." In the summer of TN 1669, their combined armies invaded the far north of the Federation after luring the bulk of the UMFA to the area around Lyonesse. The UMF mustered a defense and met the invaders near the city of Pioneer. The battle that followed, a nominal victory for the UMF, is best known as the first use of combat walkers, a development that would ultimately culminate in the Heavy Gear (see **Northern Vehicle Compendium 1**, pp. 10-21, for more details). However, the narrow margin of victory convinced the Caucus that war with their neighbors would only end in their destruction and so they focused their efforts on the Badlands. Moves to annex Red Sands proved unsuccessful, though the UMF did ensure a "special understanding" with the Badlands township, and the Federation switched the bulk of its activity to the Westridge area.

2.2.3 ECONOMICS OF ALLIANCE (TN 1670-1913)

The formation of the AST in TN 1681 prompted the NLC to suggest the creation of a pan-northern alliance, but the Federation snubbed the proposal, instead concentrating on efforts to control the Westridge Trade Zone (which would give them a stranglehold on the WFP economy). The UMF was not alone in coveting the Westridge area, however. The newly formed AST, and in particular the Mekong Dominion, sought influence in the region and this led to a major armed confrontation. Known as the Merchant War, the clash between the UMF and the Southern alliance lasted from TN 1686 to 1688 before the Azov Treaty acknowledged the region's independence. This de-facto loss galled the Federation leadership, and rumors of WFP assistance to the AST forces, added salt to the wounds. Despite these rumors, the Caucus made a policy U-turn and supported the NLC's proposal for an alliance. The CNCS was founded on 8 Summer 1694.

● THE ST. VINCENT'S WAR

The discovery of the wreck of the HCS *St. Vincent* in TN 1723 brought 29 cycles of peace to an end. The tense standoff at the wreck degenerated into a wide-ranging battle, horrific in its own right, but worse was to come. Damage to the hulk released a plague of global proportions, causing the deaths of five percent of Terra Nova's children. Each alliance blamed the other for the incident and global war ensued. For six cycles battles raged at both poles and in the Badlands, costing uncounted thousands of lives. Only the collapse of the global economy in TN 1729 forced a cessation of hostilities. Though never proven, there are suggestions that several major corporations, Northern and Southern, engineered the collapse to end the war and forestall any further losses.

● DEATH AND TAXES

The next century saw the Federation dealing with a mix of internal and external threats: The TN 1797 and TN 1814 Ashington uprisings (led by Byron Ash against his brother Rik) raised the prospect of war within the Federation. A massive show of force by the UMFA ultimately persuaded the usurper to stop short of secession. The UMFA also sacked Timmins in TN 1762 in an attempt to discourage the city-state's 'bootlegging' of UMF goods. When Timmins petitioned the CNCS in TN 1820, they refused membership in the UMF and sought Northern Guard protection, citing the devastation of TN 1762.

The most significant confrontation was the series of covert engagements between the UMF and Mekong Dominion between 1795 and 1799. Known as the Second Merchant War, the battle was fought more with stocks and shares than bullets and bombs, allowing both parties to circumvent the limits placed on them by their respective alliances. Corporations in both leagues lost millions and the losses were aggravated by special forces attacks on manufacturing sites and R&D establishments. The respective governments plowed vast sums into their economies in an effort to win the proxy war, but by late Autumn of TN 1798 the Dominion's advantage was becoming apparent. Federation Treasurer Constantin Bodiam ordered the UMFA into the field, and a series of Badlands clashes ensued. While the CNCS and AST were willing to sit by and watch the two capitalist leagues bleed each other dry, neither would sanction a massive armed confrontation and pressure from Valeria and Port Oasis forced a cease fire.

2.2.4 THE WAR OF THE ALLIANCE AND BEYOND (TN 1913–1936)

Goaded by the aloof attitude of the NLC and its dominance of the Northern Guard, the UMFA designated the Jaguar Gear a “Strategic Federal Resource” in TN 1905, much to the chagrin of Northco. With the Judas Syndrome in full swing, war between the alliances looked imminent, and the collapse of the CNCS was a distinct possibility. Yet before a world war could erupt, fate intervened.

Earth forces returned to Terra Nova in TN 1913 and drove into the heart of the two alliances, the Mekong Dominion and the UMF. Unable to stop the CEF hovertanks and GREL supersoldiers, the UMFA fought a desperate withdrawal, making profligate use of strategic weapons in a last-ditch attempt to buy the CNCS time to mobilize. The War of Alliance devastated the Federation, with battles fought throughout the league’s southern reaches and both nuclear and orbital attacks against military and industrial targets. Despite the best efforts of the UMF and the Northern Guard, the city of Mainz was quickly overrun by the invaders and Ashington became the site of five major battles, bitter street-to-street fighting occurring on two occasions, though both times the CEF were eventually thrown back. By war’s end on 9 Autumn TN 1917, the UMF was badly bloodied and exhausted. But it had survived.

• RECONSTRUCTION

The cycles immediately following the War of Alliance saw widespread reconstruction efforts, both of the UMF’s ruined industry and its shattered military. The War of Alliance had weakened the NLC’s hold on the CNCS, and both the UMF and WFP flexed their political and economic muscles. While the NLC sought a return to the pre-war status quo, including hostilities with the AST and in particular the Southern Republic, the UMF sought the advantages of peaceable contact with the south. Treasurer Yves Banderas sent out feelers to the Mekong Dominion with a view to closer economic ties, hoping to establish a third, mercantile, power block. He failed to win over Speaker Miyako Sogabe but did make contact with her chief rival, Taipan Arron Logan. However, the direction of these talks surprised even Banderas, and at a meeting with Banderas and CNCS Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe Logan suggested that the Dominion did not want to fight a war with the North and might withdraw its support from the AST in the event of hostilities.

With a Grand Plebiscite due in the Autumn of TN 1936, Banderas knew the importance of making a big impact with the deal. When Northco President Natalya Korolov learned of the contacts with the Dominion, however, she was furious. A meeting between the two on 13 Spring was heated and resulted in Northco withdrawing its support from Banderas’ candidacy, and without their support his campaign seemed doomed. Nonetheless, on 6 Winter TN 1936 the Treasurer announced his intention to stand for a fourth term.

The assassination of Thor Hutchison on 1 Autumn 1935 resulted in a major upswing in Revisionist feelings even in the pragmatic UMF, and brought tensions between the CNCS and AST to a boil. The number of religiously motivated attacks in the league rose dramatically, particularly in Jerusalemite-led Swanscombe. The city-state’s police were called in to break up a number of demonstrations, and on 22 Autumn rioting wracked the city after a mob attempted to storm the government center. Mother Superior Frances Hamilton escaped without injury, but there were a number of fatalities in the chaos.

2.2.5 THE INTERPOLAR WAR (TN 1936)

The clash between the two alliances at the Badlands community of Rahnguard Oasis finally tipped the balance and on 18 Summer TN 1936 the CNCS declared war in the AST. NorGuard Grand-Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe immediately assumed dictatorial powers in the CNCS, and as part of the process she suspended the Grand Plebiscite scheduled for 20 Autumn, instead confirming Banderas as Treasurer pro-tem. Northco and other UMF corporations publicly denounced this action, but the War Powers Act gives them little choice but to acquiesce.

While UMFA and Northern Guard forces moved into the Badlands to engage forces of the AST, pro-Southern saboteurs attacked industrial facilities and government complexes throughout the Federation. This prompted a massive outcry, though response was far from uniform. While many argued for punishing the AST for their audacity, others called for the UMF to hold itself above what they considered religiously motivated fighting. Northco’s announcement of support for the war effort on 17 Autumn quashed some of the anti-war sentiment, though others spoke up to accuse the company of seeking to profit from the war.

On 22 Autumn Treasurer Banderas left Lyonesse on a morale boosting tour of the Federation. He visited Pioneer, Rapid City, Canterbury, Baton Rouge and Marathon in rapid succession, though political unrest in Zagreb and Swanscombe prompted the cancellation of visits to those cities. However, Banderas’ aircraft disappeared while on route to Ashington. Wreckage was later found on the southern slopes of the Downing Range, and Republican aircraft were blamed for its destruction. Under the auspices of the War Powers Act, the Defense Minister, Solomon Davi, was named interim Treasurer on 28 Autumn.

By the time Banderas’ body was found, many in the halls of Northern power were already shifting blame onto him for the course of the war. Indeed, promises of Mekong aid against the Southern Republic proved utterly false and Northern troops remain locked in combat with Peacekeepers.

2.3 ECONOMICS

Money and its acquisition form the bedrock of Mercantile life, driving both individual citizens and the giant corporations. The decision of the Earth companies to establish facilities in and around the region, which in turn grew into modern city-states, provided the Federation with vast mineral and agricultural resources which have allowed the league to remain largely self sufficient. Indeed, should the UMF choose to do without external trade it could, having no need to import staples like food or minerals. As with the Mekong Dominion, the UMF is a net exporter of goods and services and were it not for strict trade restrictions the Federation would long ago have suborned both the NLC and WFP. Arguments over these issues have long been a bone of contention between the UMF and the other members of the CNCS.

The Federation's free-market economic base is very diverse, ranging from mining and farming through heavy industry, consumer electronics and service industries like entertainment. This broad-based economy has allowed the league to prosper when others have struggled. Likewise, many corporations spread their interests through a number of fields to minimize the risks associated with economic recession. Officially the government's management of the economy is minimal, limited to regional price, demand and satisfaction indices, as well as regulatory authorities, principally financial services, intended to safeguard rather than control markets. In theory, the indices are government-sponsored market research statistics intended to report the state of the economy. In practice, subtle manipulations of these figures allow the Caucus and bureaucracy to influence the flow of goods. In truth, the indices are irrelevant to the larger companies who both carry out their own research and have considerable influence of their own through the Corporate Council. Indeed, it is the Corporate Council, when it can agree, that determines Mercantile policy and as with Banderas' ill-fated alliance with Arron Logan, they take a dim view of meddling by the government executive.

The government does, however, have a major say in the transportation of goods, managing the extensive rail and road systems vital to international commerce as well as working in partnership with Terranovan TransRail to ensure the smooth flow of goods along the maglev routes. The government's control of the road system, or rather the beacon system that steers the automated "land trains," provides a significant portion of its revenue, each autopilot-equipped vehicle being required to pay an annual fee to use the system. Outside the league the government takes a more active role, principally in the form of trade delegations in major cities of the CNCS and AST, usually as part of a UMF consulate or embassy. Led by a trade commissioner, these delegations promote UMF goods and corporations, often serving as glorified salesmen sponsored by particular corporations. Furthermore, the UMF organizes and protects the trade caravans that wander the fringes of the Badlands, providing numerous small communities with their only source of a wide range of goods.

The net result of the league's economic success is a very high standard of living for those in work, particularly those employed by major corporations. Even allowing for the absence of taxes, wages in the Federation are above the average for the CNCS, though the companies also demand much of their employees. Working hours are long, driven as much by competition within work groups for limited promotion slots as by the employer's demands, and public holidays minimal, in turn placing a major strain on family life. However, Mercantile citizens have accepted this as the norm, the price to be paid for success and prosperity. The flip side of this is that those who are not employed are shunned and virtually cast out from normal society. The Federation's social security provisions are minimal.

2.3.1 NATURAL RESOURCES

The region's abundant natural resources were a major factor in encouraging settlement and continue to play a major role in the economy. Farming occurs throughout the UMF but the fertile Marathon Basin is the league's breadbasket. Agriculture is a mix of arable farming and ranching, providing raw materials for manufacturing and the pharmaceutical industry as well as food. Farm sizes vary considerably, ranging from a few dozen hectares on the Badlands fringe to thousands of square kilometers on the automated corporate farms of the Marathon Basin. Fishing is a popular pastime in the many lakes that dot the northern expanse of the UMF, but only on Lake Tristan does it take place on a commercial basis.

Logging plays a major role in the economy of the Northern Marathon Basin as well as the Byerst Plain and the Arctic regions, supplying the wood necessary for construction and furniture production. The process is heavily automated but the devastating effects of deforestation prompted the government to enact a series of environmental protection laws.

The league's territory contains abundant mineral resources, extracted via a mix of deep-shaft and opencast mines, wells and dredging. Iron ore is particularly common in the Quinn Range while bauxite is common on the Ashington Plains and the Zihl Salt Flats in the north of the Sangar Basin. The extraction of petrochemicals plays a secondary role in the economies of both Baton Rouge and Canterbury, though the principal refineries are in Rapid City and Marathon. Several mines in the northern Westridge Range, among the few in the league directly controlled by the government, provide the league with radioactive material for weapons and power. Djakarta Point yields a number of precious metals, principally gold and silver, that play an important role in the electronics industry.

Energy product provides the fourth strand of the UMF's raw materials. Banks of solar panels and highly efficient windmills surround several city-states, topping up the power received from small-scale fission piles. In Ashington, famed for its high winds and low cloud cover, power generation forms a major part of the local economy.

2.3.2 MANUFACTURING AND SERVICE INDUSTRIES

The UMF is the industrial powerhouse of the CNCS and is rivaled on Terra Nova only by the Mekong Dominion. Though many city-states encompass a broad range of industries, most also have some form of specialty product. Mainz is a major transport hub for trade with the WFP and the Badlands communities of the NuCoal, but it is best known as the center of the UMF's ranching and meat processing industries. Mining is associated with several UMF city-states, most notably Djakarta Point, but also Canterbury, Marathon and Baton Rouge. Rapid City and Marathon are the principal processing sites for such materials and Rapid City's industrial plants are also the UMF's largest consumers of petrochemicals, processed metals and chemicals.

The UMF's financial and information services are based in Lyonnesse, with products ranging from routine banking through pensions and personal equity plans (PEPs) to insurance and share dealing. Both Rapid City and Swanscombe also play a significant role, particularly in futures trading and securities. Though based in Lyonnesse, the Federation Stock Market also has offices in Swanscombe, allowing Mercantile financial institutions to exploit the 12-hour time difference between the two cities and continue full-scale trading for 30 hours a day. In fact, were it not for the Federation's financial regulatory bodies, principally the Mercantile Stock Exchange Regulatory Authority (MSERA), who insist on a break in trading to allow software and hardware maintenance, as well as backups of the vital data, the Exchanges would likely remain open 36 hours a day.

Marathon serves as a secondary hub for information brokering, making use of the city's advanced communications and computer systems to process and analyze data generated from a wide range of reports. Models built from census and market research data play a major role in the design and marketing of goods throughout the UMF and CNCS. Regional demographics and economic data allow precision tailoring of such campaigns to regions and city-states, and when combined with EPOS (Electronic Points of Sale) and credit rating data it is also possible to produce successful tailored direct-mail programs. Direct-mail advertising is frowned upon even in the ultra-capitalist UMF, and thus rather than offend consumers most large companies shun the practice.

Most UMF cities have a sizable leisure industry, but none are more developed than those of Pioneer and Canterbury. The only city on the planet to experience year-round snow, Pioneer is a major tourist site, particularly popular for honeymoons, anniversaries and corporate incentive programs. Indeed, the latter form an industry in their own right, with companies like Galitzco (who also own a chain of hotels across the UMF) specializing in creating such programs to aid sales and to encourage staff productivity. Canterbury, on the other hand, is renowned for its theme parks.

2.3.3 INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Staunch believers in free trade, the UMF imposes few restrictions on imports and exports. This has long been a bone of contention with their CNCS neighbors, who do enact tariffs against UMF goods as a means of limiting Mercantile influence in their economies. This has prompted UMF companies to seek markets outside the CNCS, particularly in the Badlands but also including AST member-states. In the interests of national security, such trade is tightly controlled.

There are two main restrictions. The first is an embargo on the sale of advanced technology to "hostile or potentially hostile powers," which means the entire AST. It was this that prevented the UMF from selling arms to the Basal rebels in the ESE and, to their chagrin, allowed Paxton Arms to do so — although UMF lobbying did prevent a CNCS subsidy. The second restriction is on the sales or export of items deemed to be a "strategic federal resource." This also includes the sale of goods to the WFP and NLC, and was used to limit the proliferation of the Jaguar Heavy Gear prior to the War of the Alliance.

Before the Interpolar War, the Mekong Dominion was a special case, with strict limits placed on the importation of all Dominion goods as part of the ongoing economic confrontation between the two powers. With taxes and tariffs illegal in the UMF, banned Dominion goods were the principal source of revenue for smugglers in the Federation, though the growth of "gray" (semi-legal) imports before the outbreak of war had begun to cut into such operations.

With the outbreak of war between the CNCS and AST, all four members of the Southern Confederacy have been placed under total embargo and Mercantile trade negotiators have been recalled via the neutral NuCoal. Even trade within the UMF and CNCS has been curtailed, military equipment and food receiving priority over "luxury" goods. This has prompted a resurgence in smuggling activity, both into and out of the CNCS and its member states, to Badlands communities who serve as middlemen for the AST. Trade has opened up with the Free Emirates (the rebel regions of the ESE), who are now official Northern allies. The state of war, however, means this trade is largely militarily sponsored support and brings in little to no revenue.

Prior to the War of Alliance much of the CNCS' trade with Caprice was handled via the UMF and its two Gateships, the UMFGS *Lhaban Emuros* and UMFGS *Marcus Pohlo*. However, since the War of Alliance the vessels have fallen under the jurisdiction of first the Joint Terranovan Space Initiative (JTSI) and more recently the Northern Guard Space Service, and no trade missions have been allowed.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

She sat at the terrace bar, a favorite of vacationing corporate wage-slaves, dressed in the trideo-fabric thermal clothing that was en vogue among the bourgeois classes. Around her, small groups enjoyed the last of the afternoon sun, engrossed in the background hum of meaningless conversation. Many of the drones showed signs of intoxication — the apres-ski parties were already in full swing.

Madeleine Silva was stone cold sober. She had a job to do, but that didn't stop her from feeling disgust at the decadence of those surrounding her. She despised the Federation. Always had, and always would. A native of Zagreb, she felt the whole attitude of the UMF ran contrary to the interests of the people, the socialist leanings of her own city-state offering the morally superior path. Were it not for the UMFA's de-facto occupation of the city, they would have left the corrupt league long ago. But no one left the Federation. Or could they? Certainly one faction — the Rodinists — felt it might be possible, with outside help of course. And that help had a price.

So she was here in the last place God created. Outwardly calm and relaxed, appearing little different from the wage-slaves, she seethed inside. First the pickup from their new Northco exec had been botched. Faulks, their original contact, had disappeared some seasons back and the new guy was paranoid. Justifiably so as the Rodinists had gathered considerable *kompromat* on him. That didn't stop the little twerp from constantly changing the time and place of their meeting, however.

And now her contact was late. Probably still out skiing or enjoying the company of one of the numerous 'companions for hire,' she thought. Undoubtedly arranged the meeting here so he could enjoy a few days of the bourgeois lifestyle. The Southerners were little better than the Mercantilists, but if their help secured Zagreb's secession from the Federation, it was worth it.

A cough brought her attention back to the real world. A waiter stood there, bearing a tray and dressed in shirt-sleeves despite the bitter cold. He passed her an envelope and withdrew. She opened it and discretely read the contents. It was unsigned and simply read *they know*. The message could only be from Valence, and 'they' were most likely the FIA, the Mercantile internal security agency. If they knew of his involvement...

She stood quickly, leaving a handful of coins to pay for the drink, and hurried for the exit. Pulling her coat even tighter around her she headed away from the main bar towards the rarely used side steps that lead directly to the sidewalk. This route offered her the best chance of escaping any FIA agents in the bar.

However, on the third step from the top her foot encountered a thin coat of ice, sliding and throwing her off balance. For a brief instant she seemed to regain her footing but unfamiliar with arctic conditions her wild attempts to prevent a fall exacerbated the situation. She tumbled the remaining dozen steps and came to a halt with a sickening crack of bones. As her vision faded into darkness she heard a scream and someone yelling, "Help! There's been an accident."

In the terrace bar Anton Jaiputi allowed himself a brief smile. Arranging for the temporary disconnection of the stair's heating elements had been easy, as had spooking the suspect. The ambulance crew that took Silva away would be part of Northco security like himself, and after revealing her new source and contact she would simply disappear. Adrian Faulks had been most cooperative with Project Flytrap before his accident.



3.1 CAPITALISTIC DEMOCRACY

Born in the corporate “coup” that ended the Lyonesse League, the United Mercantile Federation’s system of government reflects a preoccupation with money and efficiency. Mercantilists see the corruption and waste of the unwieldy Lyonesse League government as the epitome of bad management, while the small, sleek and efficient Mercantile government exemplifies their ideal. The government is quite literally a business, so why not run it like one? Under Mercantile law, the UMF government is a publicly owned company, with the board members elected every five years through the purchase and use of electoral vouchers, in effect temporary company shares. Known as the Caucus, the board serves as the Federation’s executive body and is supported by a surprisingly small and efficient bureaucracy.

With many of the tasks usually associated with a government — social welfare, pensions, health care — part of the private sector, the central tenet of the UMF government is to ensure a favorable financial climate, at least for Mercantile concerns. This involves building and maintaining the Federation’s infrastructure, maintaining stability within the league and serving as arbiter and intermediary in internal and external disputes. In many regards it serves as a coordinating body for the city-state governments and corporate interests, ensuring minimum standards and compatible systems. In theory the government is apolitical, looking out for the Federation as a whole rather than a collection of interest groups, but in practice the UMF’s electoral system, combined with corporate ties and liberal use of *kompromat*, leads to a government constantly at odds with itself. Many Mercantile citizens care little for how the government functions, instead simply being glad that it does. In the United Mercantile Federation, success is everything.

3.1.1 THE CAUCUS

The Caucus serves as the decision making body of the United Mercantile Federation Government, debating and enacting all legislation that effects the Federation as a whole. Members of the Caucus are elected in the Grand Plebiscite and serve five-year terms. Each candidate to the Caucus stands in elections for a specific post — Finance, Defense, Foreign Relations, Justice, Culture, Natural Resources, Infrastructure, Human Resources and Economic Development — and if elected becomes secretary for that department. The Finance Secretary, also known as the Treasurer, chairs the Caucus and serves as head of state.

Given the involvement of finances, corporate politics play a major role in both the elections and day-to-day government. Any serious candidate needs to secure corporate patronage if they are to stand any chance of success in the elections. The corporate voting blocks far outweigh those of individual citizens, the largest purchasing tens of thousands of vouchers for each Grand Plebiscite. Even once in office, political lobbyists work to persuade the Caucus to support their views and advance their causes — any secretary may propose legislation — and those who seek re-election would be wise not to offend the voters who elected them. Furthermore, the byzantine web of favors, bribes and blackmail that pervades corporate society is equally prevalent in the Caucus.

The Treasurer, who also serves as head of state, chairs the nine-member body. The Caucus passes legislation by majority vote, though any secretary may call forward expert advisors to address the body. Once the Caucus has agreed upon a piece of legislation, its legal implications and interaction with other laws are closely examined and draft copies made available to the public for scrutiny and comment. Once these stages are complete, a process taking anywhere from ten days to a cycle, the draft legislation is again presented to the Caucus and if passed a second time it becomes law. It is, however, possible to fast-track laws. To do so, the proposing secretary must ask their proposal be accepted *prima facie* and provided the Caucus votes unanimously in favor and no legal obstacles are found to its implementation, it becomes law without public consultation or a second reading.

► Ministerial Positions of the Caucus

With the exception of the post of Defense Secretary, which is open only to members of the UMFA, each Caucus position is open to any UMF citizen who can post the requisite one million mark deposit (forfeit if the candidate polls less than five percent of the vote). If elected, the candidate must forfeit any non-governmental corporate interests for the duration of their tenure. All nine elections are held simultaneously and in each election a candidate may only stand for a single post. In the event of the death or resignation of a Caucus member, a replacement is not elected and instead their duties are divided among the remaining secretaries until the next Grand Plebiscite.

Position	Current Holder	Position	Current Holder
Defense Secretary (Director of UMFA)	Solomon Davi	Natural Resources Secretary	Shamil Paskin
Finance Secretary (Treasurer)	Solomon Davi*	Infrastructure Secretary	Patryk Quinlan
Foreign Relations Secretary	Karol Ohkawa	Human Resources Secretary	Genifa Langley
Justice Secretary	Faruq Elym	Economic Development Secretary	Nanase Sumeragi
Culture Secretary	Galina Yanayev		

*Under the provisions of the War Powers Act, Director Davi currently serves as acting Treasurer following the death of Yves Bandaras.

3.1.2 THE BUREAUCRACY

A small bureaucracy that provides legal and administrative support assists each department. These career civil servants have a poor reputation within the UMF, and are known derogatorily as “leeches.” This prejudice stems back to the corruption of the Lyonesse League, though most citizens today recognize that they are a necessary evil. The civil service is divided into distinct groups that support each secretariat. There is surprisingly little overlap of function, each relying on the others’ specialties. This is not to say that relationships between departments are always good: a number of clashes result from overlapping responsibilities, such as between the Infrastructure and Economic Development departments, leading to considerable back room diplomacy.

The principals that govern the Caucus — money, favors and blackmail — are equally true in the civil service, with corporate lobbies and interest groups seeking to advance their causes. In many regards, the non-elected nature of the bureaucracy leads to a more brutal style of politics; they do not need to worry about reelection and are less concerned about public relations (though no Mercantile citizen ever completely ignores his image). Furthermore, the civil service’s promotion structure, again following the corporate model, prompts bitter internal struggles. Despite this, the bureaucracy runs well, with competition between departments and working groups driving each to excel. As elsewhere in Mercantile life, results are the key. Provided the work is done promptly and efficiently, few care about the processes. The converse is also true — failure is frowned upon and severely punished — and forms the basis of much of the internal politics.

3.1.3 CITY GOVERNMENTS

The document that sets down the laws of the United Mercantile Federation, the UMF Charter, grants each city-state the right to maintain its own tradition of government. This results in a wide range of governments: a monarchy in Ashington, a matriarchal oligarchy in Swanscombe and a self-perpetuating socialist bureaucracy in Zagreb. The one requirement is that production and distribution systems be fully integrated with the UMF and obey Mercantile laws. Beyond that, each city is given free reign to govern itself, supported by federal economic or military aid if needed. Indeed, the UMF is barred from interfering in internal city-state matters, though it may take action if the city-state’s actions threaten the political or economic stability of the Federation. For example, the UMF did not interfere in the revolutions that occurred in Ashington in TN 1797 and 1814, except to make it clear secession from the UMF would not be tolerated.

3.1.4 THE SHADOW GOVERNMENT

While the Caucus rules the United Mercantile Federation, it is corporate interests who elect the secretaries, steer the process and have the power to destroy hopes of reelection. They manipulate the government to suit their needs and it is a brave secretary or Caucus who opposes them. Publicly each corporation wields its own influence through sponsorship of elections and via lobby groups. It is also widely accepted that, though obliged to forgo any non-governmental corporate interests, many secretaries maintain close links to sponsoring corporations and serve as advocates for their interests. Less well known is that the Federation’s largest companies form a shadow government, called the Corporate Council. The principle role of the Council is benign — to provide a forum in which inter-corporate disputes can be mediated — but it also serves a darker purpose. It is the Council that determines much of the UMF’s fiscal policy and steers relationships with its neighbors, wielding considerable influence in both the Caucus and the bureaucracy. Much of the Council’s efforts go towards ensuring a common purpose for Mercantile corporations, minimizing internal conflicts by laying down clear guidelines for areas of trade, pricing and so forth. They also work to deter foreign interests from gaining a major hold in the UMF or its foreign markets, using pressure on the Caucus to influence the CNCS.

Members of the Corporate Council (42 Autumn TN 1936)

Company	Abbr.	Representative	Principal Interests	Home Office
Northco Heavy Industries, Unlimited	NCO	Natalya Korolov	Heavy industry	Rapid City
Federation Telecommunications Trust	FTT	Isla Donovan	Telecommunications	Lyonesse
Abaline Research	ABR	Sara Wright	NNets and computing	Marathon
MainzFood	MFD	Caesar Moran	Food production	Mainz
United Mercantile Federation Army	UMFA	Solomon Davi	Military	Lyonesse
Ashington Power Corporation	APC	Hans William Ash	Power generation	Ashington
Hague-Monroe-Jordan	HMJ	Benicio Jordan	Finance	Swanscombe
Djakarta Point Mining Corporation	DMC	Kaori Ganendra	Mining	Djakarta Point
Marix Industries	MAI	Thomas Matinez	Consumer Electronics	Marathon
Preisner Heavy Industries	PHI	Misha Cadieux	Heavy industry	Rapid City
Federation Broadcasting Corporation	FBC	Cyndine Yakolev	Media	Canterbury
GalitzCo	CZC	Jared Garz	Performance enhancement	Pioneer

3.2 INFLUENTIAL GROUPS

Regarded as unproductive, political parties are unknown in the United Mercantile Federation, but this has not stopped the UMF from developing a Byzantine political structure. Politics and economics are two sides of the same coin, and the interplay of corporate interests has ensured a constant shifting of politics within the Caucus and the bureaucracy. Traditionally, religion has played a very minor role in the federation's affairs, but recent cycles have seen radical shifts in the balance of power in the UMF. First, the assassination of Second Follower Thor Hutchison led to a massive upswing in support for the Revisionist Church, which the Caucus could only ignore at its peril. The steady deterioration of relationships with the AST followed and, encouraged by hints of support from the Mekong Dominion, the CNCS declared war on the Southern alliance. This gave CNCS Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe far-reaching dictatorial powers which allowed her to intervene in Mercantile internal politics, suspending the Grand Plebiscite, confirming the current Caucus for another term and streamlining the league's economy to support the UMFA and the Northern Guard. Most recently, the tragic death of Treasurer Yves Banderas has led to the consolidation of political and military power in the hands of UMFA Director Solomon Davi, who also sits on the Corporate Council.

The following groups and individuals represent the principal political, religious, corporate and military interests in the United Mercantile Federation. All wield immense power, particularly in light of the on-going conflict against the AST, but are forced to be careful in their manipulations lest the Grand Marshal accuse them of interfering with the war effort.

► Natalya Korolov, CEO of Northco

Natalya Korolov is a product of the UMF's corporate system, raised in crèches while her parents worked, educated at Swanscombe University's prestigious business school. Sharply intelligent but blessed with an easy manner, she headed the student council between 1901 and 1903 and joined Northco as a junior executive in TN 1904 where her ability to get the most out of the system and to identify the needs — and weaknesses — of others made her a sought after part of the mammoth conglomerate. By the outbreak of war in TN 1913, she headed up the financial services division, despite being barely 35 cycles old. Following a major restructuring of the company necessitated by the CEF's repeated bombing of Rapid City, she found herself elevated to the Board of Directors in TN 1918. Since then, Korolov has been the epitome of a sharp businesswoman — charming, calculating, ruthless and slowly strengthening her grip on the company. Now controlling the largest block of Northco shares, some 29 percent, she serves as the company's CEO though she is repeatedly forced to beat off challenges from her archrival, Aidan Jarlson. Korolov is easily the most powerful executive in the Federation, heading the Corporate Council and maintaining numerous contacts in the government.



► Treasurer / Director of the UMFA Solomon Davi

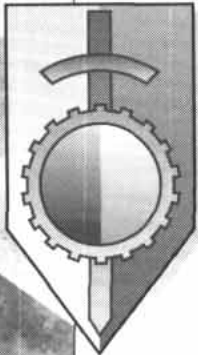
The death of Yves Banderas placed Solomon Davi at the head of the UMF Caucus, making him the head of both the UMF government and its military. A former member of Northco's Gemeinsam Guard, he transferred to the UMFA in TN 1906 and distinguished himself in the War of Alliance. Natalya Korolov persuaded him to run for the post of Secretary of Defense in the TN 1931 Grand Plebiscite, though his promotion earned him enemies among the high command — he was only a major general and most Directors are elected from the ranks of the Thanes (the highest UMFA rank). He has consolidated his grip on the UMFA over the last six cycles. Dedicated to the Federation, Davi believes the UMF's best hope is to remain within the CNCS and was a staunch opponent of Treasurer Banderas' moves toward alliance with the Mekong Dominion. His relationship with CNCS Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe is at best described as coolly professional, despite her recent confirmation of him as Treasurer pro-tem. Like many Mercantile citizens, Davi is only a token Revisionist and finds the Grand Marshal's acceptance of fundamentalist Revisionist doctrine disturbing. He feels it has clouded her judgment about the War and he has clashed with the Grand Marshal on several occasions.



► Galina Yanayev, Culture Secretary

A close ally of former Treasurer Banderas, culture secretary Yanayev is Director Davi's principal opponent in the Federation Caucus. At 94 cycles, the former lecturer in media studies at the University of Swanscombe is the oldest member of the Caucus. She has taught some notable personalities over the cycles of her career as a professor, including both Natalya Korolov and Grand Marshal Edden-Smythe in their time at the university. A superb orator, Yanayev feels too much power is currently in Davi's hands, especially given the provisions of the War Powers act. She is using her talents to try and persuade the other members of the group to reign him in, or otherwise define some limits to his authority. She is even subtly pressing the Caucus to take the unusual step of transferring the Treasurer's powers to another member of the body, either permanently or at least for the duration of the conflict. Several members are known to support her, but in private sessions Davi has accused Yanayev of attempting to prejudice the good order of the Federation government and the Northern Guard war effort in general. Given the state of war that exists with the Allied Southern Territories, this charge, which is tantamount to sedition, carries the death penalty. Although Davi has yet to proceed with the matter, the threat has prompted Yanayev to tread very carefully — though she continues her campaign, she is doing so quietly and with the utmost caution.





3.2.1 THE UNITED MERCANTILE FEDERATION ARMY (UMFA)

From its earliest days, the UMF has had a reputation for aggressive expansionism, as much by force as by diplomatic or economic means. The UMFA was the instrument of their martial ambition, a large and powerful multi-service armed force. Since joining the CNCS the size of the UMFA has decreased considerably, but this is made up for by the quality of its troops and equipment.

As with all major organizations in the UMF, the UMFA is legally a corporation in its own right, operating under the aegis of the UMF and receiving financial support from the central government. The UMFA also raises its own revenue from the promotion "ransoms" of its officers and from the sale of merchandise such as books, model kits and artwork relating to its units and equipment. The army's volume of income and expenditure, *combined with its corporate status, qualify it for a seat on the Corporate Council* though until Director Davi took up his seat in Autumn TN 1936, only two Directors had exercised this option. Furthermore, unlike most militaries, the UMFA is directly represented in the Mercantile government, its Director also holding the post of Secretary of Defense.

The Director works closely with colleagues in the Northern Guard, the WFA and the NAF. Save for the head of the WFA, who also serves as head of state for the Protectorate, the Director has the most wide-ranging powers in peacetime. The liberalization of the Guard following the War of Alliance has strengthened the position of the Director, but even so he must bow to the will of the CNCS Grand Marshal in times of war. At such times the Director still retains considerable influence through a seat on the Northern Guard's Joint Command Council. Indeed, in this capacity the Director commands both UMFA troops and Northern Guard forces operating in the Federation.

Furthermore, the Federation's War Powers Act grants the Director sweeping powers over the economy in times of war, giving military supplies and foodstuffs priority. Even in peacetime the UMFA maintains strong links with the Mercantile military-industrial complex. Many arms companies court the UMFA's patronage with large financial contributions and sponsorship of units. The military are also closely involved in the development of new technologies, with military pilots and designers working at corporate sites, and new equipment given to UMFA troops to field test. This has, however, earned the UMFA the reputation of being a "show room" for Northco products.

Vital Statistics ◀

Legal Name:	United Mercantile Federation Army (UMFA)
Headquarters:	South Wing, Building A, Lyonnesse, UMF
Director:	Director (Secretary of Defense) Solomon Davi
Goals:	Ensuring the stability and security of the UMF.

Organization ◀

The Director and the four theater commanders (or Thanes) form the UMFA Executive committee who advise the Caucus on military matters. Below them is the Federation Defense Council, known colloquially as "the board." This comprises the remaining members of the UMFA General Staff, the 23 service branch heads and the commanders of all 10 line divisions and fleets. The FDC determines the general policy of the UMFA, in line with the dictates of the Caucus and Executive, and is responsible for enacting policy in their commands. All members of the general staff are skilled politicians as well as military commanders, and those of senior rank are also acute businessmen. Associations with corporations other than the UMFA are common, a product of the sponsorship required to meet the promotion ransom.

The UMFA purchases Electoral Vouchers, but traditionally limits their use to elections for the Secretary of Defense. It occasionally forays into other elections, particularly those of Foreign Affairs and Finance Secretaries, but such occurrences are rare, usually only when the ascension of their preferred candidate as Secretary of Defense is assured and they wish to oppose (or support) particular candidates in the other elections.

Current Concerns ◀

As might be expected, the current war against the AST occupies the lion's share of the UMFA's attention. The UMFA is doing its utmost to win, knowing that a long, drawn out conflict will be prejudicial to the economic interests of the UMF, but the difficulty of coordinating operations with Norlight and Westerner forces has posed a number of problems. Furthermore, though war had been looming for some time, the UMF had not called up its Territorial forces, reservists who spend most of their time in civilian occupations, for fear of damaging the economy. Forming up these units posed a number of logistical problems in the first season of the conflict, occupying much of the FDC's attention.

Also, with the support of the Mekong Dominion failing to emerge, the Director and his subordinates fear that the Victoria Edden-Smythe's Revisionist fundamentalism — and the ambitions of former Treasurer Banderas — has led them into a dangerous situation. The quick resolution they hoped for is nowhere in sight, and the UMF is plunging deeper into a war that many think does not concern it.



3.2.2 THE CORPORATE COUNCIL

In TN 1551 the spiraling chaos of the Lyonesse League prompted the corporations upon which the nation's economy were based to band together and depose the corrupt league government. That meeting, known as the Lake Tristan Conclave, decided the fate of the Lyonesse League and both created and shaped the United Mercantile Federation. Over the cycles that followed, the companies continued to meet to discuss political and economic issues, formalizing their relationship in TN 1572 as the Corporate Council. It should be noted that while only twelve companies form the Council, every corporation in the UMF recognizes its authority and follows its dictates. Over the cycles several companies have learned to their chagrin what it means to challenge the Council. Their stock was attacked by the combined might of the Council and the companies either rendered worthless or taken over and dismembered. Unsurprisingly, such challenges are rare.

The Council serves a number of roles, but its principal concern is ensuring that conditions in the UMF and its neighbors remain favorable to Mercantile business concerns. Competition is a good thing, but too much can damage the market and the Council works to ensure that trade wars within and without the UMF do not escalate to a great extent. They attempt to mediate disputes between companies, but also seek to head off trouble by establishing pricing guidelines and distinct areas of influence. They also coordinate the Mercantile response to foreign threats, making it difficult for foreign concerns to establish a foothold in the UMF or Federation-dominated foreign markets. The classic example of this is Paxton Arms, whose attempts to break into the CNCS Gear market have long been stalled by Northco through the aegis of the Corporate Council. The Council also lobbies for reform within the CNCS, particularly the removal of trade barriers, knowing that a level playing field will turn their present success into future dominance.

Corporate and Federation interests do not always coincide, however, and it often falls to the Corporate Council to mediate a common path, or more often, to force the corporate line. Corporate influence over fiscal and foreign policy in both the Caucus and bureaucracy is considerable, a result of sponsorship of election campaigns, virtual domination of the electoral process, and by knowing what skeletons are in which closets. Persistent public lobbying lends this process an air of respectability, but it is a rare secretary or career civil servant who can hold out against pressure from a single corporation for long — none can withstand the combined efforts of the Corporate Council.

► Vital Statistics

Legal Name:	The Corporate Council
Headquarters:	None
Director:	Northco CEO Natalya Korolov
Goals:	To promote the financial well-being of the UMF and its member corporations.

► Organization

The organization of the Corporate Council is loose, but follows a set of guidelines that date back to the Conclave of TN 1551. The Council's number is restricted to twelve members. The UMF's top eight companies (calculated on the cycles' turnover as reported to the UMF's finance department) are granted automatic places on the Council. These eight members select the other four at the start of each cycle from any other Federation company with a turnover of at least 1 billion marks. Other corporations and individuals may appear before the council to present petitions or evidence, or to face charges.

The Council has no set venue or meeting schedule. Its members gather wherever and whenever they need to, though certain trade shows like the Rapid City Expo or the annual Lyonesse Business Awards are almost always accompanied by a meeting. Any member may call a session and propose business, but at least five days notice must be given. The Council is chaired by the head of the UMF's largest Corporation, which is usually (but not always) Northco.

► Current Concerns

Yves Banderas' attempts to ally the UMF with the Mekong Dominion have been of grave concern to the Corporate Council since it discovered his maneuvering in Winter TN 1935. Banderas' death has done nothing to alleviate their concerns, his so-called alliance having led the CNCS on the path to war with the AST. Recognizing the futility of attempting to oppose CMCS policy, the Corporate Council has decided to put its full weight behind the war effort, using the influence of Solomon Davi to steer the war goals to its advantage.

The Council has not ignored its more traditional concerns, namely the relationship between UMF corporations and their foreign rivals. The rise of Norlight manufacturers like Shaan Mechanics and the general efforts of the NLC to reduce its dependence on trade with the UMF have been the main topics of discussion over recent cycles, as has the rise of Paxton Arms. Indeed, it was Corporate Council lobbying that prompted the UMF to block northern efforts to use Paxton Arms to supply the Basal Rebels in the Eastern Suns Emirates, though they ultimately could not prevent the NLC brokering the deal (for more details, see **The Paxton Gambit**).



3.2.3 THE REVISIONIST CHURCH

Sorrento Revisionism is accepted as the principal religion of the United Mercantile Federation, but unlike in the NLC it is not granted the status of state religion. Indeed, the UMF's policy of allowing city-states to maintain their own cultural institutions and forms of government mean that Revisionism must compete with a wide range of religious creeds. Until recently most Mercantilists paid religion only lip service, be it Revisionism, Jerusalemism or the Blue Crescent.

That all changed with the assassination of Second Follower Thor Hutchison in Sorrento at the end of 1935. His murder on live trideo sent shock waves across the CNCS, sending grieving citizens to their local churches in the thousands. The reaction in the NLC was to be expected, but the scale of the public outpouring of grief in the UMF was both unexpected and unprecedented. Compared to its Norlight sister, the Revisionist Church in the Federation was small, more concerned with carrying out charitable acts than preaching to its small congregations. It has struggled to meet the challenges of the last cycle, but has persevered and shows every sign of emerging from the crisis stronger than ever before.

Historically, the church has had little influence over the UMF government and indeed many Mercantile corporations look on the church with scorn. Public sentiment, however, has forced both the corporations and the government to take notice. Companies have been forced to accede to workers' demands for time off work to attend Gentle Day services — Wednesday is not traditionally a day of rest in the UMF — though the establishment of corporate chapels in office buildings and factory complexes has allowed many corporate citizens to meet both their spiritual and contractual obligations. The Government has also been forced to pay closer attention to Revisionist concerns, though this does not sit well with the Caucus. Many Caucus Secretaries, including Director Davi, follow the Revisionist faith, but with one notable exception, they find the fundamentalism of the Sorrento Church unsettling. They are well aware that it was Revisionist demagoguery that swept the nation into an anti-Southern fervor and propelled them into war with the AST.

The Prophet's Shield (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p. 27) has exploited the changes in the UMF to expand its membership and influence in the Federation. Previously treated as little more than a curiosity, the Shield's power has increased considerably over the last few seasons, particularly in Rapid City and Lyonesse, the site of their principal meeting houses. Their membership now includes a number of senior corporate figures, as well as a Caucus member: Secretary of Economic Development, Nanase Sumeragi.

Vital Statistics

Legal Name:	The Sorrento Revisionist Church of the UMF
Headquarters:	Reiss Cathedral, Lyonesse, UMF
Director:	Senior Reverend Donal Severdzan
Goals:	Charitable work in the UMF; Supporting the Revisionist agenda in the CNCS

Organization

The Mercantile arm of the Sorrento Revisionist Church lacks much of the formal structure associated with the Norlight branch, though it has many features in common. The UMF is divided into three regions, each headed by a Senior Reverend, though Senior Reverend Severdzan of the Lyonesse District oversees all Revisionist activity in the Federation. Below the Senior Reverends, maintaining day-to-day contact with the people of the UMF, are the Reverends. These are priests and monks (though monks are rare in the UMF) who have shown particular dedication to the Revisionist Church. A few serve as regional administrators, but the majority remain with their churches or monasteries.

While Priests are responsible for leading congregations and instructing the faithful, the Mercantile arm of Revisionism also makes use of laymen. Principally this has been to distribute food and alms to the needy, but the unexpected upswing in Revisionist fervor has prompted a number to be employed as lay ministers, helping bring the word of Mamoud to the people. They are regarded as only a temporary measure, and the church is seeking to increase the number of ordained clergy in the UMF.

Current Concerns

For the immediate future, the greatest concern of the Revisionist Church in the UMF is to cater to the needs of its adherents in the Federation. Priests have scheduled additional services to meet the demand, but with churches poorly sited and often neglected, many meeting places have been converted into temporary places of worship. The lack of ordained priests has presented a major problem, though the acceptance of lay ministers has eased the burden somewhat.

In the long term, there are serious concerns as to whether church attendance will remain high or will fade with the passage of time. Already the numbers in many city-states have begun to drop off, though they still remain considerably higher than before the dreadful events of 1 Autumn TN 1935. In rural areas attendance figures show no sign of declining, and these are the regions poorest served by the church.



3.2.4 THE FORZI CARTEL

Where there is legitimate endeavor, the criminal underclass lurks in the shadows to exploit it. Most city-states have their criminal underworld, dealing in stolen goods, trafficking illegal material, or extorting money. Much of this "industry" is dominated by the Forzi Cartel, one of the groups based in the CNCS protectorate of Wounded Knee. The Forzi have built their criminal empire by suborning existing enterprises, using strong-arm tactics — with ultra-violent object lessons for the recalcitrant — to persuade the groups of the wisdom of cooperating with the cartel. The Forzi dominated Wounder politics throughout most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, using the vast income from their affiliates in the UMF to finance an extravagant lifestyle and keep the other groups in check. However, the Kolson family usurped their leadership of the protectorate at the end of the nineteenth century. The Forzi immediately rebounded, smuggling goods, people and information into and out of CEF territory during the War of Alliance, a tradition they have continued in recent years with their covert mediation between Taipan Arron Logan and Treasurer Yves Banderas. The cartel is also believed to have extensive contacts with the Badlands Revolutionary Front (BRF).

The most important center of Forzi business is the UMF, where they specialize in gambling, money lending and extortion, though they also smuggle high-value goods — including people — into and out of the UMF. The Forzi appear as an all-pervasive force in the Mercantile underworld, their influence strongest in the west of the country, particularly in the corporate centers of Lyonnesse, Marathon and Rapid City, though almost every city in the UMF contains Forzi-controlled affiliates. The cartel's inability to break into the lucrative markets of Djakarta Point has been a bone of contention with a succession of Forzi leaders, who have instead settled for sponsoring a series of faction wars in the crime-riddled city. Roman Forzi, who has recently become responsible for all Forzi operations in the CNCS, has put this disappointment behind him and continued to exploit the Kolson-dominated NLC. From 1918 to 1934, Roman was in charge of Norlight operations and led a bloody (and ongoing) war with the Kolson cartel. Kolson lieutenant Sundra Turai responded with attacks on Forzi holdings in the UMF, trying to erode Roman's support among the Forzi hierarchy. Indeed, Nelis Forzi (Roman's elderly uncle, who had ruled UMF operations since the 1870s) was very displeased. Roman solved the problem by assassinating his uncle and taking over all Northern operations. Cartel chief Maraka Forzi had little choice but to accept his cousin's coup. Many Forzi capos have come to realize that Roman is now the de facto leader of the cartel.

Traditionally, the Caucus and the corporations have taken a hands-off approach to organized crime in the UMF, treating the Forzi as an unsavory but necessary corollary to their activities. The expansion of the Kolson-Forzi gang war into Federation territory, however, has prompted both the Federal Intelligence Agency (FIA, the national security service) and corporate security forces to take a tough line against any of the Wounded Knee cartels.

► Vital Statistics

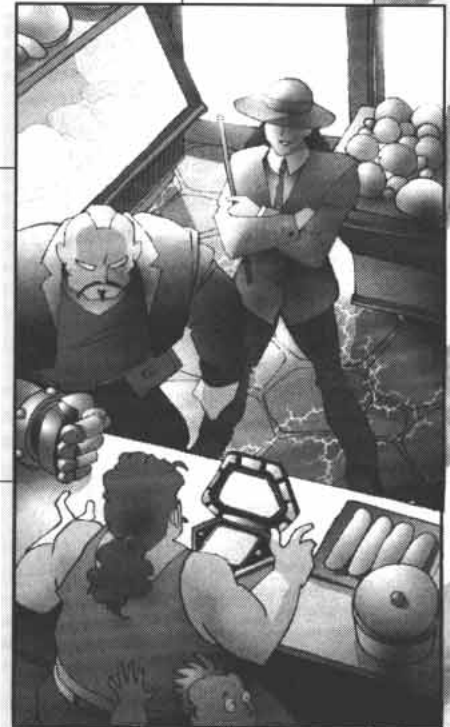
Legal Name:	The Forzi Cartel
Headquarters:	Wounded Knee
Director:	Roman Forzi (Northern operations); Maraka Forzi (cartel head)
Goals:	Power, profit and influence.

► Organization

The Forzi Cartel uses a rigid, authoritarian structure, often described by outsiders as a bloody dictatorship. All members are bound by a strict code that governs their relationships both within the cartel and with outsiders, the most notable provision of which is an oath of secrecy. All infractions are dealt with harshly and executions, usually by garrote, are common. Sharply intelligent, but also prone to insane rages, Roman Forzi rules the cartel with an iron hand, demanding unquestioning loyalty from his subordinates. Forzi commands the cartel's activities through a strict hierarchy of lieutenants, divided by area of interest and geography, though he frequently takes direct charge of key operations. With the outbreak of the Interpolar War, Roman has found he must travel across the North and Badlands to secure Forzi concerns. He has handed over command of the war against the Kolson cartel to Chrystof Donnel, head of the Rapid City office. An able businessman, Donnel is known as "the surgeon."

► Current Concerns

The expansion into the Kolson holdings in the NLC has been the focus of the Forzi's efforts for the last three cycles, though the expansion of the conflict into the Federation has provoked considerable concern. Rather than backing down, the Forzi have reacted in typical fashion, stepping up their activities — and the level of violence — in an effort to end the conflict. Bombings and drive-by shootings have become commonplace and Forzi agents have twice attempted to assassinate Sundra Turai, prompting the Kolsons to reciprocate with attacks against Donnel and several other Forzi notables. The UMF authorities have likewise arrested many members of both Wounded Knee factions, though corporate security agencies have shown themselves to be as ruthless as the cartels in their efforts to end the dispute. Meanwhile, the distraction of the Forzi-Kolson war has allowed the Badlands-based Granis Cartel to strengthen their position on the Federation's southern fringe.



3.3 REGIONAL GROUPS OF INFLUENCE

Though national concerns dominate the politics of the United Mercantile Federation, the league's constitution grants each city state the right to manage its own affairs and to maintain the culture and system of government it had when it was incorporated into the UMF. This diversity is part of what gives the Federation its strength. Its people are allowed to work in a manner that suits them rather than being forced to comply with the often blinkered views of central government. They adapt to local conditions, political and cultural as much as geographic, making use of their detailed knowledge to make best use of resources. Most local authorities work in harmony with the UMF central government, though local interests do not always coincide with those of the Caucus or the corporations.

Ashington is a good example of this, ruled by a monarchy but firmly integrated into the corporate structure of the league. Internal politics sometimes place the interests of the city-state at odds with the UMF, prompting occasional federal intervention.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is Zagreb, staunchly opposed to the corporate system but a grudging participant to ensure the city-state's survival. The federal presence in Zagreb is high profile, carrying the threat of intervention should the city's rulers step out of line. Though Zagreb's government follows the dictates of the UMF, many of its citizens do not, forming a communist resistance known as the Rodinists.

Lastly, though Revisionism is the dominant religion of the UMF, it is far from being the only one. Jerusalemism forms a sizable majority and nowhere is that more obvious than the matriarchal city-state of Swanscombe. The Swanscombe Jerusalemite Church serves as de-facto ruler of that city-state and is viewed as a slap in the face by the Revisionist Church. Though Swanscombe has never shown anything but loyalty to the UMF, the rising tide of Revisionism in the North has brought Jerusalemite fidelity into question.



Major-General Ferdinand Loew, Commander of UMFA Military Intelligence

Born in Pioneer in TN 1865, Ferdinand Loew is of medium height and medium build with a plain face and no distinguishing marks. Academically he was average too, performing neither spectacularly well nor badly. He was an average guy. In short, the perfect spy. He joined the UMFA in TN 1885, serving first in the infantry but transferring to the Special Forces command in TN 1888. During a joint SpecFor/Military Intelligence reconnaissance mission against Port Oasis he came to the attention of Colonel Ali Bacall, head of the MI Field Agents Corps, who arranged for his transfer to Military Intelligence.

Loew retired from active duty in TN 1909 and took command of the Field Agent Corps, but the drastic losses against the CEF prompted him to reenter active service, undertaking several dangerous missions against Earth forces in the Barrington Basin. With the UMFA reliant on information provided by Military Intelligence in this time of crisis, many members of the high command actively court Loew's support, giving him considerable power in the Federal Defense Council. As a former ally of Yves Banderas he is not on good terms with Solomon Davi, and the Director is using MI's "intelligence failure" with regards to the Mekong Dominion alliance in attempts to force Loew's resignation.

Secrets Within Secrets

With three government bodies — the Department of Military Intelligence, the Special Operations Executive (foreign operations) and the Federal Intelligence Agency (domestic espionage and counter-espionage) — as well as allied agencies in the CNCS, it was quickly realized that there was a need for an information "clearing house." As a result, the UMF formed the Joint Intelligence Council (JIC) in TN 1822. Intended to form a bridge between Military Intelligence, the SOE, the FIA and their respective bodies in allied nations, there is considerable divergence between the intended and actual operation of the JIC. Whilst the UMF's civilian and military agencies had been cooperating for some time, the governments of the CNCS allies were less willing to share intelligence fearing that both would serve as conduits to the corporations, allowing them to tighten their stranglehold on the CNCS economy.

The Special Operations Executive is divided into three distinct corps, though only two, espionage and analysis, are known to the public. Members of the third, the Intervention Units, are trained in assassination, kidnapping and sabotage. Its members are outsiders, not officially part of the Federation government and form 'Special Groups' that are the UMF's dirty tricks units. Most Special Groups are deployed in the AST, particularly the Mekong Dominion, but several operate in Port Arthur and Peace River, as well as the CNCS. Legally, the SOE cannot operate within the UMF itself, but the Caucus, meeting in closed session, may grant special dispensation.

Unlike the SOE, which has developed a reputation for malpractice, the Federal Intelligence Agency has done its best to remain squeaky clean. Part of the justice ministry, it handles multi-jurisdiction criminal cases in addition to its role as the Federation's main counter-intelligence agency. However, the FIA too has a dark side with teams carrying out illegal searches (physical and electronic), wiretaps and surveillance. Recently a whole team based in Djakarta Point was suspended pending an internal investigation, suspected of complicity with criminal activities.



3.3.1 THE ASHINGTON MONARCHY

Ashington is a strange blend of a corporation and a hereditary monarchy, founded by an outcast Terran prince in the 10th century. The head of the royal family, the Prince (the title is used irrespective of gender) exerts dictatorial powers over the city-state, although since joining the United Mercantile Federation in TN 1620 there have been a number of reforms and the monarch is advised by an elected advisory council. The Prince also serves as the President of the Ashington Power Corporation, the UMF's largest power utility and one of the most profitable companies in the Federation, claiming a seat on the Corporate Council. The Royal family also has major interests in a range of other commercial interests, including the Ashington Import Corporation (AIC), a minor import-export agency, and Racine-Ash Distribution, a long-haul distribution company operating across the CNCS.

Firmly entrenched in both the corporate and political spheres, the Ash family is among the most powerful in the UMF. This has led to a tendency for its members — and citizens of Ashington — to regard themselves as superior to the rest of the UMF. Furthermore, some branches of the family feel that Ashington should part ways with the Federation, returning to the independent status it enjoyed before TN 1620. These secessionist feelings have twice caused major unrest in the city, first in TN 1797 (allegedly with Mekong Dominion support during the Second Merchant War) and again in TN 1814. On both occasions only a federal show of force prevented Byron Ash, who had deposed his brother, from seceding from the UMF. The current prince, Hans William Ash VI, is an advocate of remaining in the UMF but several of his immediate family are less convinced of the benefits of the arrangement.

Nepotism is rife in the city-state, exemplified by the Prince's control over the Ashington Royal regiments. Membership of these units is tightly controlled, open only to those born in Ashington and given out by the Prince to nobles and commoners alike as rewards — the units' first loyalty is to the Prince. Furthermore, the Prince's daughter and heir, Hannah Ash, rose to command the Second Royals barely five cycles after graduating from the Lyonesse Military Academy and at 32 cycles is the youngest colonel in the UMFA. Indeed, many members of the city's nobility have military experience, regarded as little more than completing their education. The UMFA does not like being used as a finishing school for ladies and gentlemen, but the noble families have made generous donations to allow the practice to continue.

► Vital Statistics

Legal Name:	The Royal Court of Ashington
Headquarters:	Sun Palace, Ashington, UMF
Director:	Prince Hans William Ash VI
Goals:	Upkeep of the monarchy and the city-state

► Organization

The nobility of Ashington are broken into two distinct groups: the Royal Family and the Estates. The Royal Family consists of the Prince and his immediate family, while the Estates are the lesser nobles of Ashington — all of whom claim Ash blood. The Prince has the power to nominate his own successor, though traditionally this is determined by primogeniture among his children. This is not automatic, however, and there have been cases of the throne passing to younger children or even to another branch of the family.

Since joining the UMF, the Prince has been advised by a body known as the Privy Council. This twelve-member committee contains eight members elected from the commons and four from the Estates. The Council advises the Prince in a wide range of matters, from public opinion to inter-league affairs, but has little power of its own. Nevertheless, the council's influence is considerable, especially over weak-willed rulers. The current chairman of the committee is a member of the Estates, Count Mykel Galen-Ash, who unknown to the Prince is head of the Order of the Chain, a group of nobles who believe Ashington's destiny lies outside the UMF.

► Current Concerns

The presence of power generating facilities, as well as major rail yards and transshipment depots for trade into and across the Western Desert, make Ashington a prime military target, and the city-state was attacked repeatedly in the St. Vincent's War and the War of Alliance. The Prince is concerned that in the current conflict Ashington will once more become the focus of military action. To date the AST has refrained from attacking the city-state directly, but as the war progresses such attacks appear increasingly likely. Similarly, with the Second Royal regiment off in the thick of the fighting, Hans William fears for the safety of his daughter and has made secret provisions for the succession to pass to his younger son, Frederick, should something happen to both himself and his heir. The outbreak of war has also seen public demonstrations, claiming that the city and its troops have no part in this "Revisionist crusade." A growing minority, secretly manipulated by Count Mykel, are calling for the city-state to cut its ties with the UMF and CNCS, declaring its neutrality for the duration of the Conflict. The intelligence forces of the UMF are as yet only dimly aware of this movement, but they are following several leads. Some are very anxious to deal with "Ashington traitors."



3.3.2 THE RODINISTS

Faced with ruin at the hands of the much larger UMF, the city-state of Zagreb chose incorporation into the Federation over the destruction of their way of life. The Federation's constitution allowed the city-state to continue its authoritarian practices, including what amounts to "thought police" and education camps. These have horrified the rest of the Mercantile population, but the UMF has no legal jurisdiction over matters deemed internal to a city-state. Instead both the Federation and CNCS have brought indirect pressure to bear, with measures including a lower defense priority, smaller government subsidies and an increase in red tape, all to no avail. In fact such actions have only served to strengthen the resolve of the Zagrebites, leading to the formation of a mini-league, the Social Economic Pact, with Timmins and several minor Badlands communities. The most recent development — and perhaps the most dangerous — is the formation of an extremist group known as the Rodinists whose intention is to strike back at the "capitalist oppressors."

Seeking independence for Zagreb, the Rodinists have staged a number of terrorist attacks on UMFA personnel and federal government employees, ranging from car bombs and sniper attacks to disrupting power and water supplies to UMF buildings and compounds. These actions, combined with the outbreak of war with the AST, have prompted the UMFA to deploy patrols on the city's streets, though these too have come under attack by the Rodinists. Both the FIA and the Northern Guard Intelligence Service are active in the city-state and have carried out a number of operations against suspected members of the organization. While it has netted some low ranking terrorists, these operations have been counterproductive, perpetuating the cycle of violence. Allowing the terrorists free reign would provide the AST with a major opportunity to destabilize the CNCS.

Not all of the Rodinist's activities are directed against the UMF. They are also involved in political agitation among the city's population, building support for their eventual goal of secession from the UMF. Several cells are tasked with raising funds for the group, mostly by voluntary contributions but also by theft and extortion. Unbeknownst to most Rodinists, the group is manipulated by the SRID and receives support from the AST via Timmins. Principally financial but including some military hardware, this aid has slowed since the outbreak of hostilities and the capture of several Republican agents by the FIA. Despite this there are several secret caches of arms and equipment in the city, waiting for the people to rise up and free Zagreb from the yolk of Mercantile oppression.

Vital Statistics

Legal Name:	None
Headquarters:	Zagreb, UMF
Director:	Red Wolf (Censor Marya Faraday)
Goals:	Zagreb's independence from the UMF.

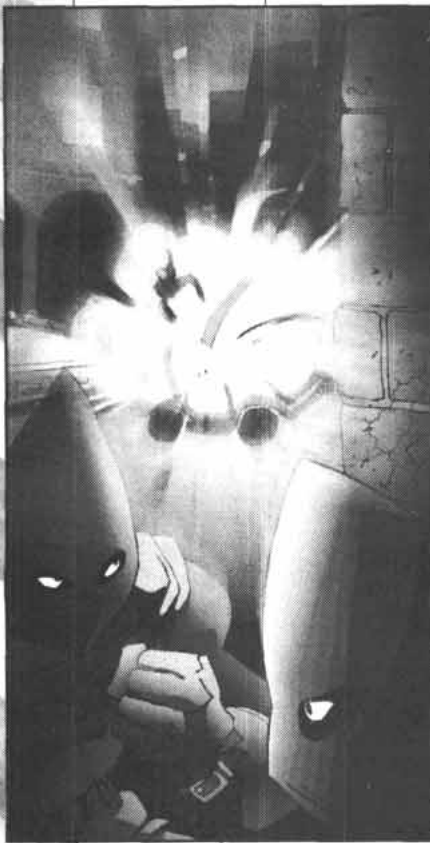
Organization

The Rodinists use a cell structure, each containing up to a dozen members and isolated from other groups. Only the cell leader knows how to contact other cells and that is accomplished through a mix of dead-letter drops and pre-arranged meetings. This system ensures that if the FIA or NGIS captures an operative, only their immediate contacts are at risk. If a group is believed to be compromised by the security services it is simply abandoned by the organization, receiving no further orders. The decision making body of the Rodinists is called the Revolutionary Command Council and consists of seven members. Great pains are taken to conceal the identity of these individuals, even from one another, with masks and pseudonyms used at all meetings. A woman known as Red Wolf chairs the council, supported by the head of military operations, a man known as Wyvern. However, Red Wolf is unaware that Wyvern is in fact a member of the SRID and has been using her to steer the Rodinist agenda to the Republic's advantage. At his urging, members of the JCC who have questioned the aggressive policy have been cowed into submission or else have disappeared and been replaced by more sympathetic or malleable individuals.

Chief Censor Johan Duvall privately supports the Rodinist's goals of independence from the UMF but feels their methods risk bringing the wrath of the UMF down on the city-state. He is unaware that Red Wolf is in fact one of his aides, Censor Marya Faraday.

Current Concerns

The Rodinists wish to break Zagreb out of the UMF, and see the Interpolar War as their best opportunity to do so in many cycles. They believe that with the UMF distracted, Zagreb can shatter its bonds and enter into full partnership with Timmins and its Badlands allies. Whether the Social Economic Pact (the communist alliance between the cities) would remain within the CNCS is a major point of debate in the JCC, with opinions divided on the issue. Wyvern cares little either way, or even whether the Rodinist cause succeeds, so long as it forces the UMF and CNCS to commit military and intelligence resources to the region. Zagreb is little more than a distraction from the concerns of the Interpolar War, but one which could explode in their faces should they ignore it.



3.3.3 THE SWANSCOMBE JERUSALEMITE CHURCH

When large-scale colonization of Terra Nova began in the late 5th Terranovan century, the colonists included a number of members of the Roman Catholic Church, seeking to administer to the spiritual needs of the population. By the late 7th Century a number of permanent religious institutions had been established, including, in TN 692, the Convent of St. Justine on the Northern Plain that would one day become the city-state of Swanscombe. The sisters chose to remain on Terra Nova when the Church purchased the world of New Jerusalem in AD 5415, and thus when Earth withdrew from its colonies in 5790 (TN 1454) they had little choice but to remain behind. Widely respected by the people of the Northern Plains and considered neutral in the disputes that raged after Earth's abandonment of its colonies, the Swanscombe Convent and the town that surrounded it became a focus for refugees. In a bid to avert chaos in the power vacuum, the order's Mother Superior took control of the city, imposing the matriarchal system that remains today and instigating reforms that allowed the Church to join the Jerusalemite alliance of faiths. Indeed, as the cycles have passed the Mother Superior's power, though centered on the city-state, has spread across the UMF.

Swanscombe Jerusalemism forms the UMF's second largest religion, with almost five percent of the UMF population devoted adherents. This mix of political and spiritual power gives the Mother Superior considerable influence across the UMF and her status as head of a city-state gives her unimpeded access to the Caucus. In the pragmatic UMF, such influence is viewed with some amusement, though not by all. Indeed, though considerably larger, the Mercantile Revisionist Church envies the secular power of Swanscombe Jerusalemism.

Even after almost 500 cycles, the Swanscombe Church retains a firm grip on the city-state's reins of power. Even though only thirty percent of the city's population are Jerusalemite, many of the city's female population have supported the Matriarchy. This has waxed and waned over the years but despite the occasional male revolt, swiftly put down by the all-female and Jerusalemite-dominated police force, there has never been a serious threat to Matriarchal or Jerusalemite rule. Until, that is, the rise of Fundamentalist Revisionism.

► Vital Statistics

Legal Name:	The Jerusalemite Church of Swanscombe
Headquarters:	St. Justine's Convent, Swanscombe, UMF
Director:	Mother Superior Frances Hamilton
Goals:	Promotion of the Swanscombe Jerusalemite Faith; Governance of the City-state of Swanscombe.

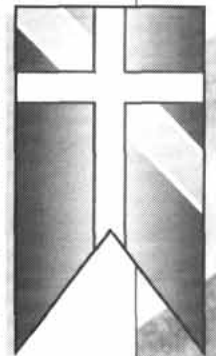
► Organization

The Mother Superior of the Swanscombe Convent serves as head of the city's government as well as serving as the head of the local sect of Jerusalemism. She chairs the Ecclesiastical Council, formed of the Convent's three senior nuns, who both govern the convent and form the executive of the city-state's all-female government. This body drafts legislation and represents the city-state to the UMF government, but unlike the UMF Caucus its powers are not absolute. All decisions are subject to ratification by the nine-seat secular city council, though this has traditionally been a formality. Since Hutchison's assassination, the secular council has repeatedly blocked the Ecclesiastical Council's decrees, effectively paralyzing the city-state's government.

The structure of the Jerusalemite Church is notably different from the city-state government for its incorporation of male bishops and priests, albeit only outside Swanscombe itself. Each of the six senior bishops — who may be male or female — are responsible for a region known as a diocese, principally within the UMF but also including parts of the WFP and the Badlands. Each bishop is responsible for all the churches and priests within that region and has the power to confer holy orders. It should be noted, however, that though ruled by the Mother Superior, the Swanscombe Jerusalemite Church is not strictly matriarchal. As its influence expanded throughout the UMF, male priests and even bishops have joined the church and taken holy orders, though both the head of the Church and the Bishop of Swanscombe are always female.

► Current Concerns

The upsurge in Revisionist Fundamentalism led by Thor Hutchison worried the last three Mother Superiors, but the religious apathy of the UMF drastically reduced its impact on Swanscombe. The massive upsurge in Revisionist sentiment since the Second Follower's murder is of grave concern to the current incumbent, Mother Superior Frances Hamilton. Almost overnight, Swanscombe Jerusalemism has become a church under siege, deemed unacceptable by many in the Revisionist faith. The UMF is a tolerant nation and Jerusalemites have never had need to fear, but over the last cycle they have been verbally and physically abused, their homes attacked and their jobs threatened. Furthermore, angry crowds have twice besieged the convent, most notably on 22 Autumn TN 1935 when a mob attempted to storm the government complex. The Mother Superior escaped unharmed but there were deaths in both the mob and among the police who attempted to restore order. Hamilton believes worse is to come, and is considering reducing the role of the church in governing the city-state in hopes that distancing the church from the state will calm the religious tensions.



FISH IN A BARREL

Andrei felt a sharp tug as the drogue chute deployed, pulling the pallet from the hold of the ground-skimming cargo plane. Yet the sudden G-forces of that operation paled when compared to the shock that reverberated when the almost ten-ton load struck the ground and bounced several times, throwing up a huge pall of dust. The third bounce became a skid and the Grizzly ceased straining against its restraints. Almost before his senses cleared he hit the switch that released the clamps binding his machine's torso to the shock pallet. Pulling the machine into a sitting position, he released first the leg clasps and then those binding the feet. Then, with a delicate shifting of the machine's balance, he coaxed the lumbering Gear to its feet.

So far the operation appeared to be a success. Thinking they faced a light section, the enemy had committed their reserves to eliminating the Federation unit, and no sooner had the two forces engaged than the trap was sprung. Light and medium paratrooper Gears would already be engaging the enemy's rear echelon and heavy support Gears like his own were beginning to enter the fray.

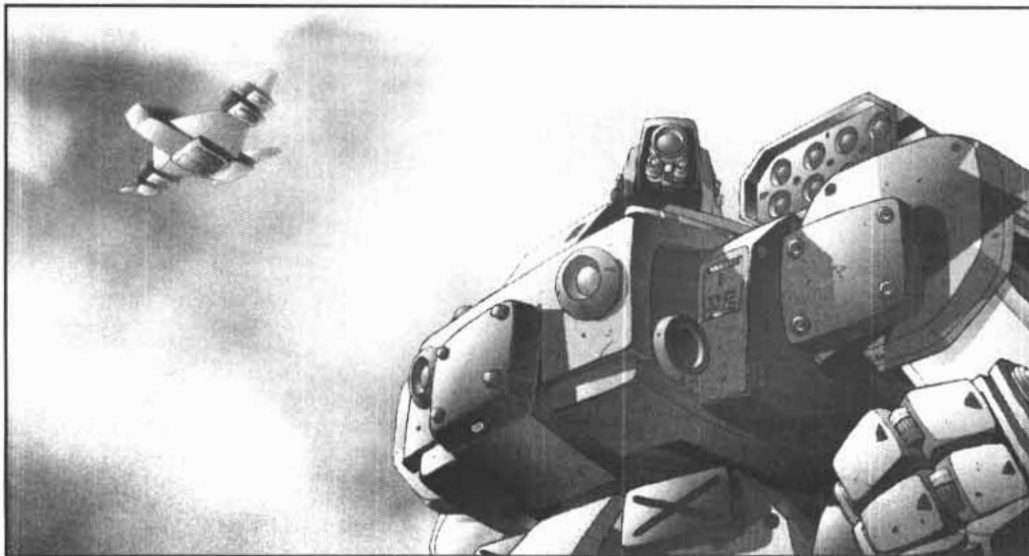
Turning the Gear through a full circle, he surveyed the battlefield. He already knew where combat was occurring but sought a brief moment to familiarize himself with the terrain. Studying maps back at the jump-off point was a poor substitute for being down in the field, and he immediately noticed that the low ridge designated Hill 2618 was covered in a multitude of boulders, some as big as the Grizzly but most no larger than a human head. The rough terrain would prevent their using the swift secondary movement system, but this was of negligible importance over such a short distance. Victory was never in doubt.

Pushing the Gear into a loping run, Andrei moved toward the rendezvous point, sweeping the Grizzly's autocannon from side to side, ready to engage any hostile Gears. Sensors picked up movement to the right, roughly 600 meters away, its IFF transponder identifying it as a friendly Ferret. Perkins, he assumed, heading for the rendezvous.

Then a second blip appeared, and a third. This time the display showed them in red. Enemy forces. The closest was barely 300 meters away, presumably concealed in the clutter of the boulder field. The pilot was obviously inexperienced — had he remained concealed, the two Federation Gears would have bypassed his position, giving the Jäger either a clear shot at the heavier machines' rear, or else a clear avenue of escape. Instead his panic earned the pilot little more than a quick death as a single volley from the Grizzly's main gun swatted it to the floor. It struggled to rise and a second shot ruptured the fuel tank.

Three hundred meters further on, the two Federation Gears crested the ridge of Hill 2618 and looked down into the battle. Their task was simple — head off any enemy units attempting to escape through the valley below. In conjunction with units he could see arriving on Hill 2619 they would enfilade the fleeing troops, crushing them in the escalating crossfire. And here was the first catch of the day. A lone Iguana was withdrawing towards them, trailing the wreckage of its left arm behind it.

Canting the torso of his machine slightly forward, he primed his mortar and waited for the tone that signaled Perkins' painting of the target. He didn't have to wait long, and as the first shells arced towards the stricken Gear he couldn't help but liken the engagement to shooting fish in a barrel.



4.1 THE NORTH

The UMF rebuffed early attempts by the NLC and WFP to form a Northern Alliance and only reversed their stance after being defeated by the AST in the Merchant War. They have never been happy with the CNCS, disliking the need to work in conjunction with historical enemies and feeling that many of the alliance's provisions are intended to restrain the Federation's mercantile activities. In light of the Southern power block and after living through St. Vincent's War and the War of Alliance, they now view it as a necessary evil.

The NLC's historical dominance of CNCS institutions has also been a major sticking point. The animosity it engenders has threatened on several occasions to break the CNCS apart and contributed greatly to the Judas Syndrome. The UMF felt that its interests were being deliberately snubbed by Valeria, prompting them to take the unprecedented step of enacting trade embargoes on their allies. Only the CEF invasion prevented the situation in the CNCS from deteriorating into open conflict, fostering greater understanding within the alliance and also with the members of the AST. The ascension of Field Marshal Anders von Breslau to the Norlight presidency continued this détente, allowing the UMF and WFP a greater say in alliance affairs and granting the Northern Guard independence from the NLC. The Federation has taken a dim view, however, of NLC President Adjanni's attempts to regain control of the CNCS, particularly Norlight initiatives to weaken the Mercantile hold on the Northern economies.

With CNCS politics adrift, Treasurer Banderas sought to forge a new alliance with the Mekong Dominion, but instead of creating a new power block, his Mekong contacts suggested the possibility that the Dominion would stay neutral in an Interpolar War. With the UMF media laying blame for the assassination of Thor Hutchison squarely at the feet of the Southern Republic, the Federation's diplomatic efforts looked set to pay massive dividends.

However, promises and actions are not the same thing, and the Federation has come to regret its involvement in the war. Since the outbreak of hostilities in the Summer of TN 1936, the UMF has found itself with a two-front war. On the one hand, its military forces have been incorporated into the Northern Guard and have been fighting those of the AST in the Badlands. On the other, it has been fighting an economic war with the Mekong Dominion, where stocks and shares replace bullets and bombs.

► Victoria Edden-Smythe, Grand Marshal of the Northern Guard

Born in Swanscombe in TN 1877, the future Grand Marshal of the Northern Guard had a troubled childhood. Her father was imprisoned when she was barely six cycles old for involvement in a failed uprising, and with her mother always working to pay the bills, Victoria was left to her own devices. Perpetually angry and with a hair-trigger temper, she fell in with a juvenile gang, eventually becoming their leader. Her conversion to Revisionism in TN 1895 did little to calm her wild streak, and her teachers were amazed when she secured a place at Swanscombe University in TN 1899. Despite heated arguments with tutors and fellow pupils she persevered at her studies, finding a suitable outlet for her natural aggression in the UMFA's University Corps. However, disaster struck TN 1902 when a minor disagreement escalated into a major confrontation, ending with her striking the head of the student council, who happened to be a close friend. The incident occurred in public and the authorities had little choice but to expel her. Having shown an aptitude for the military in the University Corps, Victoria joined the Northern Guard in TN 1903, harnessing her temper and quickly rising through the ranks. By the time of the CEF landings she was a colonel and her drive and bravery ensured that by war's end in 1917 she was a General. In TN 1918, when Anders von Breslau became president of the NLC, Victoria was promoted to Grand Marshal, a position she still holds.

She remains committed to Revisionism, having joined the Prophet's Shield in TN 1930, and was devastated by the assassination of her friend and ally Thor Hutchinson. Her influence is largely responsible for the broad-based upsurge in support for Revisionism in the UMF. A firm believer that humanity needs strong moral guidance, she views those who murdered Hutchinson to be beyond redemption and promises that justice will be served.

► A Very Mercantile War

Though the first shots of the Interpolar War occurred at Rahnguard Oasis, the CNCS and the UMF in particular braced for conflict on another front: attempts by the AST to ruin their economy. The AST's first target was the UMF stock exchange, and by extension that of the CNCS. Having experienced economic warfare firsthand in the Second Merchant War (TN 1795-1799) and already involved in a low-level economic war with the Mekong Dominion, the stock exchange had numerous safeguards against such tampering and the effects of the Southern action were minimal. This did not stop "legitimate" attacks on the stocks and shares, with Dominion shell companies like Ultra Trade dumping massive quantities of shares and causing a significant depression in prices. The UMF returned the favor, vigorously attacking Dominion and Republican companies, though the suspension of inter-hemisphere share dealing has limited the impact of such transactions. Federal sanctions on Mekong Interests — and the treasonous status of Mercantile stock in the Dominion — has limited the direct impact of two economic superpowers on each other. Instead, the war is being fought by proxy, using Republican, Norlight and Westerner companies as pawns in the game, to be used and discarded as needed.





4.1.1 THE WESTERN FRONTIER PROTECTORATE

The UMF has long had an adversarial relationship with the Western Frontier Protectorate. The first contact between the two powers was the annexation of Fort Charles (now Mainz), and the situation deteriorated from there. Military confrontations between the two leagues were common prior to the formation of the CNCS in TN 1692, the Protectorate seeking the return of its territory and the UMF looking to expand its interests. Mercantile expansionism eventually drove the WFP and NLC to ally, striking into the UMF and, though defeated at the Battle of Pioneer, prompting the Federation to cut back its activities. The scaling back of military activity did not prevent economic attempts to weaken the Protectorate, including the ill-fated Merchant War that drove the Federation to join the CNCS.

Since joining together in the CNCS, relationships between the two have warmed, largely thanks to the overbearing nature of the Northern Lights Confederacy. The Protectorate has often served as a mediator between the UMF and NLC, balancing Norlight political ambitions against Mercantile economic interests. Indeed, with the protectorate holding the balance of power in CNCS councils, astute Mercantile Treasurers have courted Western votes, encouraging them to defy the NLC. The WFP has used its position to extract concessions from both larger neighbors, wielding power beyond their size. The upswing in Western nationalism, combined with the slow but steady attempts by the NLC to regain domination over the CNCS, however, has led the Protectorate to increasingly support Mercantile interests over Norlight ones. The UMF encourages this exploitation of the Protectorate's internal divisions, providing the nationalist Zuccite faction with covert financial aid through a series of shell companies. The Mercantile agents responsible for the operation suspect that the NLC has been supporting the Maderan faction headed by Lang Regina, and have proposed a number of operations to weaken the Norlight position.

The Protectorate remains wary of Mercantile economic ambitions. As well as extensive trade with the Protectorate's city-states and rural communities, the UMF uses the WFP as a way-station for trade with the Southern Republic and the Badlands communities of the Barrington Basin, particularly Port Arthur's NuCoal. The Protectorate also serves as a proxy battleground for the Federation's economic war with the Mekong Dominion, a conflict that has escalated considerably since the outbreak of war.

4.1.2 THE NORTHERN LIGHTS CONFEDERACY

The Northern Lights Confederacy and the United Mercantile Federation have long fought for domination of the Terranovan arctic. The military confrontations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have given way to political struggles that have, at times, threatened to tear the CNCS apart. Norlight domination of the CNCS was particularly rankling to the Federation, who felt that since they provided the lion's share of the alliance's funding, they should have a larger share in its control. Indeed, only the mediation of the WFP allowed the CNCS to survive its early years, the St. Vincent's War finally convincing both parties of the need to cooperate. Nevertheless, the NLC's heavy-handed attitude continued, and were it not for the War of Alliance, it would likely have prompted the collapse of the alliance in the early twentieth century and launched the arctic powers into civil war.

Although Anders von Breslau's post-war government in the NLC gave both the WFP and UMF a greater say in CNCS affairs, distrust between the two powers remains. The Norlight government believes that despite two centuries of peace in the North, the UMF harbors major ambitions, both within the CNCS and across Terra Nova, and several ministers regard the UMF as the biggest threat to the NLC after the Southern Republic. Indeed, though espionage between CNCS members is a matter of routine, NLC Foreign Minister Ethan Scope (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p. 31) has directed considerable espionage and analysis assets against the UMF. The Federation's intelligence agencies are aware of this through their own agents, principally Theodore Chu, a senior analyst in the Norlight Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) and one of the most senior SOE agents in the Norlight Confederacy, and have been working to divert Norlight attention. Were the NLC to discover Chu, a major scandal (and perhaps even a bloodbath) would result.

The NLC has always taken a protectionist stance against the UMF, seeking to minimize the influence of the Mercantile neighbor on their economy. In contrast, Mercantile diplomats have long advocated an abolition of such trade controls, regarding them as an institutional block to the UMF's way of life. Despite this, trade and tourism between the two leagues is very well developed, and the NLC is the Federation's principal trading partner. President Adjanni and many others in the NLC know that eventually the UMF will succeed in having the trade controls abolished and will have free access to the league's markets. With that in mind, they have worked to undermine the Mercantile economic position, building alliances with domestic companies to strengthen the league's economy and to block UMF influence. This has, in turn, only prompted the Federation's corporations to increase their efforts in the NLC.

The UMF finds the influence of Revisionism in Norlight affairs puzzling, and the NLC is likewise ill at ease with unrestrained Mercantile capitalism. The differing outlooks that result play a major role in the difficulties between the two powers. The NLC has used the sudden upsurge in Revisionist sentiment in the UMF to push the Norlight agenda in the CNCS Inner Council. The Federation's diplomatic negotiations with the Mekong Dominion gave the Federation considerable leverage in the Inner Council, though the collapse of these efforts and the progress of the war have seriously undermined the UMF's position.



4.2 THE SOUTH

As far as the UMF is concerned, the Allied Southern Territories are both a threat and an opportunity. Simmering resentment of the Federation's defeat at the hands of the AST in the Merchant War — which both forced the UMF to abandon attempts to gain economic control of the WFP and forced the league to acquiesce to the formation of a northern alliance — plagues any attempts at friendly relations. Nevertheless, the AST also represents a major untapped market remaining to be exploited by Federal corporations. Mercantile expansion into the region has long been challenged by the Mekong Dominion, which closely guards its markets across the AST. Mercantile interests have established a foothold, however, reaping considerable profits in both imports and exports, much to the disgust of the Dominion and CNCS.

The rise in tensions before the Interpolar War led to a major clash between the intelligence agencies of the two alliances, and both the FIA and SOE have worked hand-in-hand with the NorGuard Intelligence Service (NGIS) and other Northern agencies against their Southern equivalents. The SOE's activities have been principally concerned with intelligence gathering, but a number of Intervention Unit teams were put in place and used to disrupt AST communications. The importance of these teams has risen dramatically with the outbreak of war, and they have undertaken many dangerous missions against AST and Republican targets. The FIA are working with the NISA, Norlight Police, and the NGIS to identify Republican moles in government, corporate and military posts. A number have been identified and either removed or used to feed false information to their Southern masters. The FIA has learned of a mole code-named "Cherub" operating within the UMFA (see **Humanist Alliance Leaguebook**, p. 38) but have yet to identify the spy though considerable resources are being devoted to the task.

With the outbreak of war, the military abilities of the AST and its member states are perhaps the UMF's greatest concern. Though much of the fighting is taking place in the Badlands, the AST has the capability to use orbital artillery against targets in the North, and the Federation's military-industrial complex is a prime target. Furthermore, Dominion "Ghost Squads" operating within the UMF's borders have wreaked havoc with the commercial distribution network, prompting the formation of combined FIA-UMFA task forces to hunt them down. Contrary to expectations, the Southern military has shown no sign of collapsing and the hoped-for quick victory has receded into the distance. UMFA forces (under the aegis of the Northern Guard) were among those who participated in the ill-fated attempt to move into the Mekong Dominion. It remains to be seen if the UMF's corporations can turn this situation to their advantage or whether it will break them. They certainly can make a profit from a short war, but a destructive conflict could easily do more harm than good to the UMF's economy.

4.2.1 THE SOUTHERN REPUBLIC

The relationship between the UMF and the Southern Republic has always been strange, a mix of commercialism and political maneuvering. The Republic regards the UMF as the most comprehensible of the Northern leagues, driven by a clear cut, easily manipulated desire to make money. They also see the UMF as the weak link in the CNCS, an ambitious league subjugated by a more powerful neighbor, and they have sought to exploit this through trade. Republican representatives have deliberately sought contacts with UMF corporations and slighted those with Norlight concerns. Ironically, this suited the UMF just fine. It reminded the NLC and WFP that the Mercantile economy was not totally reliant on them, but that they were reliant on the UMF.

The years immediately following the War of Alliance were very profitable for the UMF, with many Mercantile concerns winning contracts to supply the AST with materials to rebuild after the devastation of the Earth invasion. This included work by Mercantile architects and designers, though the Republic was careful to limit the activities of foreign employees to non-sensitive sites, fearing, quite rightly, that many were spies for the NGIS and SOE. The need to transship goods via the Alpha Maglev and the Humanist Alliance or with Badlands trader caravans limited the volume of goods that could be shipped between the leagues, and thus the UMF-SR trade centered on high-value luxury goods. Ashantite fashions and Réunion's gourmet cawfee were the main goods heading north, while fine arts from Baton Rouge and Djakarta Point jewelry formed the principal Mercantile exports.

With the collapse of détente and the subsequent CNCS declaration of war against the AST, this trade has been curtailed, at least officially. In practice, however, a number of smuggling groups have exploited the break in relations between the UMF and the Republic to make large profits. The risks are considerable, transporting goods across a war zone, but the potential revenue is immense. Several Mercantile corporations are directly involved in this smuggling, using Port Arthur and the NuCoal, as well as the Wounded Knee smuggling cartels, as intermediaries.

Only a handful of people in the United Mercantile Federation or Allied Southern Territories know that Northco has maintained secret contact with its Southern rival, Territorial Arms. Placing profit before politics, this treasonous alliance has one goal in mind: containing Paxton Arms' growing influence in the Gear market. At the same time, Northco and TA, under the auspices of their respective governments, are also attempting to ruin each other through a mix of sabotage, assassination and stock-market manipulations. Director Davi is aware of Northco's contacts but is keeping them secret from both the Caucus and the CNCS Grand Marshal. His silence is due to the patronage of the Northco (and its CEO Natalya Korolov), but Davi has serious personal reservations about dealing with a Southern corporation in this manner.





4.2.2 THE MEKONG DOMINION

The UMF and the Mekong Dominion are both very alike and very different. Both believe in the power of economics, but while the Dominion is a homogenous culture unified by loyalty and duty, the UMF is a patchwork of different groups looking after their own interests. Ironically, it is the similarities rather than the differences between the cultures that have made them such staunch rivals over the cycles. Each dominates the economies of their respective alliance, but Badlands trade has long been a source of discord. The leagues have fought two Merchant Wars, though the first was under the auspices of the AST. Furthermore, a low-level economic war has raged between the two since the end of the War of Alliance, the principal battleground being the stock markets and trading houses of the North and South.

Not all the objectives of the two alliances are at odds. Neither cares for their neighbors or the politics of the polar confederations. Both would much rather be given free reign to make profits, and resent the limitations placed on them by the power blocks. When UMF Treasurer Banderas put out feelers regarding a potential alliance between the two powers, Taipan Arron Logan of the Mekong Development Corporation responded. What Logan told Banderas prompted the Treasurer to arrange a meeting between Logan and CNCS Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe: the Dominion had little interest in an Interpolar War and might be willing to remain out of the fighting, allowing the Southern Republic to be smashed.

The truth of the matter was far more complex, with Logan representing only his own faction and with his own interests in mind. As the two polar power blocks launched into war, the neutrality of the Dominion failed to emerge and the UMF found itself embroiled with yet another economic war. Mekong Ghost Squads operating in the Federation began systematic attacks designed to cripple the UMF and CNCS distribution system. Meanwhile Mekong-owned shell companies like Ultra Trade (subsequently closed down by the Finance Secretariat) sought to wreck Northern financial institutions.

4.2.3 THE HUMANIST ALLIANCE

The Alpha Maglev has allowed the UMF to maintain strong trade relations with the Humanist Alliance, but the rigidly stratified culture of the Alliance is alien to Mercantilists. In the UMF almost any problem can be solved with money, but in the Alliance attempts to grease the wheels of business cause more problems than they solve. Nonetheless, until recently trade and tourism between the two leagues was strong, particularly in minerals and high technology products. Pioneer was the main site visited by Humanist tourists, but Zagreb is of particular interest to the Southern league, its use for reeducation having much in common with Alliance policies.

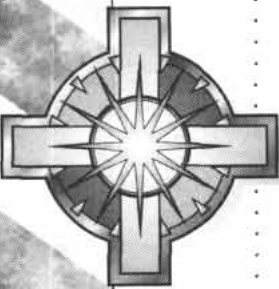
Trade and tourism have ground to a halt in early TN 1936, however, with the Republican occupation of the Alliance in the wake of the Theban Blight outbreak. The Mercantile government had no intention of allowing the Blight to spread into the UMF and pressured Terra Nova TransRail into placing the Alliance under quarantine and suspending its service to Gardena and Perth. When TNTR resumed service from Perth on 5 Summer of 1936, a small outbreak in Rapid City soon ensued and the quarantine was reestablished. The issue was settled once and for all with the declaration of war two weeks later, when both North and South cut the maglev links to prevent them being used as an avenue of attack.

The current legal status of the Humanist Alliance is also in question. The CNCS is at war with the AST, of which the Alliance is a member, but the league's de-facto occupation by the Southern Republic has brought its status as a belligerent power into question. Indeed, Humanist expatriate forces are currently fighting side by side with Northern troops in the Free Emirates region of the ESE. Meetings of the UMF Caucus and the CNCS council have raised the issue, suggesting that given its known anti-Republican leanings, the Alliance could be viewed as an occupied ally. The Humanist ambassadors in Lyonesse, Valeria and Port Arthur — now exiles — fully endorse this plan. In the meantime, the city-state of Raleigh, freed by Northern troops in early 1937, has officially joined the Free Emirates, although many citizens still consider themselves Humanists.

4.2.4 THE EASTERN SUNS EMIRATES

Physical distance and cultural difference have meant the UMF involvement in the ESE has never been great. The league's descent into chaos further discouraged the UMF from becoming involved. The Caucus found some merit in supporting the Basal revolt, knowing that the growing insurrection would tie down a large portion of the Republican military, but they balked at supporting the Easterner's attempt to purchase weapons from Paxton Arms. With Northern manufactures forbidden to sell arms to Southern concerns, this was the only way to provide the rebels with the material they desperately needed. Using the UMF to exert pressure on the CNCS council, Northco blocked any official financial support for the rebels before the outbreak of war. The SOE suspected (and continues to suspect) the NLC ignored the CNCS' decision and funded the deal covertly. The agency deployed a number of operatives to Peace River in an attempt to discover evidence of the NLC's illegal activities and to sabotage the new production lines.

With the outbreak of the Interpolar War, the CNCS has put its full support behind the Free Emirates, using the region as a major beachhead from which to push into the Humanist Alliance and Southern Republic. As such, Northco and other major UMF corporations are now funneling support into the region and hope to develop it into a viable postwar market. The SOE's covert actions against Paxton have not been stopped, however, despite the fact that Paxton weapons flowing into the Free Emirate is now inline with short-term Mercantile interests.



4.3 THE BADLANDS

To the United Mercantile Federation, the Badlands contains both the best and worst of Terra Nova. It represents untapped markets and political opportunities, but is also unstable, dominated by smugglers, rover gangs and the remains of the CEF. The UMF plays a major role in the Desert Trade Commission, steering the CNCS body to the best advantage of Mercantile industries. Through the DTC, the Federation dominates the trade in the Western and Great White deserts, though efforts to curtail the activities of Timmins and Peace River have been blocked by CNCS Deputy Trade Minister, Ella Kayman. With the outbreak of war, the Badlands have become the battleground of the polar confederations and trade has been badly disrupted. Many citizens of the equatorial regions have fled the fighting, and both Mainz and Ashington have seen their populations swollen by refugees.

4.3.1 PEACE RIVER & PAXTON ARMS

One of Northco's major rivals, Paxton Arms' governance of Peace River has had an adverse influence on the relationship between the Badlands city and the UMF. Although the UMFA buys equipment from Paxton, the Federation has long sought to contain Paxton Arm's ambitions in the field of Gear manufacturing. Although Paxton made vast inroads into arms manufacturing after the St. Vincent's War, technical difficulties — aided by Mercantile sabotage and assassinations — kept them out of the Gear market until around TN 1800. By that time, Northco had cornered the market in the CNCS.

Unlike the other CNCS leagues, whose contact with Peace River is through the DTC, the Federation maintains its own embassy, which also serves as a base of operations for the SOE operatives in the city. Relations between the UMF and Peace River are cool but civilized, as much a result of Peace River's traditional paternalism in the Badlands, which often interferes with Mercantile interests, as the friction between Northco and Paxton Arms. Despite this, UMF ambassador Gretchen Alvarez is on good terms with city administrator Helena Hitashi and also has regular meetings with President Simosa. She also works closely with DTC trade commissioner Rian Kolbro.

The secret deal between the NLC and Paxton to equip the Basal rebels of the ESE threatens to shatter the already fragile relationship between the Federation and the Badlands manufacturer. The number of SOE operatives in the city has risen dramatically as the UMF attempts to find evidence of the NLC's involvement. Other units have been charged with sabotaging the new production lines, disguising their actions as those of the BRF, but Paxton HEO Milani DuBeau-Slovenski suspects Mercantile involvement and has ordered increased PaxSec surveillance of the UMF embassy.

4.3.2 PORT ARTHUR AND THE NUCOAL

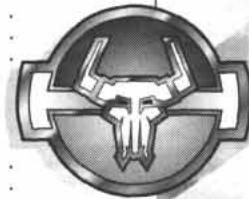
UMF citizens, to whom the suffering of the War of Alliance is still a vivid memory, regard the GRELS and former CEF citizens of Port Arthur with considerable suspicion. With so many GRELS in the population, many regard the city as a grave threat to regional security, but the UMF has, reluctantly, followed the CNCS' diplomatic lead and accepted the city's existence. Port Arthur's location at a trade route nexus between the CNCS and AST and the presence of valuable diamond mines has sweetened the deal for the Federation, prompting Mercantile corporations to become the city's largest trading partners.

The creation of the New Coalition (NuCoal) between Port Arthur and the communities of the Westridge Range in TN 1932 prompted a cooling of relations in Lyonnese. The Westridge Area had been the subject of bitter disputes with the AST (most notably during the Merchant War, TN 1686-1688) and the Federation considers Arthurian influence in the region provocative. Despite initial vociferous protests, the Federation has maintained its links with Port Arthur and the NuCoal administrative center in Prince Gable. Indeed, just prior to the outbreak of war, Northco sold the alliance a number of Gears to help re-equip their armed forces, beating out competition from Territorial Arms and Paxton.

Since the outbreak of war Port Arthur has served as neutral territory, allowing both diplomatic contacts and limited trade to continue. Attempts to use the city-state as a clearing house for NGIS and SOE operations in the south has met with considerable resistance from the Arthurian leadership. The Westridge region itself has been a major hot zone in the war, with not only polar armies involved, but Arthurian forces, local militias and rovers, the make-shift Khayr ad-Din Army and Colonel Proust's New Human Republic fighting it out for territory.

4.3.3 THE NEW HUMAN REPUBLIC

The advent of the New Human Republic on the fringe of the Great White Desert poses another threat to the Cajun Plain and the south-western Ashington Plain, already troubled by the Koreschi, better known as the Sand Riders. Led by a rogue Jan-class GREL, Colonel Proust, the ambitions of the NHR remain unclear. However, Proust is known to promote the idea of GREL supremacy, which has earned him considerable support in Jan Mayen and the disaffected population of Port Arthur. Though Proust's forces are currently small, it is feared that many of these individuals will rally to his banner, swelling the forces at his disposal and posing a major threat to UMF and CNCS operations against the Southern Republic in the Western Desert. Attempts to infiltrate the NHR have been hampered by Proust's disdain for 'inferior' normal humans.



THE FIRST CASUALTY

"You can't do this," screamed senior editor Leverton Spry, "It infringes on the freedom of the press! The people have a right to know!" The target of his invective stood passively with his back to the newsroom, his green and black military uniform in stark contrast to the disheveled outfits worn by the journalists. Only Carolyn Mosely, tonight's anchor reclining on the office's single sofa, looked as smart, but that was her job.

"Mister Spry," said the calm and collected officer. "If you check Clause 17B of your broadcast license you will find a provision for the government to block broadcast of material deemed contrary to the interests of the United Mercantile Federation or prejudicial to the good order of its troops. I think you'll find that more than adequately gives me the right to do this."

The guy must have ice water in his veins, thought Jym Howard, the floor manager. No one in their right mind went up against Spry, not and kept their career after tangling with the Federation Broadcasting Corporation.

"So we get to say everything is fine and dandy. You want us to turn the story on its head and lie for you because the truth would be 'prejudicial to good order.' God, you army types make me sick."

"Nonetheless, you will not broadcast the story. Furthermore, you will surrender all copies of the tape to my staff. Any failure to comply will result in the revocation of your broadcast license —"

"You wouldn't dare! Take us off the air? How much bad publicity would that give you?"

"— and quite possibly a charge of aiding and abetting the enemy," continued the officer, unfazed by the interruption. "Does FBC really wish to court charges of treason? The War Powers act is in force, and you know what the penalties are."

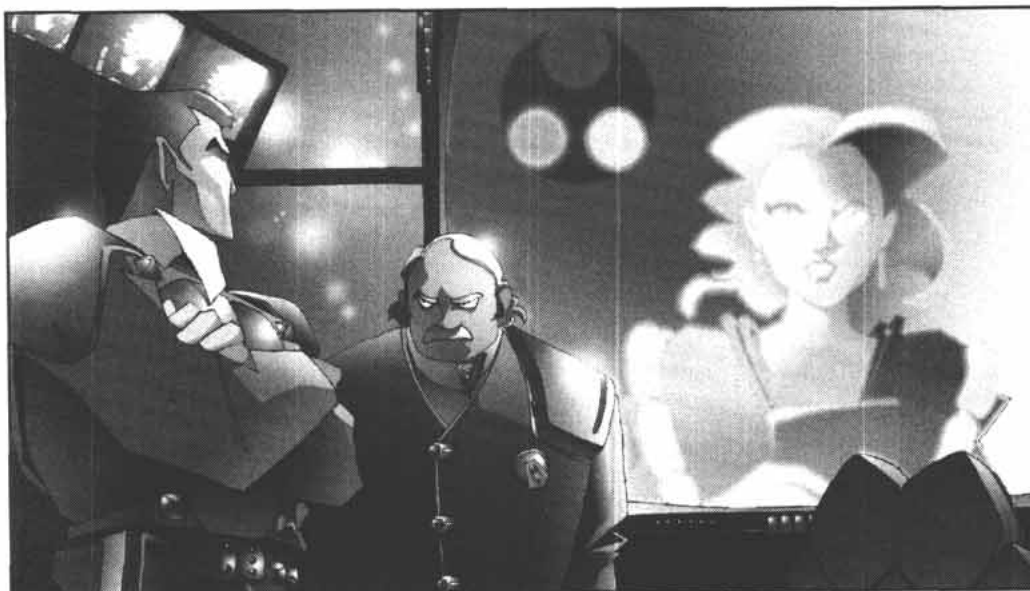
Spry knew all right. Forfeiture of company assets, and execution for the ringleaders. No — that they could not risk, not now at least, but he had known that all along. This was a game they always played with the UMFA's censors. This time, however, the whole incident had been recorded for posterity by the office microcams. After the war he would enjoy breaking this little puke and the thousands like him. He bowed his head and nodded imperceptibly.

"I'm glad you finally agree." And with that the UMFA officer turned on his heels and left the office.

"Okay Jhon, pull the story and put their little fairy tale in its place. That'll leave us forty-five seconds short... Bump everything else up and put the hopper story in at six. Even with editing it'll be a bit tight. We have—" he checked his wristwatch, "three minutes fifteen."

They rose, moving with practiced precision to the adjacent studio. As technicians fitted her mike, Carolyn watched the stories presented on the autocue shift to reflect the military's dictates. Seeing the UMFA Captain watching her, she shivered. Could she really lie to twenty million people? *Oh well, here goes.*

"Today Northern Guard forces won a major victory against Republican troops at ..."



5.1 MERCANTILE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the withdrawal of Earth from her colonies, the area now occupied by the United Mercantile Federation was dotted with commercial enclaves, each surrounded by a township and charged with exploiting the region's abundant resources. Many of these city-states disappeared after Terra Nova's abandonment, their personnel withdrawn or else scattered by the chaos that followed. Those that remained fortified themselves and fought a series of internecine wars that wracked the region for the next fifty cycles until, by the early sixteenth century, only the present cities remained.

Under the auspices of first the Lyonesse League and later the UMF, the city-states banded together to foster mutual interests, unifying their armed forces and harmonizing their economies. The government invested heavily in creating and expanding the league's infrastructure, building on the pre-abandonment road and rail system to develop strong and versatile links between the cities. Terranovan TransRail's (TNTR) alpha maglev line, already almost a thousand cycles old, formed the backbone of this system, particularly between Lyonesse and the industrial hub of Rapid City, but also extending to various other communities along the line. The Federation's internal rail network grew too. Though not very rapid when compared to the maglev line, it provided comprehensive passenger and freight services and was thus better able to meet the needs of Mercantile concerns. Originally one state-owned system, the rail network was privatized in the late sixteenth century, broken into a collection of smaller, mostly regional companies responsible for tracks and services in their area. The efforts of these companies are coordinated and regulated by Federation Rail Associates (FRA), a government-owned body. The government has, however, retained direct control of the navigation beacon system established for ground traffic and used as the primary control system for autopiloted vehicles. The war has led to Southern interference in the system — beacon tampering by Mekong Ghost Squads has caused numerous accidents — and most vehicles have reverted to manual control.

The infrastructure was badly damaged in the War of Alliance, but thanks to Federal efforts under the command of the Infrastructure Secretary, was quickly repaired and brought back on line. This isn't to say the scars of the war have been erased, however. Many regions still bear the marks of CEF or Mercantile strategic weapons, though these — and downwind areas — are the subject of long-term cleanup operations.

Although nominally under league jurisdiction, much of the infrastructure is built and maintained by individual city-states using federal grants. This is an attempt, largely successful, to balance the needs of the UMF with each city-state's constitutional right to local self-government. Each controls an area between 500 and 2500 kilometers in diameter, the remainder of the UMF falling under direct federal authority, and known collectively as the Regional Development Authorities. These authorities are also responsible for managing the resources in their jurisdiction, ensuring they are exploited while simultaneously working to preserve them for the future. The infrastructure secretary arbitrates this clash of local, regional and national needs and has the power to prioritize projects, particularly in troublesome city-states like Zagreb.

► Infrastructure Secretary Patryk Quinlan

Born on a farmstead near Baton Rouge in TN 1863, Patryk Quinlan hated rural life and fled to the city as soon as he was old enough. He spent some time in Lyonesse before ending up in Marathon where he was employed by Abaline research as an administrator. Despite his poor aptitude with computers, he proved to be a superb administrator and consummate diplomat. In TN 1890 he became senior administrator of the Abaline Computer Center, balancing the needs of many research teams and under his management inter-departmental disputes were at an all-time low. There he met Megan Rea, a mid-level executive in charge of Applied Technologies, and after a tempestuous courtship they were married. The couple have four children, three sons and a daughter, and their eldest, Mathias, is bond twinned to Lauren, the daughter of Sara Wright, bringing them into regular social contact with the woman who would later become Abaline's CEO. Wright and Quinlan became staunch allies in company's internal politics, and when Wright became CEO of the company in TN 1918, she promoted him to head the Administrative Services Division and granted him a seat on the board where his diplomatic skills provided a stabilizing influence.

With the TN 1931 Grand Plebiscite looming, Wright prompted Patryk to stand for the UMF Caucus, using his political skills to the company's advantage on a national level. His campaign for the post of Infrastructure Secretary was a hard-fought battle against Andi Tor of transport concern Toraman Industries, though in the end Abaline's spending power won out. Though supporting many Abaline initiatives, such as upgrading the hardware and software of the league's autonav beacons, Quinlan has proved himself to be his own man, frequently going against the wishes of his sponsor corporation to follow his conscience and the needs of the UMF. He has twice voted against Abaline in their ongoing dispute with the Federation Telecommunications Trust (FTT) over networking standards. This has led to a marked cooling of his relationship with Wright, though the two still occasionally meet on a social basis.

Although not planning to stand again, Victoria Edden-Smythe confirmed Quinlan for a second term at the outbreak of the Interpolar War. His responsibilities have been expanded to include the Mercantile portion of the Northern Guard's military logistics, including the prioritization of military equipment convoys. The vast responsibility does not intimidate him, though he does regard the situation as the greatest challenge of his life.



ASHINGTON

5.2 ASHINGTON

Founded as the personal fief of an exiled Terran prince, Ashington has risen to become one of the most important cities in the UMF. The road to membership in the UMF, however, was long and tortuous. A succession of princes refused invitations to join the league, fearing the loss of their social privileges and power. Long, arduous negotiations followed until eventually, in TN 1620, the economic and security benefits of the relationship won the incumbent prince over and Ashington became the UMF's eleventh and final member state.

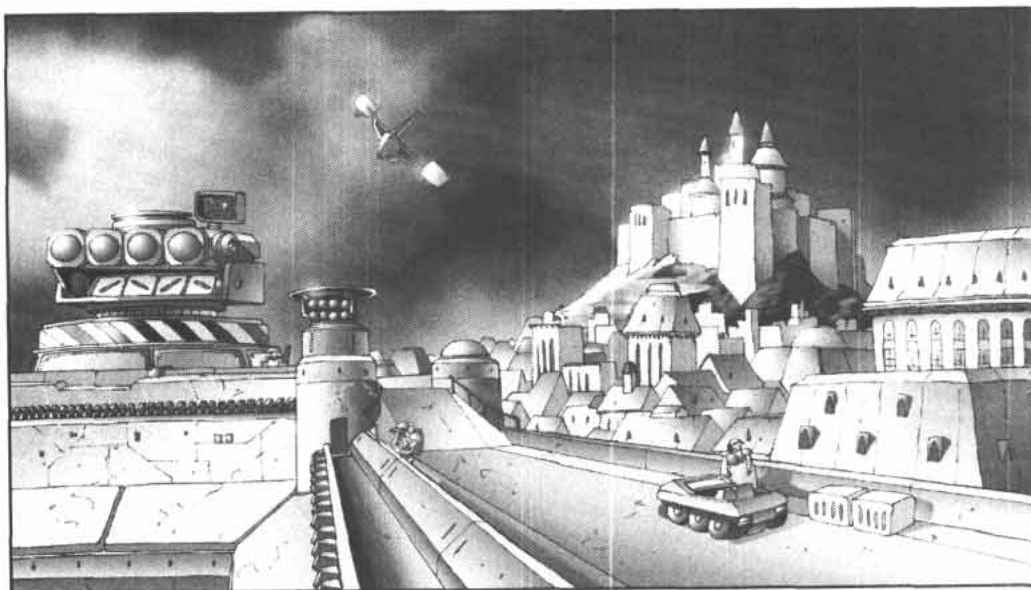
The principal reason the UMF sought to bring Ashington into the fold was for its power generation facilities. Today the extensive banks of solar panels and aerogenerators (*highly efficient wind-mills*) which surround the city provide much of the Federation's energy, making Prince Hans William Ash VI (head of both the Ashington Power Corporation and the city) one of the most influential people in the UMF. Indeed, APC has the sixth-largest turnover of any Mercantile corporation. In addition to its role in power generation, the Federation desired Ashington for its location. It dominated trade along the Badlands border and was the starting point of trade routes across the Western Desert. From Ashington, goods could be transshipped to the Southern Republic, circumventing the Humanist Alliance and Western Frontier Protectorate, through whom any goods transported by Maglev would have to flow.

Located on the rolling plains that border the Badlands, Ashington is the most heavily defended city in the UMF. It sits within two layers of defensive fortifications: a series of low walls and ditches surrounding the city and power generation complex, and the massive walls of the city proper. The lower outlying walls provide the entire complex with a degree of protection while having little impact on the flow of air and thus power generation. During the War of Alliance this outer area of the city was the site of several pitched battles, causing extensive damage to the power complexes. CEF forces also assaulted the city itself but while they succeeded in breaching the defenses during the Second Battle of Ashington, they were beaten back in bitter street-to-street fighting by Northern Guard troops under the command of Victoria Edden-Smythe. Since then, both the inner and outer walls have been rebuilt and extended.

Ashington was bombed repeatedly by the CEF, and much of the city's once-famous architecture was destroyed during the War of Alliance. This is especially true of the neighborhoods that sat close to the various defense systems. The city has since been the site of a major rebuilding program, which is still going on — albeit much more slowly — today. Thanks to the dedication of the inhabitants, Ashington now contains some of the most modern architecture in the league. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, many claim much of the city's pre-war charm has been lost.

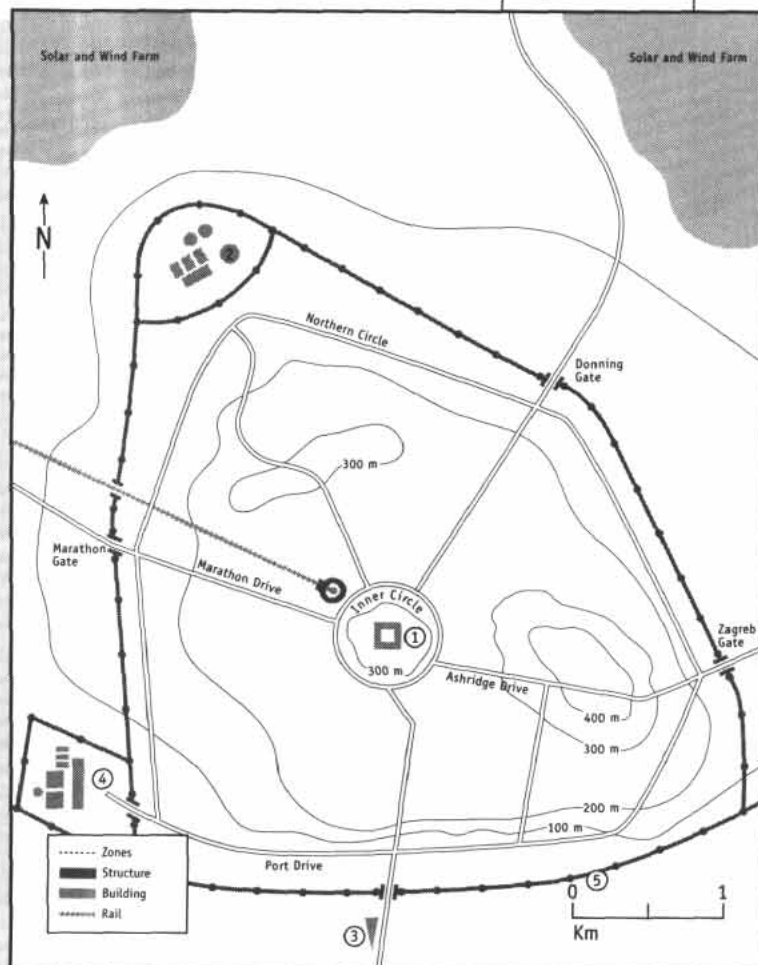
Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 922
Joined UMF:	TN 1620
Method of Government:	Monarchy
Head of Government:	Prince Hans William Ash VI
Population:	500,000
Principal Industries:	Electrical power generation



Ashington Map

Location	Description
1. The Sun Palace	The Sun Palace is the official residence of the Prince of Ashington, the site of numerous state functions, balls and garden parties. Rebuilt after the War of Alliance, the palace is a large rectangular structure surrounding an open courtyard. It features long galleries with broad columns and large windows. Some parts of the building and its surrounding gardens are open for guided public tours, though advance bookings are required.
2. Fort Russell	Unusually, the UMFA compound is situated within the city's perimeter walls although its own defensive works turn it into a fort within a fort. During the Second Battle of Ashington the compound served as a redoubt for the UMF defenders when the CEF forced their way into the city, allowing them to hold out long enough for reinforcements to drive the Earth troops away.
3. Dauntless Memorial	The Vortex-class landship NCS <i>Dauntless</i> was crippled in the Battle of Baja, though she was able to limp back to her base at Ashington. The massive vessel was subsequently decommissioned and her shell established as a war memorial, located half a kilometer south of the city.
4. Landship Docks	Ashington serves as the HQ for the Northern Guard and UMFA landship fleets in the Western Desert. The fleet-base is located within the city's outer perimeter but outside the city proper, two sets of fortified gates allowing the leviathans egress onto the Ashington Plains.
5. The Badlands Wall	Heightened and strengthened since the War of Alliance, Ashington's formidable southern wall reaches a staggering 110 meters in height. Formed by the merger of the city wall and the perimeter wall, it bristles with gun ports and sensors and is regarded as a wonder of modern engineering.



• THE SUN CROWN

Life in Ashington has always been hard, its people eking out a living on the fringe of the Badlands, though since joining the UMF the social standards within the city have improved considerably. Until the Emancipation Proclamations of TN 1624 most of the city's population were serfs, holding land from the prince and obliged to work his holdings without pay for three days out of ten. This prompted a strong work ethic that has carried over into 'free' Ashington, with the city's commoners willingly working long hours.

Respect for the city-state's nobility has slowly been eroded since TN 1624, increasing freedoms among the commoners leading some to question the status of the Estates and the Monarchy. The large majority of the population still favor the royal family, however, regarding it as part of their heritage and traditions that set them apart from the rest of the UMF. Indeed, most Ashington-born citizens regard an insult to the Prince as an insult to them and will willingly fight to defend royal honor.

Many of Ashington's citizens recall the devastation of the War of Alliance and fear a repeat during the current Interpolar War. Having commanded the defense of the city during the Second and Third Battles of Ashington in the War of Alliance, the citizens of Ashington look on Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe as a living legend. Many believe that with the "Heroine of Ashington" at the helm of the CNCS war machine, the North must surely be victorious and unlike many Mercantile citizens, have thrown their weight solidly behind the war effort.

A tough local police force and large contingents of UMFA and Northern Guard troops maintain order in the city. This has not stopped the Wounded Knee Cartels from establishing the city as a major base for operations into and across the Western Desert. The Forzi Cartel dominate the city's black market and smuggling operations, though this has not prevented the Granis Cartel from strengthening its operations in the city while the Forzi-Kolson war rages. The formidable security presence has curtailed the open gang warfare that continues to rage across the CNCS and instead of the gun battles and bombings of elsewhere in the league, the war in Ashington has been limited to sabotage and assassinations.

• POWER POLITICS

Despite the freedoms they gained in TN 1624, the commoners remain second class citizens. Authority remains in the hands of Prince Ash, and many senior positions are reserved for members of the city-state's nobility. The nobility promote this as the 'natural order' and many in the city acquiesce to the situation, but a growing minority advocate further change, sweeping away the monarchy — or at least curtailing its powers — and establishing the city as a true democracy. This group, alternatively known as republicans or anti-monarchists, has become increasingly vocal in its opposition, though to date it has had little success gaining representation in the Privy Council.

The same cannot be said for the Order of the Chain, a semi-secret group of Estates members (see 3.3.1 *The Ashington Monarchy*, p. 23) who advocate Ashington's withdrawal from the UMF. Led by Count Mykel Galen-Ash, who also chairs the Privy Council, the Order believe that outside the UMF and CNCS the city-state would be regarded as a neutral power and thus spared the attacks it has suffered in every war since joining the Federation. The city-state could still export its power to the UMF, thanks to the absence of border tariffs, but without federal and CNCS interference in its internal affairs. The Order's ideas have spread beyond the nobility and have begun to take root in the city's corporate employees.

It should be noted that the Prince's succession has not always been smooth — the heir is nominated by the Prince, not by any established rules of primogeniture — leading to volatile dynastic politics within the Ash family and the Estates. Historically, assassination has played a major role in the process, though full-scale rebellions are rare, with only two occurrences (TN 1787 and TN 1814) since the city joined the UMF. Though technically an internal matter and thus of no concern to the UMF, both these cases involved secessionist forces, prompting the UMFA to put on a show of force to convince the city's new leadership to stay within the UMF.

• COME RAIN OR SHINE

The industrial base of the United Mercantile Federation requires a massive amount of energy to function, and while many cities and industrial complexes have their own power generation facilities, these are usually small-scale backup systems. Power generation and the establishment of the necessary infrastructure is a very expensive business and vital to the league, but most city-states and corporations would rather avoid the expense, buying what they need from specialized conglomerates. The Ashington Power Corporation is the largest such company in the Federation, established and still controlled by the Ash family.

Founded in TN 1327 while Terra Nova was still under Earth control, the company is one of the oldest in the UMF. A locally controlled company, APC fared well when Earth government collapsed and with a strong military (the Ashington Royals) to ensure its neutrality, the corporation and by extension the city-state remained on good terms with its neighbors. Since joining the UMF in TN 1620 the boundaries between APC and the city-state have become more defined but both remain under the steady hand of the Ash family.

Unlike many of the industrialized city-states within the UMF, Ashington is almost entirely self sufficient for food. The area's climate is hot and dry as would be expected near to the Badlands, but wells driven down to the McAllen Network allow extensive irrigation, creating a verdant garden amidst the dusty plains. Crops of johar, wheat and even low-grade cawfee are grown among the aerogenerators and solar collectors, both for consumption by citizens and for export.

• 2ND ASHINGTON ROYAL HEAVY GEAR REGIMENT: THE PRINCE'S TROOP

The lead regiment of the Sixth Heavy Gear Brigade (the Ashington Brigade, part of the 1st Border Division), the Ashington Royals have a long and prestigious history. Formerly the 2nd Mobile Cavalry Regiment, the unit was renamed the Second Ashington Royal Regiment when the city-state joined the UMF in TN 1620. Like the other four Ashington Royal units, the structure of the unit and the ranks used by the Second diverge from those of the UMFA and Northern Guard. They add a fifth company, composed entirely of 'glamour' units who use the best equipment in the unit and whose role is largely ceremonial. Membership of the regiment (and the other Ashington Royal units) is tightly controlled: only those born in Ashington are eligible to join and Prince Hans William Ash's advisors must approve any recruits.

The current commander of the Second Royals is Colonel Hannah Ash, daughter of Prince Hans. Her appointment to command barely five cycles after graduating officer college demonstrates the nepotism inherent in the Ashington system, although she has proved herself an able commander. The Regiment's Duelist, Ethan Lords, has earned considerable notoriety for his hatred of AST forces. In TN 1921 his actions at the Baja Memorial prompted Deeana Earnshaw of the 42nd Northern Guard Gear Regiment to challenge him to a duel. He lost and has nursed a feud with her ever since.

The Second is notable for its use of heavier Gears, especially the Grizzly and its Crossbow Grizzly variant, and also deploy an unusually high number of Brawler Mammoth assault striders. The Ashington Royals use a deep-blue color scheme highlighted with gold when on parade or ceremonial duties. Manipulator-held weapons are painted black while hardpoint-mounted systems utilize blue and gold to match the rest of the Gear. In the field they favor tan desert camouflage. The eggshell blue dress uniforms of the Royals make them stand out in gatherings of Federation officers. Senior officers and members of the nobility wear a gold sash across their right shoulder to further distinguish them from other ranks.

5.3 BATON ROUGE

Located in the heart of the Marathon Basin, Baton Rouge sprawls over an area of roughly three hundred square kilometers, broken into a host of local communities linked by a series of twenty broad boulevards. Farmland, industrial areas and housing are intermingled throughout, with no definable city-center.

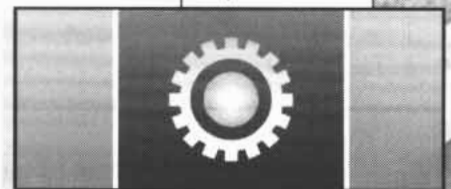
Originally little more than a collection of farming communities, Baton Rouge incorporated as a city in 1072. The region had been mercilessly exploited by Terran corporations and the formation of a city, no matter how geographically dispersed, gave the region's farmers political leverage against the conglomerates. This distrust of outside interference persisted even past Earth's withdrawal, with a succession of mayors working to keep the city-state isolated. When Mayor Brandal Finch met with the leaders of neighboring city-states to discuss the formation of the Lyonesse League he was going out on a limb, and a combination of pressure from home and "unreasonable" demands on the part of the other city-states prompted him to withdraw in TN 1527. He managed to keep Baton Rouge out of the league until TN 1531, but by then economic pressures on the city-state were so great that they had to join or face ruin.

Remaining true to its agricultural roots, the city-state has been spared the horrors of war, though it has twice been occupied by enemy troops — the AST in the Merchant War and again in the St. Vincent's War. While the city itself has been spared damage, large tracts of land 500 kilometers south and west of the city were ruined in the War of Alliance by the UMFA's use of nuclear and chemical weapons to halt the invaders. These hot zones have been the subject of a massive clean-up operation since the war, but farmers are concerned about toxins and fallout blown down-wind from the battlefields. The Natural Resources Secretariat monitors all foodstuffs originating in Baton Rouge and has, to date, passed them fit for consumption.

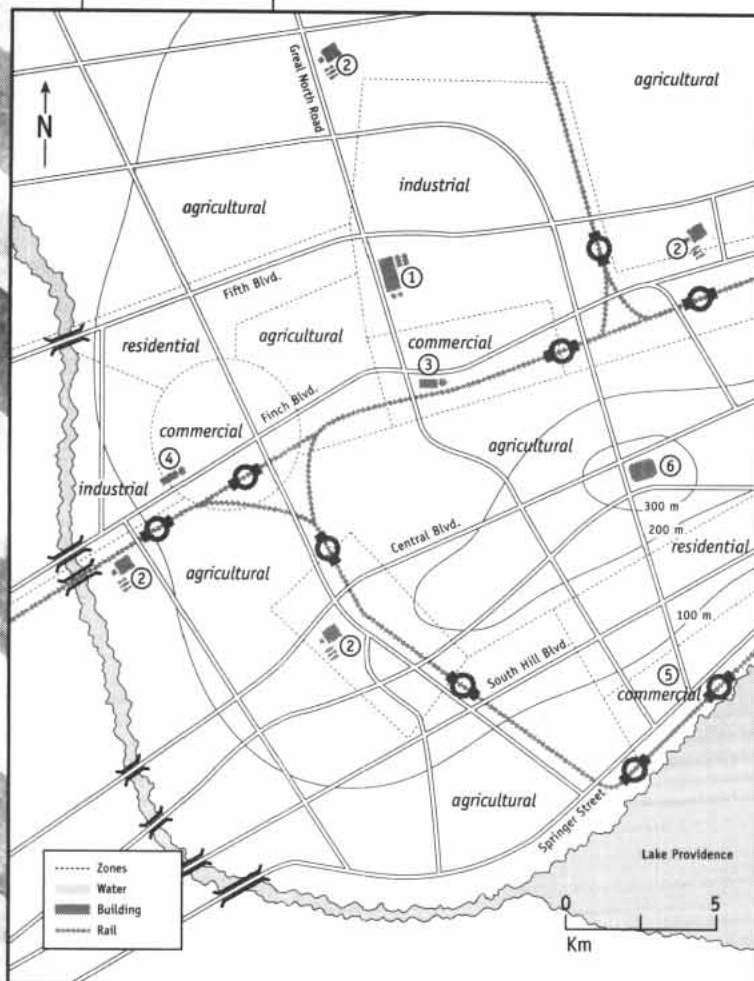
Though agriculture dominates the city-state — it is the primary food production center in the Mercantile Federation — it is not the only industry. The city contains a wide range of service and manufacturing industries, and is largely self-sufficient with regard to the inhabitants' basic needs. Pharmaceutical products play a major part in the local economy as well, driven by the numerous plants with medical uses growing here. In fact, the Willow-Jones drugs company dominates employment in the area, coming behind only agriculture in terms of total number of employees. Perhaps surprisingly, though, petrochemical extraction to the north of the city provides it with substantial revenue, coming in third for percentage of gross product. There are several large areas covered with sophisticated automated oil derricks, but it is not uncommon to see pumps located in the heart of a field of johar or cattle.

► Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 1072
Joined UMF:	TN 1531 (Lyonesse League); TN 1551 (UMF)
Method of Government:	Representative Democracy
Head of Government:	Mayor Wallace Martin
Population:	830,000
Principal Industries:	Agriculture and fine arts



Baton Rouge Map



Location	Description
1. Willow-Jones	Willow-Jones is the UMF's largest pharmaceutical conglomerate, and their enclave in Baton Rouge is a mixture of research site and manufacturing plant. Access to the facility is tightly controlled, bolstered since the outbreak of war with troops from the nearby UMFA enclave. The complex contains the Albert A. Willows Memorial Hospital, Baton Rouge's main medical center.
2. UMFA enclaves	With no definable center, Baton Rouge is a defense planner's nightmare. The UMFA has scattered their troops to defensive compounds throughout the city. Fort Lancaster, some 10 kilometers north of the Willow-Jones plant, serves as the city's military command center.
3. Admin Center	Baton Rouge's Administrative Center is located in the commercial district of Oakley. A complex of drab, functional buildings, it houses the mayor's residence and the council chambers. Numerous sub-offices are dotted throughout the city, serving as home to the city's bureaucrats.
4. Mortenson Foods	Though far from the largest producers in Baton Rouge, Mortenson are among the most diverse. Their crops range from Johar and wheat to modified Terran vegetables, and they also maintain a large dairy herd west of the city. Their complex in the western sector include a number of plants.
5. Orion	Baton Rouge is renowned for its artists; the largest — and most famous — concentration can be found in the lake front suburb of Orion. Many workshops are open to the public, and visitors are invited to watch the craftspeople at work. Many accept commissions, though demand for products, particularly metal sculptures, is high.
6. Hendon Stadium	The Hendon Stadium serves as home to the Baton Rouge Creoles and the Hendon Hunters, two of the UMF's leading Gear dueling teams. The stadium also provides a venue for other spectator sports such as soccer and athletics.

• WORKING THE LAND

Since joining the UMF, the local distrust of outsiders has faded, though the regional dialect retains a number of words and usages that reflect the 'us and them' mentality such as Grockle (a tourist) or Foreigner (anyone not a citizen of Baton Rouge). Indeed, the city-state's charter only grants citizenship to those born in Baton Rouge or who have lived there for at least twenty cycles. Anyone else is regarded as a resident alien. To the citizens of Lyonesse or Rapid City, the sedate rural life of Baton Rouge lacks sophistication, but the standard of living is above the national average, and the city is a major retirement center. The limited employment prospects in the city — working on the farms, in a processing plant and the like — has driven many of the city's youngsters to relocate to more cosmopolitan cities like Marathon or Lyonesse. This exodus of the young has been the city's greatest problem in recent years.

Violent crime is almost non-existent in Baton Rouge, limited to the occasional drunken scuffle outside one of the city's many pubs. Vandalism, mainly malicious crop damage, is rife, however, particularly among bored youngsters. The city also serves as a center for smuggling, particularly along the rail link from Red Sands, and is thus the focus of numerous corporate and government anti-smuggling operations. As a result the ongoing gang wars among Wounded Knee smugglers appears to hardly touch the Mercantile city. Neither the Forzi nor Kolson Cartels wish to attract undue attention to their operations in the city and have agreed upon a truce in the region. This has not stopped each leaking details of the other's operations to the Baton Rouge PD.

Baton Rouge is the center of the UMF's third religion, the Mahayana Buddhists of the Drepan Monastery. The Buddhist community is largely integrated with the principally Revisionist population, though since the resurgence of Revisionism in the UMF the homes of several prominent Buddhists have been daubed with graffiti. Furthermore, the Buddhist's attempts to block shipments to the UMFA and Northern Guard has prompted outrage among the local population, being dubbed 'unpatriotic' and prompting a number of violent incidents.

5.4 CANTERBURY

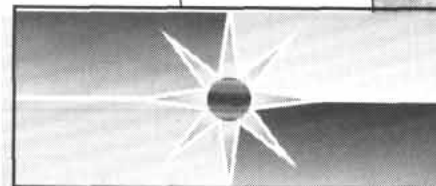
Situated in the foothills of the Downing Range, Canterbury is the most cosmopolitan city in the wildly diverse UMF. Tourists from across the globe rub shoulders with media stars and movie moguls in the carefully planned city, engrossed in the self-perpetuating image of glamour and extravagance. The city sprawls along the eastern flank of the mountains, stretching from the hilltop homes of the rich and famous, the destination of numerous tourist outings, to the slums and industrial parks of the plains, carefully avoided by tours.

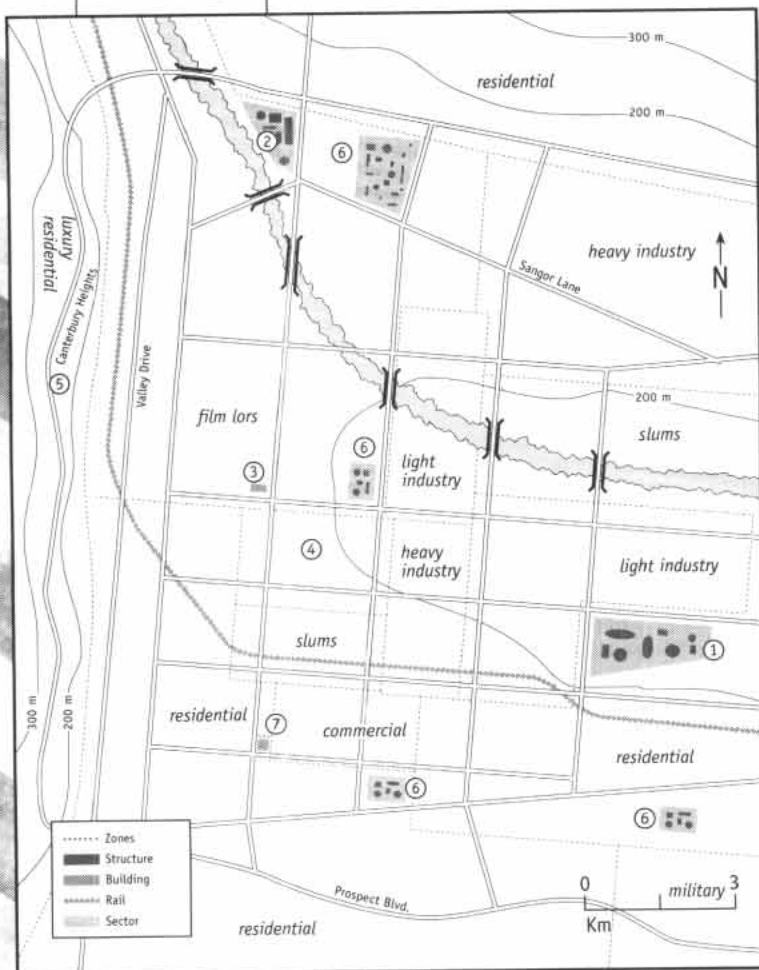
Founded in the eleventh century as a support base for petrochemical drilling operations in the Sangar Basin, Canterbury continues to play a significant role in that industry. Even in its heyday Canterbury never rivaled Petropolis (now part of the NLC), and industry in the city slowly diversified. The city council made a number of grants available for companies to relocate to the city, and one company attracted away from now-lost Salisbury was Terranovan Multimedia Projects (TMP), a producer of educational software and documentaries about the new world. The company slowly metamorphosed from a producer to a local broadcaster, and when Earth abandoned Terra Nova, the staff of TMP chose to stay. After Canterbury joined the Lyonesse League in TN 1528, TMP became a major supplier of trideo and video material to the allied cities, and as the company expanded to keep up with the demands placed on it, so did the special effects companies, costumers and duplicators that supported them. By the early nineteenth century Canterbury had become the heart of the Federation's media industry, the home to most of the UMF's trideo, video and holomovie companies. In the meantime TMP had grown beyond all recognition, renaming itself the Federation Broadcasting Corporation in TN 1842. With controlling interests in a number of CNCS broadcasters and film studios, FBC is one of the biggest companies in the UMF and currently has a seat on the Corporate Council.

Today many CNCS and some southern media agencies have offices in the city. Combined with the millions of tourists who visit the area, this makes Canterbury an ideal clearing house for intelligence gathering in the Northern city-states. The problem for the government and agencies like the FIA isn't as much stopping the flow of intelligence through Canterbury, but doing so without disrupting everyday life. The movie, trideo and tourism revenue generated by the city and the region around it is staggering, and the corporations divert a considerable portion of it into the government by buying large blocks of electoral vouchers. Even the quest for profit must occasionally take second place to security that benefits the whole Federation, however, and with the outbreak of the Interpolar War, companies affiliated with the Allied Southern Territories were asked — politely — to close up shop and leave.

► Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 1161
Joined UMF:	TN 1528 (Lyonesse League); TN 1551 (UMF)
Method of Government:	Representative Democracy
Head of Government:	Mayor Nial Levitus
Population:	1.7 million
Principal Industries:	Entertainment, tourism





Location	Description
1. Aquaworld	As much a zoological preserve as a theme park, Aquaworld contains numerous Earth and Terranovan aquatic species. It is home to the only whales on the planet, created using recombinant DNA techniques.
2. Earthland	Part museum, part theme park, Earthland chronicles the history of humanity's home planet, from the dawn of time to the modern era. Exhibits and rides accompany each epoch, each a mix of virtual reality and often gut-churning action.
3. Polaris Pictures	The company once headed by former Treasurer Yves Banderas is one of Canterbury's largest production and distribution companies. They are responsible for many of the Federation's greatest blockbusters.
4. The Strip	Running for five kilometers across downtown Canterbury, the "strip" is the city's entertainment district. The western end is comprised of a number of exclusive hotels, restaurants and casinos, but the further south and east it goes, the seedier the district becomes.
5. Canterbury Heights	Canterbury heights, the name of both a road and a district, is the most exclusive residential area in the city. Its palatial residences are the homes of media personalities and corporate execs, and tours of the area are popular.
6. Theme Parks	Aquaworld and Earthland are not the only theme parks in Canterbury. Others built on more traditional lines include Movieland, Renegades (a collection of roller-coasters), the Funland (an adventure park for children) and World Tour.
7. FBC	The headquarters of Federation Broadcasting Corporation are located in the southwest of the city. The company organizes a number of tours, demonstrating how a program is made, recorded and broadcast. FBC also offers tickets to watch the filming of quiz programs and chat shows.

• WHERE THE STREETS ARE PAVED WITH GOLD

Nowhere in the UMF are the divisions between rich and poor so apparent as in Canterbury. The rich live in large houses and walled estates on the hills overlooking the city while the less well off congregate on the valley floor. Several downtown areas have become virtual ghettos, particularly south of the Strip and in the River District, that serve as the focus of crime in the city.

Many people flock to Canterbury seeking fame and fortune, hoping to be 'discovered' and star in the next blockbuster. A few find the success they are looking for, but for every one who finds fame, hundreds of others do not. Some of these keep at it, working at part time jobs, while others give up the idea of a media career and return home. Yet others find themselves drawn into the sordid pleasure industries of the eastern Strip.

Rivalries between the groups on the Strip often spill over into violence, and of the dozen or so gangs responsible for activities, half are locked into an ongoing series of feuds and gang wars. "Queen" Marianne Straker heads the largest group, the Undertow, an affiliate of the Forzi Cartel of Wounded Knee based in the River District. The group dominates illegal activities in the city but have recently come under pressure from the Kolson-sponsored Braeson's Blackguard, a slick bunch of killers.

The FIA maintain their largest office outside of Lyonesse in Canterbury, ostensibly to deal with the problems of organized crime and the gangs, but in practice they are there in an espionage role. Their operatives stage a two-prong attack on enemy powers. Their spy-hunting operations are well known, hunting down and intercepting enemy agents in the city. However, they also seek to recruit agents from the transient multicultural population, using *kompromat* gathered on visitors whose guard is down while they are relaxing in the city's theme parks, bars and hotels. Corporate intelligence operatives are also active in the city, gathering information that can be used as leverage in business negotiations and elsewhere.

• TRIAL BY TRIDEO

The political system used in Canterbury is a down-sized version of that used for the national Caucus elections, with electoral vouchers purchased for 100 marks and used to elect representatives from each of the city's twenty districts. The emphasis on money results in the promotion of corporate interests and the virtual exclusion of certain groups from the city council. Indeed, nine of the councilors are corporate employees, directly working for their company's interests, while another two are suspected of having links to organized crime. The previous mayor, Coran Jesse, attempted to remedy this situation by proposing the elimination of corporate block voting, limiting every individual or organization to a single vote. However, Mayor Jesse's resignation following a sex scandal exposed by FBC destroyed all hopes that the council would approve the bill.

The Canterbury police are funded by donations from big businesses and are widely regarded as corporate stooges. Their corporate funding ensures they have the best training and equipment as well as sufficient numbers to carry out their duties. Furthermore, their excellent pay and benefits packages ensures few succumb to the lure of organized crime. There are three distinct groups within the police. The first deals with the whole range of crimes, from littering and petty crime to robbery and murder. Though the largest department by far, they usually work behind the scenes and have a poor public image. Better known are the "presence" squads who operate in the principal tourist areas. Hired as much for their looks and charm as for their policing abilities, they are intended to be the public face of Canterbury policing. The last group are the assault teams, made famous by real-life and dramatized trideo shows like *Stop or I Shoot!* and *Halton and McLean: Gear Police*. A paramilitary unit, they are trained in the use of a wide range of weapons, from handguns to Gears, and are charged with handling violent crime in the city. Their duties are often seen as glamorous, but the physical and psychological stresses of the job means few serve with the department for more than three cycles.

• ECONOMICS OF THE BLOCKBUSTER

Almost half the city's income is generated by the entertainment industry or tourism, either directly in the studios or theme parks, or indirectly in hotels, restaurants or the transport services. Even the local UMFA troops have been involved in the film-making process, often hired out to film studios to provide authentic military equipment for films or to advise on the authenticity (or lack thereof) of the same.

Canterbury serves as a regional transport hub, with road, rail and even air links to neighboring cities. Most tourists arrive by rail, either from Marathon, Rapid City or stations on the maglev line. The most extravagant can choose to travel in luxury aboard either the *Sangar Princess* or the *Byerst Princess*, passenger landships that travel between Rapid City and Canterbury. Though slower than the rail routes, a journey on the Princess-line vessels is considered the trip of a lifetime by many Mercantile citizens. However, with the outbreak of war, the *Sangar Princess* has been commandeered by the UMFA and is currently serving as a hospital ship in the Western Desert.

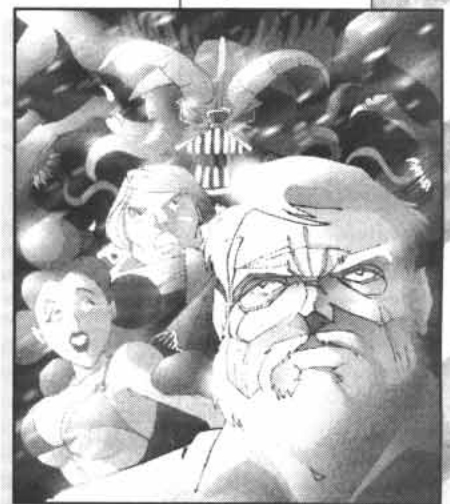
The city has also gained something of a reputation for higher education. Gibb's University, located along Prospect Boulevard in the south of the city, has a reputation for research in the hard sciences — physics and chemistry — as well as in engineering. Its graduates are well regarded, though larger institutions such as the University of Swanscombe or FTRI in Marathon receive more public attention.

► The Winter Wolves

A cult classic, John Kaidou's "The Winter Wolves" is a tale of passion and intrigue set against the backdrop of the invasion of a far off arctic world. The movie was shot on location near Pioneer and on sound stages in Canterbury. It follows the exploits of Gear pilot Jym Wang (played by Anatole Kuratin), a soldier in the armies of Earth General Thaddeus Murasaka. Wang is forced to come to terms with his commander's megalomania and must choose between his duty to Murasaka and his love for a native girl, Kristin (played by newcomer Claudya Gohl). The film's popularity has been largely attributed to its stunning visual effects, including the alien cabal known as the "puppet masters" created by effects company Believe It!. There have been many attempts to match the success of the Winter Wolves, but in the thirty cycles since its release, few have matched its commercial success. In recent cycles the film industry rumor mill has suggested that despite his age, Kaidou is planning a sequel.

The "Winter Wolves" was one of the first of a new series of "high technology spectacles," as they are often touted by the critics. Productions of this type have historically come and gone throughout the ages, depending on the means and the moods of the societies producing them. The resurgence of the genre on Terra Nova points to a near-total recovery from the horrors of the War of the Alliance; immense means are once more available to entertainment groups, and the public is again yearning for high emotion and excitement.

Born in Canterbury in TN 1825, Kaidou has retired from active film making but serves as consultant to a number of Canterbury's largest studios. His approval — or disapproval — is one of the key factors in deciding whether a project goes ahead and he is thus courted by many up and coming writers and directors. However, he is widely reviled by critics who blame the success of his films like "Sons of Destiny" for the studios' fixation with blockbusters. Kaidou's daughter, Samika, once a child actress, is one of the most senior members of the UMFA, commanding the Strategic Forces Directorate.



DJAKARTA POINT

5.5 DJAKARTA POINT

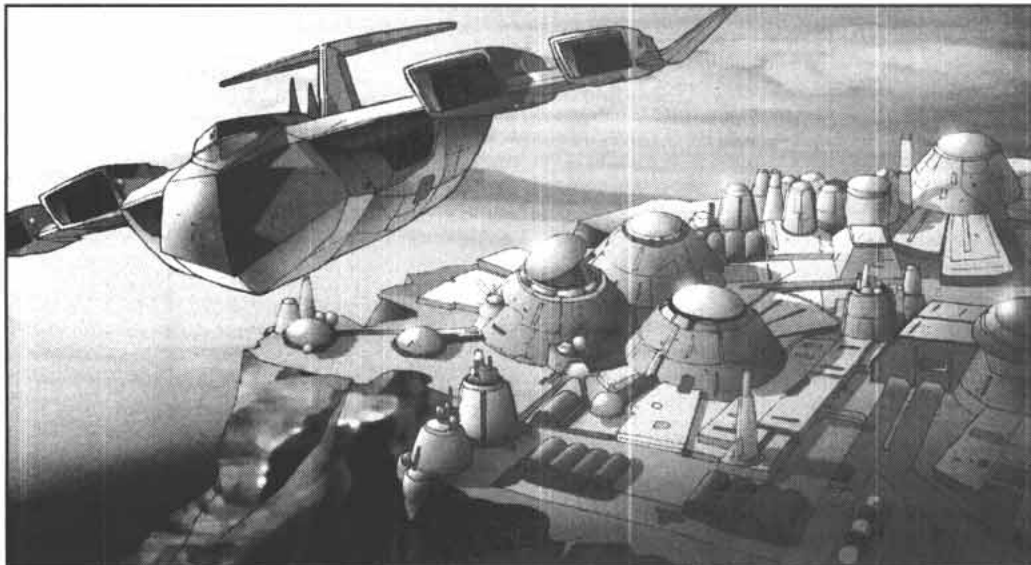
Located high in the Tershaw Range, Djakarta Point exists for one reason: the mining of gold and silver. It began life as a mining enclave, established by the Saracen Corporation in the late eighth century, but as the corporate enclave grew, so did the settlement that surrounded it. When the city of Djakarta Point formally came into being on 6 Summer TN 857, there had already been a settlement on the site for almost seventy cycles. Earth's withdrawal prompted the collapse of the Saracen Corporation, the market for the city's goods destroyed in the chaos of abandonment. The city remained a viable entity throughout the Reconstruction period, however, and when inter-city trade picked up in the 1490s the mines were reopened under the authority of the city council which slowly metamorphosed into a corporate entity: The Djakarta Point Mining Corporation (DPMC).

Djakarta Point became a focus of trade in the eastern Tershaw Range, its merchants ranging as far afield as Swanscombe and Innsbruck, building links between the communities that would stand it in good stead later. Caught between two expansionist powers, the United Mercantile Federation and the Northern Lights Confederacy, President Haruka Murakami of Djakarta Point was receptive to proposals by Zagazig mayor Yanna Goren for the formation of an economic and defensive alliance. With DPMC's trade links and Goren's diplomatic efforts, the alliance soon became reality. Dubbed the Tershaw Cooperative Alliance, it also included Swanscombe, Kossuth and Innsbruck. Unfortunately, the league proved to be short lived, collapsing under pressure from the UMF's eastward expansion. In spring TN 1567 Swanscombe was persuaded to leave the TCA and join the UMF. Simultaneous diplomatic efforts in Djakarta Point were unsuccessful — the corporate government had no desire to lose its status as a dominant regional power — prompting the occupation of the city by UMFA troops who brushed aside the ill-organized and politically divided TCA garrison.

Once in Mercantile hands, the board members of DPMC were given a stark choice: accept the situation and deal with it, or be replaced, more or less quietly, by pro-Mercantile individuals. They acquiesced grudgingly out of self-preservation, and set about rebuilding their trade links. Within a cycle, the initial hostility over their forcible incorporation had given way to excitement over the economical benefits of joining the Federation. Much to their surprise, they found the UMF took a hands-off position, allowing the city-state to operate much as it had done before its incorporation in the league. Furthermore, the league's government helped them build trade links with the rest of the Federation's territories and particularly Marathon, where the precious metals of Djakarta Point played an important part in the electronics industry. The city-state continues to play a major role in the Federation's economy, its native industries complemented by trade with the western regions of the Norlight Confederacy.

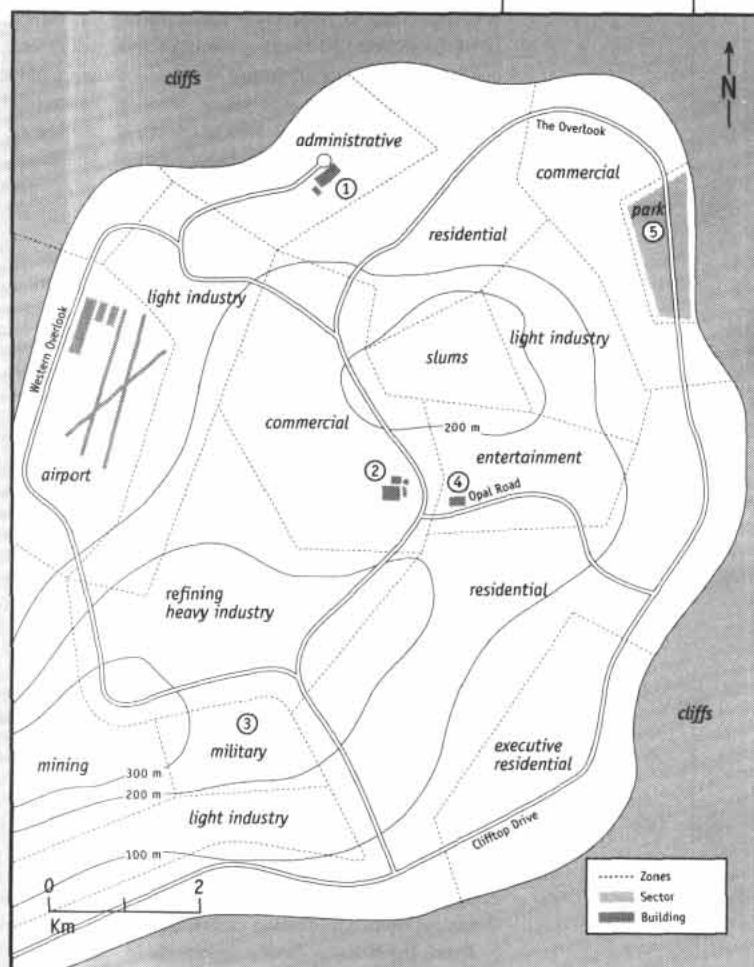
Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 857
Joined UMF:	TN 1567
Method of Government:	Corporate
Head of Government:	CEO/President Kaori Ganendra
Population:	860,000
Principal Industries:	Gold and silver mining



► Djakarta Point Map

Location	Description
1. Municipal Mint	Djakarta Point is the only city-state in the CNCS that produces its own unique form of currency, high-value silver (1, 2 and 5 M) and gold (10, 20 and 100 M) coins. The heavily defended city mint, located on the Western Overlook, manufactures and recycles these coins, constantly revising their composition, size and design.
2. Police Station	When built in TN 1842, the magnificent central police station, known locally as the <i>Black Tower</i> for its tall, dark granite construction, was condemned for its extravagant design. Its presence, looming over the seedier districts of downtown, was felt to better convey the force's determination than the archaic collection of buildings (now a museum) in the administrative district.
3. UMFA Barracks	Djakarta Point's mines are regarded as a major strategic resource and only the garrisons of Ashington and Lyonnesse surpass those assigned to this city. The military facilities took on a new importance during the Judas Syndrome, expanded in case of hostilities with the NLC. These improvements to the largely subterranean complex proved fortuitous and Djakarta Point served as a regional command center for the Northern Guard in the War of the Alliance.
4. Rock Bottom Club	Located in the shadow of the Black Tower, the Rock Bottom club, part strip joint and part gambling den, serves as the headquarters of the Djakarta Point Syndicate. Owned and operated by Luc Coral of the Jagged Edge, it is regarded as neutral ground by both Syndicate members and other gangs in the city.
5. Overlook Park	One of the few open spaces in the city, Overlook Park is a favorite venue for family gatherings and the city's youth culture, including base jumpers. After dark, however, it quickly becomes a den of iniquity, haunted by prostitutes, drug dealers and muggers.



● DISHONEST PROFIT

High security around the gold and silver mines, as well as the smelting works and the mint, have made direct theft from the Djakarta Point Mining Corporation (DPMC) a difficult proposition, though several criminal groups use blackmail and bribery to gain access to security codes, shipping schedules and the like. Such activities are only possible by the largest and most influential gangs. The remainder prey on the city's citizens, carrying out petty theft, running drugs, organizing prostitution (although prostitution itself is not illegal in the UMF, soliciting is) and extorting money. Arranging 'insurance' is the most common practice, with local businesses paying off the criminals to ensure no harm befalls them or their business. Turf wars between criminal groups are commonplace, especially when an individual or business under the protection of one gang is preyed on by another.

Organized crime in Djakarta Point is divided among more than three dozen groups, but the largest and most successful are the Jagged Edge (specialty: extortion), the Shadow Dancers (specialty: theft), the Millers (specialties: theft and prostitution) and the McHenry family (specialties: drugs and prostitution). All compete against each other for the city's business, but are allied in a loose body known as The Syndicate. Formed after the gang wars of TN 1921-23, the group was created to forestall further bloody clashes, but today exists as a front between Djakarta Point and other larger criminal groups. Luc Coral of the Jagged Edge has acted as head of the group since TN 1935, but both Franco Koke of the Millers and Elizabeth McHenry are secretly plotting to usurp his place, threatening a new series of gang wars in the city.

Djakarta Point maintains its own corporate-financed anti-organized crime squads who constantly work to keep the gangs in check. Some Syndicate members use contacts in the police department — which is no less corrupt than the rest of the city — to keep one step ahead of the law. Indeed, the DPPD spends almost as much on internal affairs as it does on the organized crime units. The UMF regards the silver and gold mines as a vital strategic resource and thus there is a strong contingent of troops and intelligence operatives in the city. The FIA works closely with the local police department but their relationship has been strained by the recent suspension of a FIA team accused of complicity with criminal activities.

• FOOLS' GOLD

It is impossible to judge where the Djakarta Point Mining Corporation ends and the city administration begins, with the DPMC board and CEO heading the city's government and the corporation's exports funding the police force and other public bodies. Numerous largely autonomous subcommittees, including non-voting representatives of the general populace, oversee the city's governance, but DPMC has maintained its stranglehold on the reigns of power, and the heads of every public body, from the mint to the street cleaners, are employed by the corporation. DPMC has proved to be a benign and generous dictator and few people question the corporation's role. Attempts by the Northern Workers Consortium (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p. 60) to gain a foothold in corporate and city politics have been repeatedly rebuffed, though they have managed to get representatives onto the public health and justice committees.

The outbreak of war has turned the city administration on its head. The local UMFA commander, Brigadier-General Gustav Neve, has assumed control of the city. Though President Ganendra retains control of day-to-day civil activities in Djakarta Point, the CNCS Grand Marshal has charged the General with streamlining operations to best support the war effort. To that end he has used the provisions of the War Powers act to place UMFA and Northern Guard representatives on numerous subcommittees, though he has so far refrained from making any radical changes to the governmental structure. Ganendra dislikes having the General as a watchdog and has staged several incidents to ascertain how far she can push him. Neve dislikes these political games but is prepared — for now — to humor the DPMC President.

The Djakarta Point Syndicate occupies a precarious position in the new political order. Their leader, Luc Coral, has been working hard to convince General Neve that they have no desire to compromise the city's security. Coral realizes his organization is poised on the brink of civil war, though he suspects the Forzi and Kolsen Cartels rather than the true source — Lauren Ibsen, one of the lieutenants in the Millers, an agent of Mekong's ICP with orders to stir up unrest in the city.

• ALL THAT GLITTERS ...

Though mining forms the heart of Djakarta Point, directly employing a third of the population, the city contains a host of secondary industries geared towards supporting the mining operation and its workers. Located in the Upper Town, near the base of the promontory, some are directly associated with DPMC, such as smelting works, precision engineering and producing mining equipment, while others are involved in transport, security and craft industries.

The entertainment district of the lower town centered on Opal Road (known locally as "Easy Street"), employs a large segment of the population, forming a cornerstone of the miners' 'work hard, play hard' mentality. Businesses range from restaurants and lounge bars to disreputable strip bars and gambling joints. No matter how innocuous, almost every pub, club or restaurant is under the sway of one or another of the gangs. In many cases this is little more than victimization in a protection racket, but others are fronts for the gangs. Respectability provides little clue as to which is which: the McHenry family operate their wide-ranging underworld business from one of the city's most posh restaurants on Clifftop Drive.

For all its wealth, Djakarta Point is heavily reliant on imports for survival, particularly foodstuffs carried up Mount Oir from the farming communities of the Tudor Plain and the NLC's Great Valley. As such, the cost of living in the city is high, surpassed in the UMF only by frozen Pioneer.

A recent craze among the city's youth has been base jumping — leaping off the cliffs that encircle the city on three sides, equipped with little more than a parachute and relying on body-planing to carry the jumper clear of the rock face. The sport has claimed almost a dozen lives since TN 1930, but despite government efforts, it remains popular, especially among adolescents.

• STRATEGIC VALUE

Nestling on a rock spur overlooking the NLC's Big Valley, Djakarta Point occupies a major strategic position and has traditionally employed garrisons far in excess of that needed to hold the city against invaders. Until the outbreak of war, a whole Gear brigade (the 9th) and the 3rd Air Regiment were based in the city, though with access to the city limited to approach by air or via three switchback roads, the brigade's infantry battalion could hold the city against all but the most determined opponents. Over the last cycle, the brigade's armor regiment and half its Gear forces have relocated to Swanscombe, bolstering defenses along the border of the Karaq Wastes, though the arrival of Northern Guard forces to man the regional command center have largely offset these losses.

The 3rd Air Regiment is unusual in its relatively high concentration of VTOLs (Vertical Take-Off and Landing aircraft) at the expense of close-support aircraft like the Redjacket fighter-bomber. The VTOLs are usually seen attached to armor regiments, not aircraft ones. In this case, geography has dictated the military's choice. The close confines of the approach routes to the region limit the effectiveness of fixed-wing aircraft, but do little to hinder helicopter or hopper operations. The unit does retain a number of conventional interceptors to discourage enemy aircraft, however, and the military section of the city-state's airport has sufficient capacity and resources to house a second, more conventional air regiment.

5.6 LYONNESSE [UMF CAPITAL]

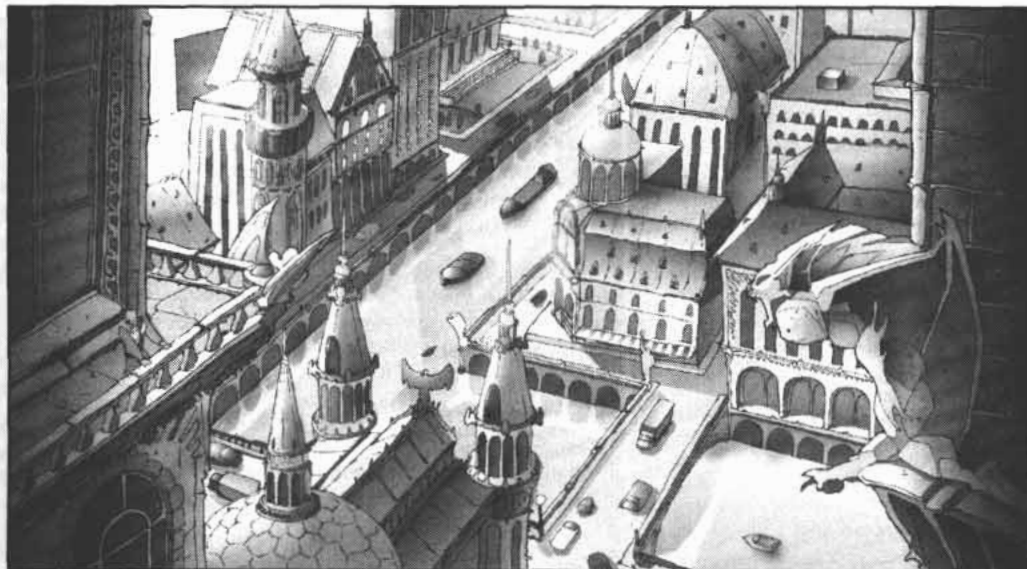
Founded TN 1327 as a support station for logging operations in and around Lake Tristan, Lyonnese was little more than a provincial town when Earth withdrew in the mid fifteenth century. The local people struggled to rebuild their lives, with local politics shattering into numerous self-serving factions. Work gangs, a thinly disguised form of slave labor, were a common sight in the TN 1460s and 70s, but by the turn of the century a measure of civilization had returned to the region. Realizing that Lyonnese had been fortunate to survive the chaos, City Administrator Yvgeny Corman set about building alliances with nearby cities, resulting in the formation of the Lyonnese League in TN 1528. The lakeside city became the administrative hub of the new alliance, its leaders wielding immense power until rampant government corruption prompted the Lake Tristan Conclave and the ensuing corporate coup.

The United Mercantile Federation chose to retain Lyonnese as the capital, but slimmed down the grossly bloated bureaucracy, putting many of the former administrators to work turning the city into the centerpiece of the new league. The old, decrepit pre-fabricated buildings, many of which remained from the colonial era, were torn down and replaced with massive edifices in the neo-gothic style. From the ground up, the new Lyonnese was built to impress. Of all the projects undertaken during this period, none has attracted more attention than Building A, known by locals as The Cathedral. Construction on this building, intended to become the center of Mercantile government, began in TN 1571 and was completed in TN 1628. The structure was badly damaged by orbital artillery during the War of Alliance, however, and reconstruction work finished in TN 1928, just in time for the building's 300th anniversary. The deliberate targeting of Building A by the CEF prompted the UMFA high command to construct a subterranean command post known as "the Pit." Completed in TN 1929, the exact location of the facility, which houses the strategic command, remains classified.

At first glance Lyonnese looks to be an elegant, relaxed city with few concerns beyond the constant circuit of political lobbying and socializing. Many visitors to the city comment on its tree-lined boulevards and broad canals, little realizing that the city is one of the most heavily fortified in the UMF. The boulevards are intended to facilitate the swift movement of troops and many are sufficiently broad to serve as emergency runways once trees and vegetation are cleared. The canals are placed so as to hinder the movement of troops without bridge-laying equipment. Furthermore, the city's towers and rooftops conceal an extensive array of anti-aircraft weaponry, together with a number of 'dazzle' lasers intended to render useless the observations of reconnaissance aircraft and satellites. Such systems are particularly dense around the Cathedral, where they are supplemented by anti-missile batteries. It is rumored that new sensors and computer software allow the system to engage ground and orbital artillery rounds, but this is most likely little more than press conjecture.

► Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 1327
Joined UMF:	TN 1528 (Lyonnesse League); TN 1551 (UMF)
Method of Government:	UMF District
Head of Government:	City Administrator Tessa Niedlich-Lywin
Population:	3.0 Million
Principal Industries:	Luxury goods, government, service



Map of Lyonnese ◀



Location	Description
1. Building A	The dark and imposing facade of the massive Cathedral hides one of the most technologically advanced buildings in the UMF. Extensively modernized during the recent refurbishment, its computer and communications systems are cutting edge, providing fingertip access to massive repositories of data.
2. Maglev Station	Also known as Building C, the TNTR maglev station pre-dates Lyonnese and forms the nucleus around which the rest of the city has grown. The station has been rebuilt numerous times over the past 1400 cycles, most recently in TN 1904 when the western portico was added.
3. LBC	An affiliate of FBC, the Lyonnese Broadcasting Corporation specializes in political and society news. The station has a reputation for investigative journalism, receiving awards and lawsuits in equal measure.
4. Agora	The old central market of Lyonnese, the Agora (or Great Market) has slowly metamorphosed from a commercial center to the hub of the city's leisure industry.
5. Plaza Hotel	The Plaza Hotel is the most prestigious in Lyonnese. It frequently houses visiting dignitaries, media stars and corporate executives. The hotel's reputation for meeting <i>any</i> of its guests' needs has also prompted numerous visits by the Lyonnese PD and the FIA.
6. Reiss Cathedral	The center of Revisionism in the UMF, Reiss Cathedral has seen a massive increase in attendance over the cycles since Thor Hutchison's assassination.
7. Golden Bough	This luxury housing development is at the heart of a political storm in the local government, with accusations that the city administrator took bribes from the development company to rezone the region as residential.

● CORPORATE HOSPITALITY

Lyonnesse is the heart of the UMF's high society and the rich and famous from across the arctic — and before the war, no small number from the Southern Territories — maintain houses and apartments in the city, partaking of its famous nightlife. Most companies also keep offices in the city, using them as the base of operations for the swarms of lobbyists which seek to influence the Mercantile government, their efforts merging with those of the socialites to ensure a near-endless circuit of balls, dinners and related functions. The organizers put considerable effort into their events, seeking to distinguish themselves from the dozens of rivals, and no expense is spared to create or import appropriate centerpieces or attractions. Numerous society columns and trideo programs play out the dramas of the social circuit, which play to the rest of the population as a real-life soap opera. Indeed, in the last few cycles a prominent Lyonnese socialite, Mari Feldman-Schroeder, has acquired national fame as a society journalist as much a result of her good looks and numerous contacts than for any real skill. Nonetheless, she is the role model of young girls across the nation and the subject of many pin-ups.

While the Federation capital likes to portray itself as rich, prosperous and sophisticated, Lyonnese too has its darker side. The western districts are home to a sizable underclass, though government statistics do their best to hide their presence. Many residents of these districts barely manage to eke out a living at the subsistence level, driving many to seek a life of crime.

The Forzi Cartel dominate the local underworld, headed by Geraint Forzi, son of the cartel leader. They make considerable profits satisfying the desires of the jaded high society, though their traditional businesses, particularly money-lending and gambling, are strong in the city's poorer districts. The cartel has so far avoided serious clashes with the strong police and FIA presence in the city, using their close links with the city administration (and even the Caucus) to maintain the status quo.

• GAMES OF STATE

Politics in the Federal District of Lyonesse, known as the "rainy city," are appropriately murky. Corporate, governmental and other interests pull in dozens of different directions, making their mark on local politics, which often serve as a surrogate for federal or even CNCS issues. For example, a group seeking to promote the expansion of the road network in the Marathon Basin may support a local rezoning bill to win the support of a senior bureaucrat or even a Caucus secretary. This trading of favors and influence is a cornerstone of Mercantile politics, working hand in hand with both reasoned argument and direct pressure. *Kompromat* is used liberally, as is bribery and intimidation. Uncooperative individuals often find salacious details of their private life — true or otherwise, it hardly matters — leaked to LBC or one of a host of other broadcasters in the area.

LBC has recently alleged that several government bodies, including the FIA, have established links with the Forzi Cartel and have used them as neutral couriers and go-betweens. Indeed, it is alleged that the some of the military and hi-tech equipment the Forzi smuggle out of the UMF go with tacit government approval, payment for services rendered. Furthermore, rumors in several local scandal sheets link Geraint Forzi and City Administrator Tessa Niedlich-Lywin, allegedly seen together at a private spa on the shores of Lake Tristan, though the one grainy photograph in circulation has done little to cast light on the situation.

The area around Lyonesse is the wettest in the CNCS and as a result is heavily wooded with a diverse range of flora and fauna. The steady encroachment of residential and industrial developments on the city's wilderness preserves — most notably the Golden Bough development — has led to many animal species being driven out of the region. A small but vocal environmental group called the Animal Rights Corps, led by Verity Kimsey, proprietor of the vegetarian Johar's Bounty chain of restaurants, has repeatedly petitioned the city administration to do something about the situation, but to no avail. After all, neither woodspringers nor arboreal hoppers can buy electoral vouchers.

• THE PRICE OF VOTES

Lyonesse is the center of the UMF's financial services industry, home to many banks and finance houses as well as the UMF's principal stock market, located on Commercial Street, west of the Cathedral. Many finance companies work hand in hand with the corporations, providing loans and facilitating inter-corporate deals, but a few like the Harper Banking Trust specialize in funding small agricultural concerns in the Marathon Basin and along the Badlands Fringe. Information brokering forms another major strand of the local economy, ranging from credit-rating companies to agencies specializing in public relations and market research. A number of such companies work under contract to the government, carrying out polls across the league and providing advice on the public presentation of the Caucus' decisions.

Entertainment is a major industry in the city, ranging from the tourist hotels and theaters of the Agora district to the swish restaurants and casinos west of the Plaza. The National Gallery on the eastern side of the Plaza, overlooking the marina, is a magnet for connoisseurs of fine art, containing a wide range of Terranovan works and a handful of priceless works from Earth.

Logging, the city's original industry, continues to play a major role in the local economy, though the remodeling of the city in the sixteenth century forced the yards almost thirty kilometers out of town. More immediate, but still marginalized on the lake front, are factories and workshops dedicated to producing a broad range of luxury goods. The city's craftsmen are renowned for their woodwork, and furniture produced in the city is in high demand across the CNCS.

► Mari Feldman-Schroeder

When Mari Feldman-Schroeder was born in TN 1901, her parents, well-known Swanscombe stockbrokers, invested ten thousand marks in the Mercantile stock exchange as her birth gift. By the time she reached her majority in TN 1922, the rapid growth of the Federation economy after the War of Alliance, combined with her parents' canny business acumen, had sent the value of these stocks into the stratosphere. Cashing in half her portfolio, leaving the rest to accumulate value, Mari walked away with a cool seven million marks and no need ever to seek employment. She relocated to Lyonesse and became a fixture on the society circuit, quickly ingratiating herself with her mix of charm and good looks.

Though she readily admits to "being a bit of a thickie," she has inherited some of her parents' business sense, winning contracts to write several society columns and hosting the trideo show "Lives of Luxury" on LBC, though her career is little more than a hobby. Her bubbly personality and child-like innocence have endeared her to much of the Mercantile population, male and female alike, making her both a role model and pinup. She has endorsed a few lines of products over the cycles, mostly clothes and luxury items.

Feldman-Schroeder is considered a "must-have" guest at most parties in the city, and her decision to attend — or not — can make or break an event. Even the most minute details are important: whether she is early or late, what she is wearing, and so on, will influence the "quality" of the event and reflect on the organizer(s). The same factors that have made her popular, however, have prompted a strong "anti-Mari" faction, leading to one prominent trideo company to end their advertising tag line with "And no Mari!"



MAINZ

5.7 MAINZ

Founded in TN 866 as a center of ranching in the Marathon Basin, Fort Charles, as Mainz was then known, was a major regional center. Largely self sufficient, Fort Charles rode out the storm of Earth's withdrawal, though bandit raids prompted the construction of extensive fortifications and the establishment of a sizable militia. Joining the nascent Western Frontier Protectorate in TN 1527, the city-state's presence in the Marathon basin originally went unchallenged by the Lyonesse League.

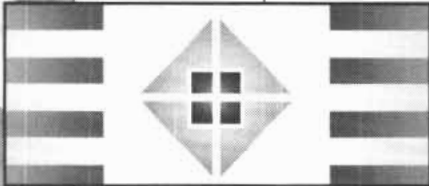
When the league was remodeled in TN 1551, one of the first actions of the new Caucus was to find an external threat upon which to focus the population's attentions. With the tacit approval of the NLC, who wished to avoid the attentions of their aggressive neighbors, the Mercantile forces moved against Fort Charles en-masse, occupying the region and besieging the city. The military commanders knew assaulting the fortified city would be bloody, and were thankful when the city bureaucracy chose to open their gates on 39 Autumn. On the last day of the cycle, Fort Charles was officially incorporated into the UMF and renamed itself Mainz in early TN 1552.

Though the speed of the Mercantile occupation had taken the WFP by surprise, the Protectorate still maintained its claim to the city and the surrounding lands, resulting in a series of border wars over the cycles and centuries that followed. The most notable came in TN 1570 while the UMFA was still consolidating its grip on the former Tershaw Cooperative Alliance city-states of Swanscombe and Djakarta Point. Launching a preemptive strike through the Cajun Pass, the WFP sought to regain their lost possession, but after a fierce rearguard action by badly outnumbered UMF troops — and the UMF's subsequent use of chemical weapons — the Protectorate troops were forced to withdraw. The resulting Cajun Pass Treaty ended the war and recognized UMF possession of the city, but neither nation subscribes to the ideal of "forgive and forget" and Mainz remains a thorny issue between the two powers.

The core of Mainz is built around the Protectorate's fort model — layers of defensive walls and AA-turrets — and like the WFP cities, Mainz has outgrown its small core. Initially the city planners attempted to control the growth of the city, using a succession of defensive walls to channel growth in the direction they favored. They failed, and the result is a series of concentric walls which, when viewed from the air, resemble the layers of an onion. These regions are the Core (central district, also known as Old Town), the First to Third Rings (walled zones) and the Outer Town (outside the fourth wall). The modern city stretches from the foothills of the Westridge Range out onto the Cajun Plains, bisected by a series of broad boulevards. These roads form part of an extensive network that links the city to its neighbors and allow the swift transport of the city's main export: food.

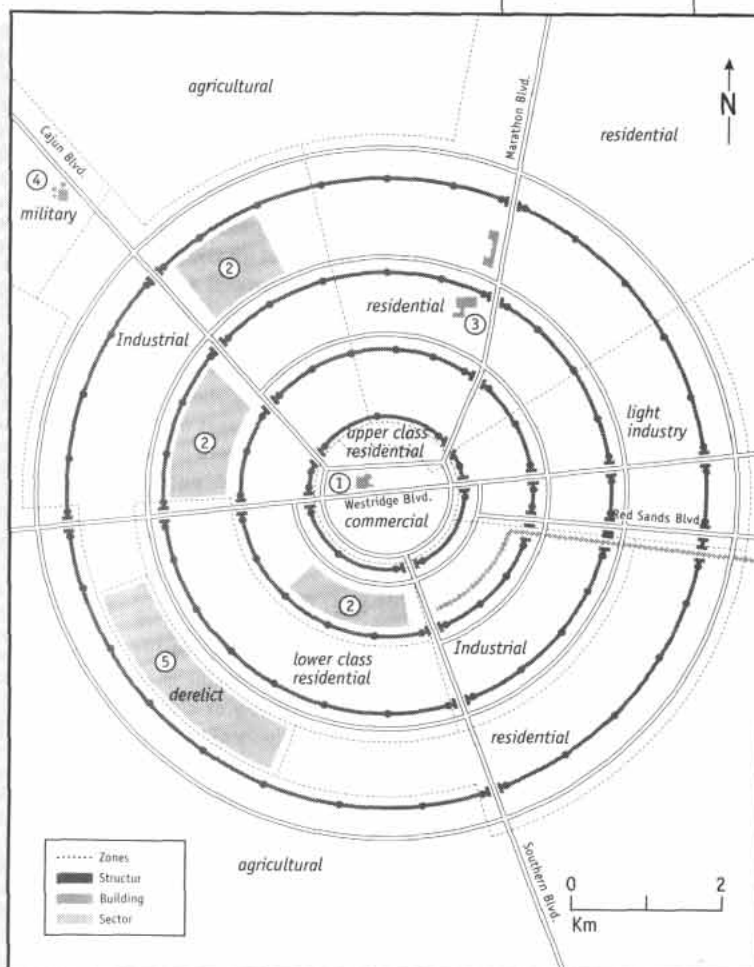
Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 866 (as Fort Charles, renamed Mainz in TN 1552)
Joined UMF:	TN 1551
Method of Government:	Self-Perpetuating Bureaucracy
Head of Government:	Mayor Kendall Shirol
Population:	720,000
Principal Industries:	Ranching, foodstuffs



Map of Mainz

Location	Description
1. MainzFood	Located at the heart of Old Town, Mainz's innermost defensive ring, the elaborate Granling Building (named for company founder Ferrara Granling) is home to the CNCS' largest food conglomerate, MainzFood. The corporation also buys produce from independent farmers, which it processes and packs in its plants in the First and Second Rings.
2. Stockyards	There are several stockyards dotted across Mainz, associated with the principal railway station (for live exports) and the processing plants, with two other "holding pens" for animals being brought into the city. Each is subdivided to meet the requirements of the animals they are to contain, ranging from barnabies and cattle to hoppers and snakes.
3. UMF War Museum	Mainz has been the site of some of the UMF's bloodiest battles, from the Cajun Pass to the St. Vincent's War and War of the Alliance, and the museum on Marathon Boulevard provides a solemn and surprisingly uncommercial reminder of the horrors the Federation's population have endured. A whole gallery is dedicated to the Heavy Gear, from its humble origins to its decisive role in the War of the Alliance.
4. Cajun Pass Memorial	This ten-meter tall monument, located just outside Mainz's main UMFA compound, acknowledges the bravery and sacrifice of the men who stood against the WFP invasion of TN 1570 and willingly called in fire on their own position to halt the attack. It depicts three soldiers standing bravely, a commander flanked by an infantryman and a tanker.
5. The Wasteland	The southwestern sector of Mainz was the scene of bitter fighting against the CEF and much of the district remains derelict. Known as the wasteland, this area of the city has become the home to numerous homeless individuals.



HOME ON THE RANGE

The people of Mainz are a strange hybrid of Western and Mercantile cultures. Many of the oldest families retain the clan structure and naming conventions (family name first) of the city-state's early days, but more recent immigrants, particularly since the War of Alliance, eschew the Westerner ideal in favor of the traditional nuclear family. The "old families" dominate the city's companies and institutions, however, forming an oligarchy that has a strong influence over city-state affairs. Many of these families use Equatorial Hispanic as their first language rather than traditional Anglic, and this has led to a series of laws that dictate all public notices and official documents must be available in both languages. Attempts to extend these provisions to periodicals and books have been repeatedly blocked, though many publishers voluntarily produce both.

Occupied by the CEF during the War of Alliance, the population was given little choice but to work with the Earth forces. This unfortunately led to many accusations of collaboration, both real and as a means of exacting revenge for some personal slight. The presence of UMFA and Northern Guard troops prevented bloodshed on the scale seen in the Badlands, but for almost a cycle revenge killings were commonplace. A number of trials ensued in the post-war years, though this was limited to prominent individuals. Even today some groups are held in poor regard for their alleged activities during the war and this has colored local politics. Inhabitants of Mainz are also occasionally subject to accusations of collaboration when traveling, both in other parts of the UMF and abroad. Violence is not unknown in these cases.

Already a major black market center, Mainz took on increased significance during the war, particularly as a "clearing center" for the Forzi Cartel's smuggling operations into and out of the CEF occupation zone. The Forzi maintain a tight grip on the city's underworld, though the Granis Cartel have used the on-going Kolson-Forzi struggle to strengthen their position in the city. To date the Forzi response has been minimal, but Sigurd Granis has been building contacts with the local community, particularly the old families and the corporations, in preparation for the day the Forzi and their allies try to expel the interlopers.

• THE POLITICS OF TRADE

Mainz is ruled by a self-perpetuating bureaucracy, nominally open to all Mainz-born individuals but in practice dominated by the old families. Each member of the fifty-person assembly chooses their own successor, deemed a fairer practice than the vote purchasing system used elsewhere in the UMF. This naturally biases the system toward the old, established families who have formed virtual dynasties within the city's government. The current city mayor, Kendall Shiroi, is only the third mayor of Mainz to come from a "new" family. He was elected principally as a compromise candidate because of the post-War of Alliance dispute between the Fernandez and Lawler families — the Lawlers accuse the Fernandez of collaborating with the CEF during the war.

Together with the CNCS protectorate of Red Sands, Mainz forms a cornerstone of UMFA and Northern Guard operations in the southeastern portions of the UMF and the Westridge Mountains. Using the independent city-state as a staging post, the Mainz garrison's reach extends along the railway lines to Ashington, including the strategic passes controlling the entrance to the Marathon Basin. Working with the UMFA's landship fleet and the Northern Guard, the force's area of responsibility includes numerous Badlands communities on the verge of the White Desert, bringing them into occasional conflict with the Koreshi, better known as the Sand Riders. Deployments in this area have been of particular interest to Northco who have used the Federation units for field-tests of their prototype white sand Gear, the Jaguar-based Sand Cat. Of more concern are the rover gangs who prey on caravans headed to or from the city, particularly the vital trade links to Wounded Knee and Red Sands. The security force in the region has repeatedly been cautioned about using excessive force against these groups. Despite this, just before the outbreak of war, allegations surfaced in the Mainz press of an official (but illegal) shoot-to-kill policy directed at rover gangs. Unfortunately, the investigation of these accusations has been given a low priority and they may be conveniently forgotten in the chaos of the Interpolar War.

• WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Ranching dominates the economy of Mainz, though less than five percent of the population work on the massive farms that surround the city. Instead, the majority work in the packaging and processing plants of the First and Second Rings, or else in the ancillary or dependent industries of the Third Ring and Outer City. Feed manufacturers and veterinarians form the majority of the outer groups while leather-working, for which the city is well known, dominates the dependent services.

Trade also plays a major role in the city's economy. In addition to exporting its own goods — meat products, leathers and fertilizers — and importing essentials such as grain, Mainz is a major center for Badlands trade, particularly in the Great White Desert, the Westridge Range and the Barrington Basin. Indeed, the city houses the second largest contingent of customs officers in the UMF, surpassed only by Zagreb, charged with limiting the import of goods from the AST, particularly the Mekong Dominion. In recent seasons these procedures have shifted from control of the quotas and legality to imposing a ban on all Southern goods as part of the Federation's trade sanctions against the AST. This policy has only improved the business of the Forzi and Granis Cartels.

Recent cycles have seen the political waters of the Westridge area — regarded as part of the UMF's sphere of influence, despite the Azov Treaty — muddled by the creation of the NuCoal and the CNCS' intervention in the form of the Desert Trade Commission. Although nominally cooperating with both parties, the Federation regards them as interfering in Mercantile trade, particularly the DTC, whose actions are viewed as furthering the Norlight agenda of reducing dependency on the UMF. Since the outbreak of the Interpolar War, the region has become a staging ground for Northern Guard and UMFA operations against the Southern Republic. The outbreak of the "White War" between a variety of local forces around the Great White Desert has only made the area even more volatile.



Senior Ranger Martha Bishop



Born in TN 1898, senior ranger Martha Bishop's first contact with the military was the CNCS' dogged defense of her hometown of Mainz against the CEF in 1914. Despite her youth, she helped the defenders during the four weeks of bitter street fighting, serving first as a runner and later as a loader. She was sent to an orphanage when the CEF occupied the city, but escaped to roam the streets like so many children in the occupied territories. After being caught stealing food, she was sentenced to the interment camps on the western side of the city. When the CNCS liberated the city in TN 1917 Martha was in a pitiful state, but quickly recovered, physically at least, under the ministrations of the Northern Guard medical corps. She was, however, left with a deep and violent hatred of the CEF that she now directs against Port Arthur and other former CEF communities.

In TN 1920 she joined the UMFA as a Gear pilot, sailing through basic training. Her somewhat nihilistic outlook limited her prospects in the mainstream UMFA and she was transferred to the special forces command where she was ideally suited to "black" operations. Bishop has undertaken missions across Terra Nova, ranging from the high arctic to the jungles of the Mekong Dominion, but has spent the last three cycles based in her home city undertaking hunter-killer missions against Badlands rovers. Her squadron has recently been seconded to the Northern Guard and their whereabouts are unknown.

5.8 MARATHON

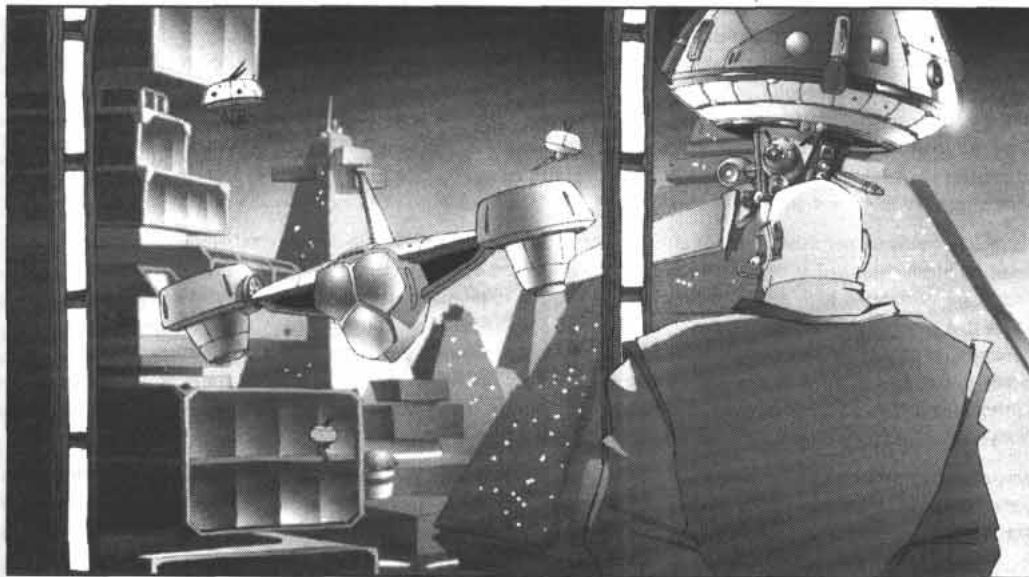
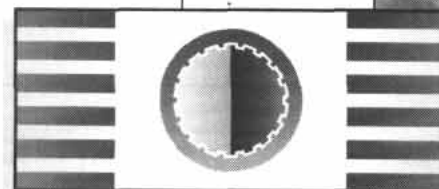
Marathon began life as the administrative headquarters for the Pheidippides Corporation's mining and petrochemical operations in the Marathon Basin and the Downing Range. The city grew to become a major colonial administrative center, famed for its idyllic setting thanks to the wide separation between its industrial and residential sectors. Indeed, the quality of life in the city was so high that few inhabitants chose to leave Terra Nova when Earth withdrew in TN 1454. The Marathonites were soon given cause to rue their decision as the city came under repeated attack from wandering bands and other city-states. Clashes were particularly bitter with the city-state of Salisbury, located some 1500 km to the south, particularly between TN 1480 and 1486, though the razing of that city-state by bandits in TN 1525 shocked even Marathon, precipitating the formation of the Lyonesse League.

Located on the northern edge of the basin that bears its name, the low-rise city sprawls across the foothills of the Downing Range, forming an elongated urban area. The rise to prominence of the Abaline Computing Corporation in the late seventeenth century (see **Northern Vehicles Compendium 1**, p. 24), particularly the creation of optical neural nets (ONNets), led to Marathon becoming a center of the UMF's high-technology industry, attracting support industries and competitors in equal measure. ACC became involved with Northco in TN 1675, commissioned by the Rapid City industrial giant to develop a system capable of controlling their prototype Bipedal One-man Tank, the progenitor of modern Heavy Gears. After the successful completion of the NOR project, the ONNET side of Abaline's business grew exponentially and in TN 1713 Abaline Research, the company's ONNet research and development division, bought out ACC.

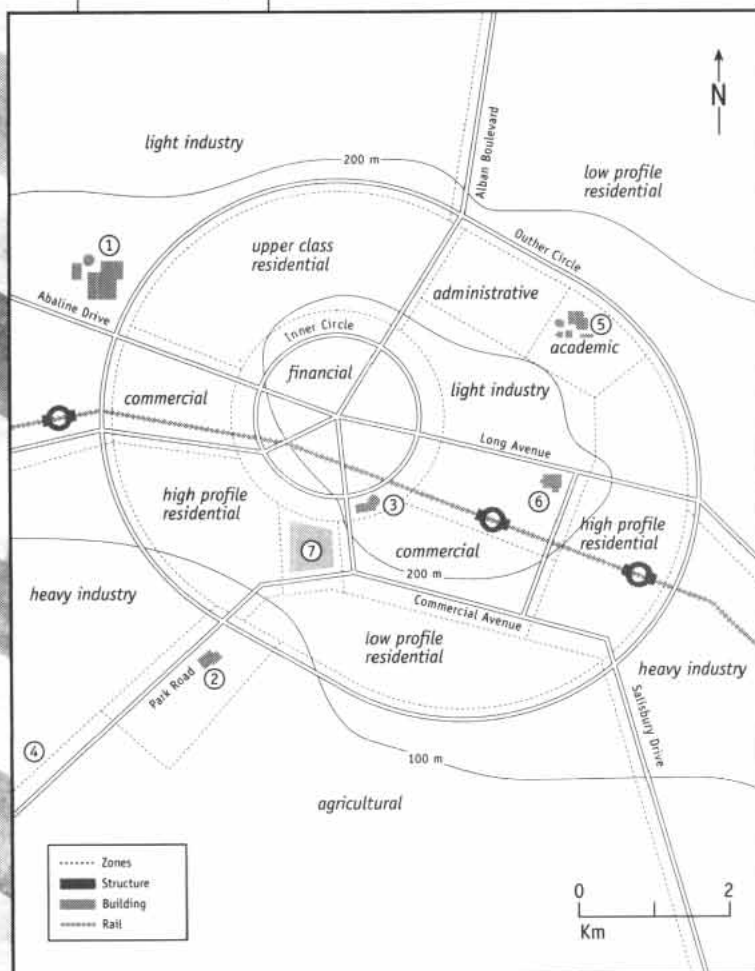
During the Judas Syndrome, Abaline persuaded the Marathon Council to install a military sensor and weapon system known as the Abaline Research Marathon Electronic Defense System (ARMEDS) in the city's perimeter defenses. Designed to analyze the sensor input, filtering out natural events and alerting the human operators to any suspicious activity, ARMEDS controls numerous weapon systems, though a series of safety locks prevent the system from taking autonomous action. The success of this system against CEF saboteurs during the War of Alliance prompted Abaline to suggest the creation of a city wide computer system known as the Marathon Net. The city agreed, gaining an advanced computer network while Abaline gained a massive test-bed for its latest ONNets. Work began on the system in early TN 1918 under the direction of vice-president of ONNet Training and Development, Anthony Phills, and within a cycle the system controlled many aspects of life in the city, ranging from the telecommunication system to traffic control. Over the cycles, the Marathon Net has grown far beyond the original specifications, becoming an essential and all-pervasive part of life for those living in the city.

► Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 701
Joined UMF:	TN 1528 (Lyonesse League); TN 1551 (UMF)
Method of Government:	Representative Democracy
Head of Government:	Mayor Gavril Bonner
Population:	2.5 Million
Principal Industries:	Computer systems, high technology



Map of Marathon



Location	Description
1. Abaline	Abaline Research maintains extensive research, manufacture and testing facilities in the west of the city. Its Computer Center is the site of many top-secret projects, and the facility is guarded by a sizable private security force.
2. ARMEDS Control	The Abaline Research Marathon Electronic Defense System (ARMEDS) oversees military security in the city. Isolated from the Marathon Net, it controls numerous gun and missile turrets throughout the city and along the perimeter wall (some 10 km out from the city center).
3. Bank of Marathon	One of the UMF's largest and most popular banks, the Bank of Marathon has branch offices in every Mercantile city. The value of the bank's stock recently plummeted upon announcement of a major fall in annual profits.
4. PX Couriers	Personal eXpress Couriers, Inc. (see Character Compendium 1 , pp. 62-71) are the CNCS' best known courier service, with clients ranging from members of the UMF government to Paxton Arms. Less well known is that the company is the front for a major smuggling operation.
5. FTRI	The Federation Technology Research Institute is one of the UMF's top universities, specializing in cutting edge research in materials and their application, as well as computing. Abaline Research hold a forty-percent stake in the university and use it as a training facility.
6. Marix Industries	Marix Industries is the largest consumer electronics company in the UMF, manufacturing everything from vidphones and trideos to military hardware.
7. Pheidippides Park	Pheidippides Park contains numerous sports facilities, including the stadium of the Abaline-sponsored Marathon Spartans soccer team. The open spaces of the park are also a popular meeting place for the city's youngsters.

THE CITY THAT THINKS FOR ITSELF

Project: Marathon is an attempt to create a city that thinks for itself, constantly adapting to the needs of its citizens and maximizing the use of resources. Almost every aspect of life in the city comes under the control of the Net, ranging from traffic control to telecommunications and the media. Every communication device in the city is linked to the Net, providing access to its vast resources but also feeding into the databases. The city database has replaced the libraries common in most cities, though the sheer scope of information has prompted numerous subdivisions for ease of access. For example, The Marathon Education Network contains electronic copies of every textbook and reference volume published in the UMF and is a key element in the recent success of FTRI. Similarly, the Marathon News Network monitors and summarizes the media reports from across Terra Nova, providing an unparalleled (if somewhat overwhelming) resource for those interested in current affairs.

Though the Net is all-pervasive, it is not always obvious. Several areas of the city are designated low profile zones, with access terminals disguised as personal computers and vidphones, and with monitoring devices carefully concealed. Other regions are designated high profile, dotted with public access terminals and display screens and monitored by hover drones that serve as the eyes and ears of the city's police force. Furthermore, many citizens in the high profile zones use sophisticated datagloves, eye-screens and earbugs, traditionally regarded as the province of the corporate elite. Many houses in the city, whether in the high profile zone or not, are fitted with a computerized majordomo system that monitors the demands and preferences of the occupants. It then orders groceries and other goods as required, and also filters news and entertainment media to suit the inhabitants' preferences.

Some of the more evolved NNets, however, have begun to take action on their own initiative. For example, one NNet came to the conclusion that most of the city's inhabitants check the sports section during their review of the news and has taken to showing the sports section, irrespective of whether it was requested.

● POLITICS OF THE ELECTRONIC REVOLUTION

Electronic voting has become the norm in the city and the sophisticated system allows citizens to take a more active and immediate role in city affairs. Each of the city's twenty districts elects a representative to the city council and sessions are broadcast on trideo with time put aside where citizens can put forward points or raise questions. Though the council makes all decisions regarding the city, they frequently use the Net to enact district or citywide referenda on contentious issues.

Though he retired from active politics in TN 1933, former mayor Brian Chambers continues to play a major role in Marathon politics, particularly as an advocate of high technology in the city. Though continuing Chambers' policies, his successor, Gavril Bonner, is more concerned with the city's substantial criminal element, particularly with regard to the Forzi Cartel and potential abuse of the Marathon Net. The Forzi have become particularly problematic in recent seasons as their conflict with the Kolson Cartel has escalated. Another prominent individual in local politics is Andrea Leiber, founder and leader of the neo-Luddite faction. The council representative of the low-profile Valley District, Leiber believes the Marathon Net is too pervasive and open to abuse, representing a real danger to the civil liberties of the city's population. Though her constituency is small, she has gained considerable popular support in the city, particularly in the wake of a recent citywide system crash.

● DIGITAL ECONOMICS

Though best known for Abaline Research and its electronic data network, Marathon's economy is surprisingly varied. In addition to computer and electronics giants like Abaline and Marix Industries, the city is a major center of the Mercantile petrochemicals industry. Oil extracted at Baton Rouge and Canterbury is shipped to the city for refinement where it is turned into a wide range of petroleum products and plastics in the huge refinery complexes in the south of the city. Though considerably smaller than the Norlight refineries at Petropolis, they nonetheless play a significant role in the local economy. Marathon also serves as the processing center for a series of iron and tin mines located in the Downing Range.

Marathon's extensive computer network makes it an ideal home for many of the UMF's information processing companies. In addition to media-fed systems like the Marathon News Network (see **Character Compendium 1**, p. 55) the system collects data on citizens of Marathon, contains national and regional census data, and serves as a hub for the UMF's banking industry, particularly for EPOS and credit data. Many companies use this vast storehouse of information — much of it public and the remainder bought from private sources, including Abaline — to build electronic models of behavior that can be used to test goods and ad campaigns, and to tailor them to regional and demographic groups. Many citizens are concerned about such systems being used to invade their privacy — and several companies exist solely to police databases, expunging their clients' details where not legally required.

The Marathon Net's sophistication is also its weakness. While the bulk of the uses of the Marathon Net do so for legitimate purposes, the possibility exists for someone with sufficient knowledge of the systems to hack into the network and gain access to information — and more importantly net-controlled systems — and wreak havoc with many aspects of Mercantile life. To combat this possibility — made startlingly real by the Mekong Dominion's actions in the Second Merchant War even before the creation of the Marathon Net — the city is home to the UMF's Computer Warfare teams, an amalgam of FIA, SOE, UMFA and corporate computer specialists. Their job is to penetrate foreign systems and to secure the Federation's networks, particularly Marathon's.

► Net Crash: Crime or Conspiracy?

(**Mercantile Business News**, 17 Autumn, TN 1936) — The citizens of Marathon were astounded last night when the Marathon Computer Network, brainchild of Abaline Research, inexplicably shut down at 03:14 for eleven minutes. An official Abaline announcement cites a computerized attack by agents of the Mekong Dominion, which prompted the isolation of elements of the network. They claim disruption was minimal thanks to the independent majordomo systems in each household which operated autonomously during the short break in service, but issued a formal apology to those inconvenienced by network restrictions. This is not the first time the Marathon Net has suffered at the hands of so-called hackers: In TN 1919 an unidentified hacker crashed the city's traffic control system and in TN 1927 an individual calling himself DarkProphet used the network to distribute blasphemous material before being caught and imprisoned.

As might be expected of such an august journal, the *Northern Inquirer* claims the crash was the result of a "world-spanning conspiracy, dedicated to keeping the truth from the citizens of Terra Nova." According to Kitsune Mokona, head of NI's Marathon office, "We had just begun a search on the Marathon News Network for information on stoneheads, particularly the work of the renowned archaeologist Douglas Morasin, and the system had just reported fifty-nine articles meeting our criteria when the system locked up. There wasn't a thing we could do, everything was locked down tight. The system wasn't down for long, and we re-entered our search profile. This time MNN reported back only fifty-seven articles. The exact same profile! That's two articles missing, with no trace at all. None. The timing of the crash is just too convenient, too improbable. We want to know what the government is hiding!"



PIONEER

5.9 PIONEER

The site of the Federation's most famous victory, the high arctic city of Pioneer is one of the oldest in the Federation and exudes a charm found in few other Terranovan city-states. Founded in TN 792, the exact reason for the city's existence is unknown, but by the tenth century its economy was much as it is today: winter sports and tourism. When Earth withdrew, the weather and economy proved a greater threat to Pioneer than the forces of other city-states, and the local population shrank from 400,000 to less than thirty thousands in under five cycles as people fled south to warmer climes. Those who remained eked out a living in the lumber industry and in the city's unusual brand of agriculture, hydroponics greenhouses.

The city incorporated into the nascent UMF in TN 1571, voluntarily seeking membership in the wake of the Federation's initial eastern expansion into the Tershaw Cooperative Alliance. Tied into the Northern economy, the city's population soared, though all that was threatened by the WFP-NLC invasion of TN 1669. The battle that ensued took place in the rough terrain some 60 km northwest of Pioneer and became a turning point in Terranovan military technology, being the first to involve mainly military walkers — actually, converted Hardhat models — and directly leading to the development of the Heavy Gear.

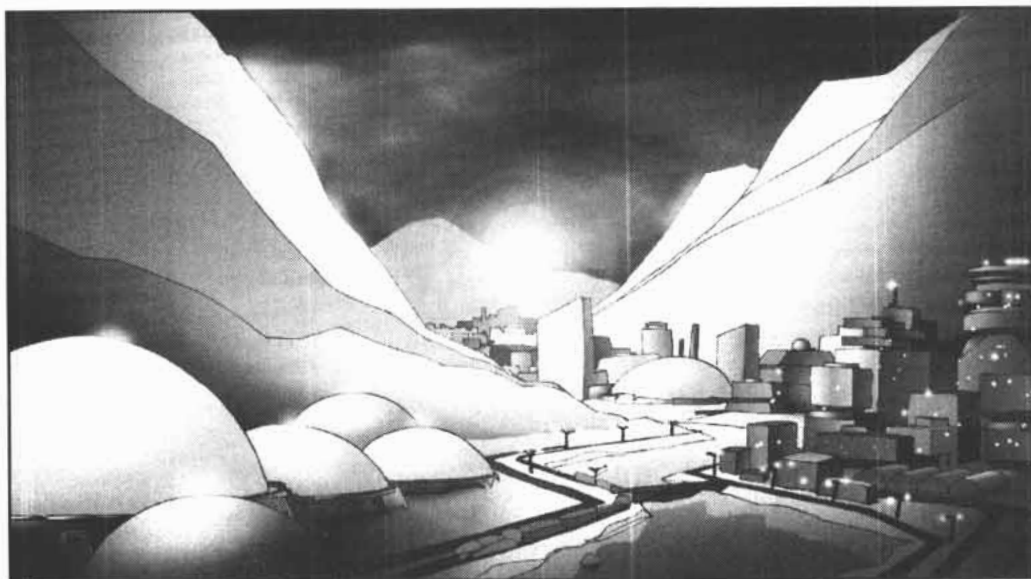
Nestling on the western end of the Whitetop Range and in the Pioneer Valley, the popular image of the city is of a living antique, but in practice most of the city is as modern as any in the Federation. Only the old town with its chalets and narrow cobbled streets winding up the slopes of Mount Seraphi matches the popular image of the city. The city remains the top luxury holiday destination, popular for staging numerous cold-weather sports like skiing, sledding and snowballing while several companies organize walking and camping tours in the hills and plains that surround the city.

The city also serves as the hub of the Federation's "performance enhancement" industry. To get the most from their staff and customers many corporations arrange product or performance-related promotions, ranging from 'collect X points for a free Joe-Gear T-shirt' to encourage purchase of a particular brand of cereal, to all-expenses-paid holidays for a company's best salespeople. Dominated by GalitzCo, such work is a multi-million mark industry, adding to the already popular (but expensive) tourist trade.

The cost of living in Pioneer is the highest in the UMF, if not on the entire planet; most goods must be imported and food is grown in special hydroponics domes. These spectacular but vulnerable structures line the southern slopes of the town to maximize the sunlight they receive. Tours of the domes are a major part of the "Pioneer experience" and with many rare species grown for export, provide a major contribution to the local economy.

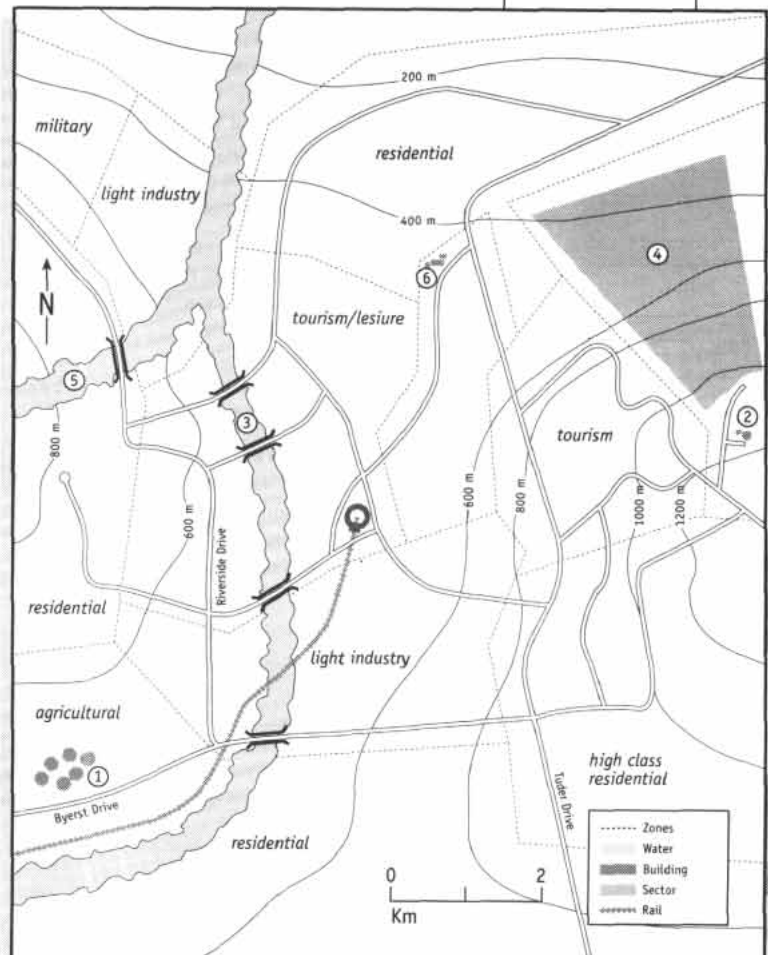
Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 792
Joined UMF:	TN 1571
Method of Government:	Representative Democracy
Head of Government:	First Citizen Iryne Cruikshank
Population:	550,000
Principal Industries:	Tourism, hydroponics



Map of Pioneer

Location	Description
1. Hydroponics Domes	With annual temperatures ranging between +5 and -5 degrees centigrade, it is virtually impossible to grow crops in Pioneer, forcing the local population to rely on heated hydroponics greenhouses. In addition to native flora, many of these domes are dedicated to Earth plants and form a valuable export.
2. Torsen Lodge	This ultra-exclusive wood-built hotel, once a private ski lodge, has hosted Treasurers, presidents and other dignitaries from across Terra Nova. It is above the snow line and has a superb view across the city and its environs. The lodge has its own ski runs and helipad, all of which are monitored by private security.
3. Pioneer River	The Pioneer River is a seasonal watercourse, little more than a snow-filled channel in winter but a raging torrent in spring and early summer as much of the region's snow melts.
4. Kragarin Complex	One of more than a dozen winter sports complexes in Pioneer and its environs, Kragarin is one of the most comprehensive, with facilities ranging from ski- and toboggan-runs of varying difficulties, to outdoor ice rinks, and a snow-ball park. Experienced instructors are on hand to teach and offer advice. The complex also maintains a number of well equipped medical and rescue teams and a trauma facility.
5. Gull Falls	A picturesque waterfall during the warmer seasons, Gull Falls are Pioneer's principal ice climbing site in the winter.
6. GalitzCo	GalitzCo is the UMF's leading performance enhancement company, providing customer and staff incentive schemes. The company has branch offices in many cities across the CNCS but their Pioneer headquarters is notable for its energy conscious design, built largely underground to aid heat retention.



• HARD LIVING

Pioneer's economy is dominated by small companies, often family run, a noticeable divergence from the national trend. In many regards this adds to the antique feel of Pioneer; each hotel, restaurant and so forth has its own distinct atmosphere, rather than being punched from a corporate mold. In the last dozen cycles, however, many of the city's younger residents have attempted to break out of Pioneer's restricted prospects, heading south to Rapid City or beyond in search of employment. In some regards this is offset by the influx of seasonal workers from other cities, particularly students taking a sabbatical to work as waiters or chalet maids in exchange for the opportunity to visit the snowy city, but it has put the long term prospects of several family-run companies in doubt.

The dominance of small business has led to the development of strong city-state owned educational and medical institutions, paid for by annual fees levied on the users and, in the case of the medical facilities, subsidized by compulsory city-state brokered health insurance for all visitors.

A sizable military force is stationed in Pioneer, though these units see little combat and most often serve as an adjunct to the civilian emergency services, rescuing injured holiday-goers from their own foolishness, resulting a close bond between the units and the people of the city. Permanently based in Pioneer, many members of the unit marry into local families and the become part of the local community when they retire. As a result the city has the second largest concentration of veterans after Baton Rouge. Furthermore, the UMFA has chosen to utilize Pioneer's isolation for its own purposes and is currently constructing a launch facility for military satellites some forty kilometers east of the city. Construction began in TN 1928 and is expected to be complete in TN 1937.

Space-based assets theoretically fell under the aegis of the Joint Terranovan Space Initiative after the War of the Alliance, but many powers — including the UMF — were reluctant to release all their facilities to an international organization. Since the collapse of the JTSI, the Northern Guard Space Service has taken over in the CNCS, but Solomon Davi is just as reluctant to let his neighbors in on the Pioneer project.

RAPID CITY

5.10 RAPID CITY

The early explorers of Terra Nova determined that the Zihl Salt Flats were a major source of *bauxite*, and thus vital to the colonization effort. The Zihl region was dry and inhospitable, however, and thus the decision was made to establish a colony on the southern fringe of the verdant Byerst Plain, some 120 kilometers north of the ore deposits. The first colonists arrived at what would become Rapid City in TN 563, barely sixty cycles after the start of mass colonization. As cycles became centuries the city grew, serving as a magnet for heavy industry in the region. Concerns over pollution prompted the city authorities to enact strict anti-pollution laws which, save for during the chaos of the Reconstruction, have remained in effect ever since.

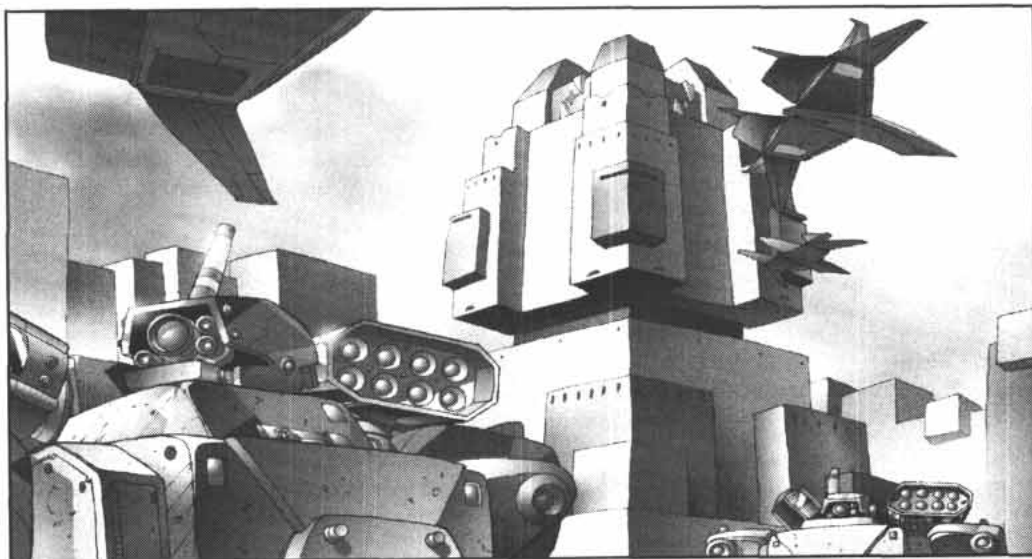
Rapid City's production facilities were much sought after in the chaos after Earth withdrew from Terra Nova in TN 1454. Numerous battles were fought over control of key industrial plants, but by TN 1471 the city was unified under the control of 'General' Nyklas Volsky who ordered the construction of a 35-meter tall wall around the city (now the 'old city'). Volsky died leading the defense of the city in TN 1504 but his successor, Gabrielle Conran, was given an opportunity to end the cycle of violence, and Rapid City became a founder member of the Lyonesse League. The troubles were not over for the city, and in TN 1550 it became the scene of the bloody clashes that brought down the Lyonesse League and replaced it with the United Mercantile Federation.

Two of the major players in the corporate coup — Northern Metals and Concordat Systems — chose to merge in TN 1618, creating a highly efficient and diverse company with interests ranging from automobiles and military hardware to industrial chemicals and electronics. Calling itself Northco (see **Northern Vehicles Compendium 1**, p. 28), the new company quickly dominated the local political scene, its approval often making the difference between success and failure. Indeed, though nominally a representative democracy, Rapid City is little more than a corporate fief, with over half the city's population employed by the massive conglomerate.

Rapid City — and with it the local holdings of Northco — was a major target of the Colonial Expeditionary Force during the War of Alliance. The weapons production plants were important assets to the Terranovans, and their destruction was high on the list of *Terran* objectives. Both the city itself and the factories were subject to repeated attacks by orbital artillery and cruise missiles. Despite the numerous defense installations ringing the city-state and dotting the region, the attacks literally flattened large sections of the city. Many died in the chaos, including Northco CEO Johan Baur and many of the company's top designers, but the city and company quickly rebuilt after the hostilities. Despite outside interference, both Rapid City and Northco have prospered over the cycles and are making efforts to maintain the status quo.

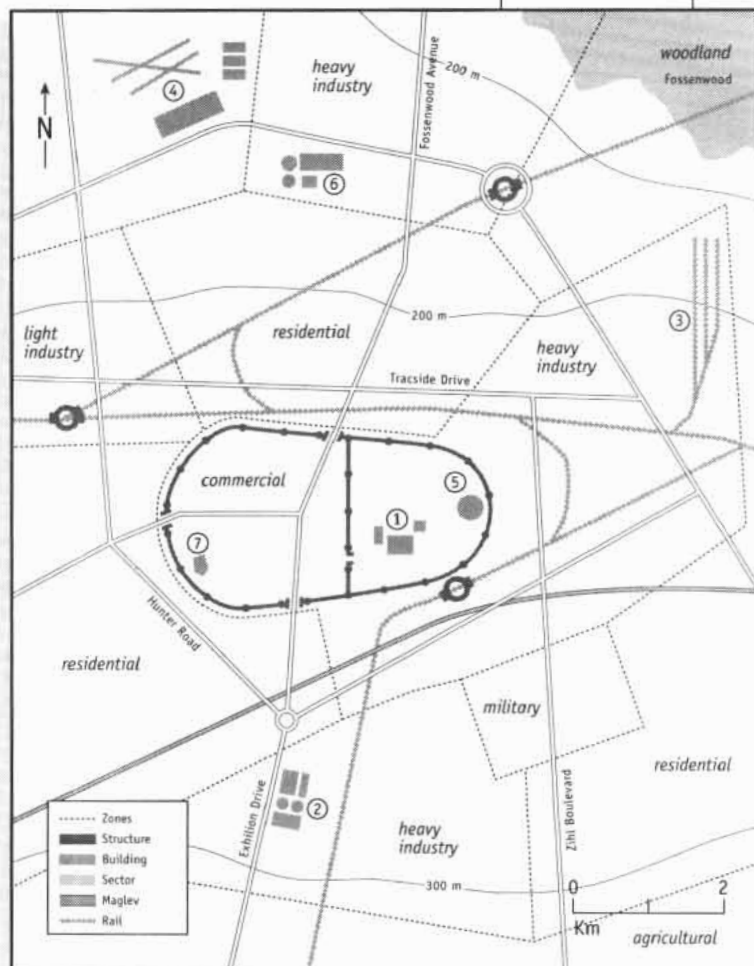
Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 553
Joined UMF:	TN 1528 (Lyonesse League); TN 1551 (UMF)
Method of Government:	Nominal Representative Democracy (de facto corporate fiefdom)
Head of Government:	Mayor Arkady Petrov (de facto leader Northco CEO Natalya Korolov)
Population:	2.8 Million
Principal Industries:	Vehicle and weapons manufacturing, diversified other



Map of Rapid City

Location	Description
1. Northco Complex	A secondary wall separates this industrial sector from commercial areas and yet more fortifications subdivide the production compound itself. The military production compounds are the most heavily defended, each with dedicated detachments of corporate security troops, anti-aircraft batteries and even Gears.
2. Exhibition Center	This massive exhibition center comprises a dozen inter-linked halls that host events ranging from book fairs and games conventions to trade shows and concerts. The site is most famous for the Rapid City Motor Expo.
3. Federated Railways	FR is the largest and most powerful of the UMF's rail corporations, dominating services across the Sangar Basin and Byerst Plain to Lyonesse, Marathon, Canterbury, Zagreb and Pioneer.
4. Baur Airport	Named for the Northco CEO killed during the War of Alliance, the Johan Baur Airport is a hub for intercity passenger and freight transport. It also serves as the home base for several Northco-owned spaceplanes and its Applefish division.
5. Northco Tower	The heart of Northco is the 700-meter Northco tower, the tallest structure in the Federation. The highest occupied floor is 92, the CEO's office and apartment. Lower floors contain offices and research labs as well as complete shopping and leisure facilities.
6. GSE	The Northco-owned Galland School of Engineering is regarded as the best engineering school in the UMF. Attendance is usually restricted to the children of Northco employees, but the Concordat Education Trust seeks out and sponsors promising students from across the UMF.
7. Lyle Gallery	The Lyle Gallery has a reputation for displaying works that challenge accepted boundaries, be they of style, taste or morality. This policy has brought them criticism, mainly from the Church.



● CORPORATE CULTURE

Rapid City is the epitome of a corporate society, almost literally run by and for a single corporation. Northco directly employs almost half of the city's population, with a good proportion of the remainder employed directly or indirectly in supporting Northco and its personnel. As such, it is in Northco's interests to secure the well-being of the city's population and the company has established solid medical and educational systems, as well as a diverse entertainment sector. The company promotes a "work hard, play hard" attitude among its staff, granting them considerable leeway in their personal lives provided they do their utmost for the company. This has fostered a high level of corporate loyalty, the population recognizing that Northco invests a considerable portion of its profits in its workers.

Some groups like the Northern Worker's Consortium have argued that Northco's supposed generosity has blinded the population to the company's despotic rule. Indeed, although Northco is de-facto ruler of Rapid City, the company has run into a number of problems with the local media. The company's security force is a pervasive presence on the streets, but though publicly working hand in hand with the Rapid City police, there have been a number of occasions where corporate security troops have blatantly ignored the legal process in pursuit of company goals. Unfortunately, several of these incidents have been recorded and broadcast by the local media, leading to calls for an investigation into why Northco itself has not been prosecuted.

Northco's best efforts have been unable to halt the growth of a large and well-organized criminal underworld. The Forzi Cartel dominate operations in the city, ranging from drugs and prostitution to blackmail and industrial espionage. In truth, Northco's security directorate has established a number of covert contacts with the Forzi, using them for operations deemed to sensitive for even Northco's elite private security force.

Roman Forzi, since his rise to the head of the cartel in the North, has been pursuing an agenda of making allies with corporate authorities. Local boss Chrystof Donnel has done well with this technique.

• ECONOMIC DETERMINISM

Officially Rapid City is a representative democracy, with councilors elected from each of the city's forty electoral districts. In practice, Northco determines who is elected to the chamber and maintains a stranglehold on the city's finances, giving the company near total control over the city's affairs. The council serves little purpose beyond rubber-stamping the decisions of the Northco board. Furthermore, Northco's importance to the UMF economy as a whole, and the presence of subsidiaries in every UMF city-state, gives the company considerable influence in Federal affairs. Indeed, it has often been claimed, only half jokingly, that Rapid City is the real capital of the UMF and Lyonnesse little more than a PR exercise. Even before the ascension of Defense Secretary/Treasurer Solomon Davi, widely regarded as a Northco stooge, Northco's voting power gave more than a little credence to this story.

Contrary to popular opinion, Northco is not a monolithic entity. A number of political currents flow through the company, many of them opposed to CEO Natalya Korolov. Principal among these is Aidan Jarlson, who controls a little over fifteen percent of the company's stock either directly or in proxy. Jarlson has tried to replace Korolov as CEO on several occasions but the complex nature of inter-division politics and the breakdown of the company's voting blocks has stalled his efforts to date. He remains committed to usurping Korolov's position and has attempted to suborn several members of her staff, though he is unaware that Korolov is aware of his efforts and is using his own agents to feed him bad information while she undermines his position.

Although Northco dominates Rapid City's government, there have been a number of protests over the UMFA's defensive plan for the city. Drawn up in conjunction with Northco, it calls for the abandonment of the outer city and a concentration of forces in the old city — Northco's enclave — and the destruction of sections of the outer city to clear defensive fire zones. Mayor Petrov knows his position is dependent on Northco and has done little to contest the plan.

• GUNS AND GEARS

Heavy industry forms the core of Rapid City/Northco's business, ranging from petroleum refineries and mineral smelting plants to the design and manufacture of finished goods. The largest segment of city's economy is the automotive sector, to which Northco dedicated twelve whole production compounds before the Interpolar War. The last cycle has seen a number of these lines retooled to produce military vehicles.

Northco's Gear production market has slowly been eroded by the rise of rival manufacturers like Shaian Mechanics and Keimuri Gear in NLC, or Peace River-based Paxton Arms. Northco suspect this is at the instigation of the Norlight government, part of a deliberate attempt to reduce dependency on the UMF and in particular Northco. In TN 1931 Northco entered into a 'strategic alliance' with Keimuri Gear, helping the company develop a new version of its Ferret Gear intended to challenge arch-rival Shaian's Cheetah. Furthermore, Northco has been involved in a subtle — and not so subtle — covert war with Shaian, partly using the Forzi-Kolsen Cartel war as cover. With the outbreak of war, the CNCS has intervened to prevent further escalation of the corporate feud and ensure an unhindered supply of material for the war effort.

Northco Gemeinsam Guard — Corporate pride ◀



The Gemeinsam Guard is Northco's primary security unit and also serve as demonstrators for the company's range of Heavy Gears. Founded in TN 1621, shortly after the merger of Northern Metals and Concordat Systems, the Guard originally served as bodyguards for the chairman and members of the board but gradually drifted from that role. By TN 1660 they were carrying out numerous paramilitary 'black' operations for the company and from there it was a short step to becoming a true military unit.

The Gemeinsam — literally 'Corporate' — Guard received its first Hunters on 10 Spring TN 1678, barely eight days after the UMFA. Officially for demonstration purposes, the units bolstered the defenses around the Rapid City factory and were likely a major factor in the WFP's decision to steal a Hunter from the UMFA rather than stage an operation against Northco itself. By the St. Vincent's War, the Gemeinsam Guard resembled the present organization; a small regiment of two companies and associated elements, self-contained in terms of support and transport.

Adept at small unit tactics and rarely involved in larger engagements, the members of the Guard are consummate professionals. The least experienced members of the unit form regular security detachments at the corporation's various holdings and installations, while the majority of the company's Gear-based black ops are carried out by the veteran 'demonstration' teams. With all Northco's resources at their disposal, they are an extremely flexible unit. One operation may call for a section of Jaguars, while the next may require a more deniable force-mix and use Hunters and Razorbacks.

Colonel Josef Gustafson, a former officer in the UMFA's Special Forces Command, commands the Guard. Widely respected, he retired from the UMFA in TN 1924 and took up a freelance post with the company under the official title of security advisor and consultant. By TN 1927 he headed the Guard and was a permanent employee on the Northco roster. Gustafson reports to Northco security chief Rozam, but in practice he answers only to Korolov herself.

5.11 SWANSCOMBE

In TN 692 a group of Roman Catholic nuns chose a gentle south-facing slope on the Northern Plains as the site of their convent, St. Justine's, which, over the cycles that followed, became the core of a bustling market town. During the reconstruction era, the town became the focus for refugees throughout the region, growing to become a regional center and founder member of the Tershaw Cooperative Alliance. In a bid to maintain order in the city, the convent, famed for its neutrality, seized control of the local government in TN 1457. The nuns rapidly instituted a radical matriarchal society as a means of maintaining order — males were reputedly more aggressive, greedy and emotional, making them unsuitable for leadership — that has proved surprisingly effective. Several Badlands based groups assumed that the female-dominated city would be rich pickings, but were quickly disabused of that notion in a series of bloody clashes that secured the city-state's independence.

Located on the rolling hills at the heart of the Northern Plains, Swanscombe is the smallest city-state in the Federation. It sits astride several major trade routes (legal and illegal) notably between the NLC and the UMF and between the CNCS and the Karaq Waste city-states of Massada and Peace River. As a result, trade dominates the local economy. The southern sectors of the city, near the massive UMFA/Northern Guard compound, are dotted with trading companies, ranging from one-woman outfits to regional hubs of massive conglomerates. Though officially owned by females, in practice many of the female CEOs of these companies are little more than figureheads. Indeed a number of the city's businesswomen specialize in providing outside companies with a legal pretext for operating in the city, serving as legal owners of Swanscombe-based assets while receiving a notional rent (usually 1 Mark per cycle) in addition to their corporate wages.

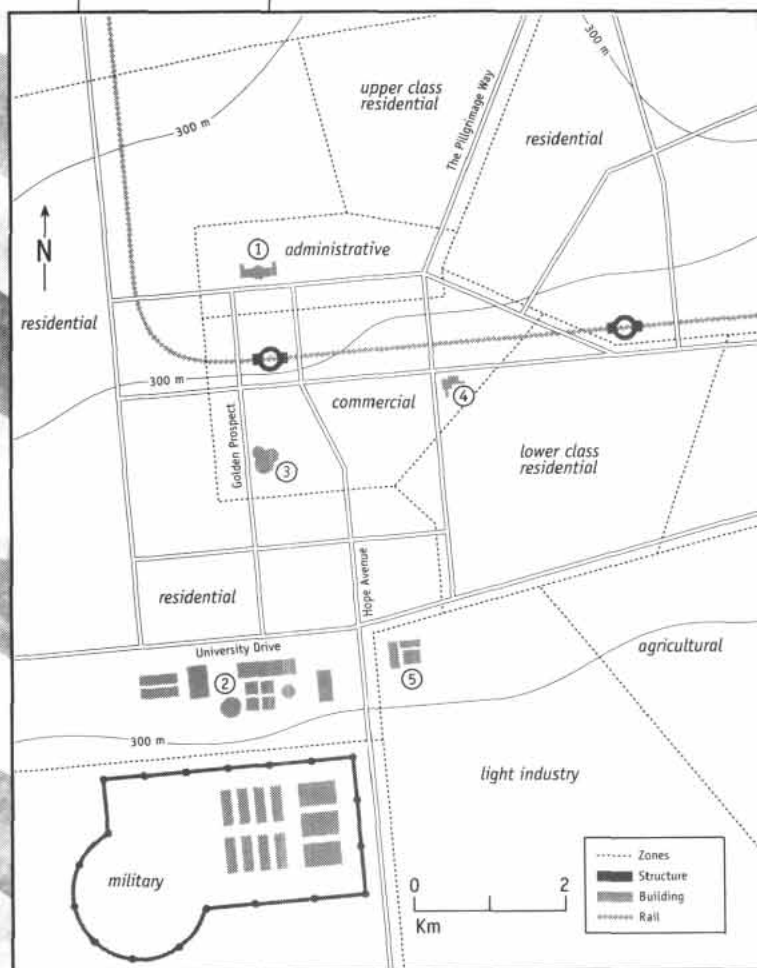
Despite female ownership, few women work as laborers on the massive farms that surround the city, preferring instead to manage the estates. As a result the agricultural concerns have become a refuge of the male population, giving them the illusion of escape from the matriarchal city-state. Wheat and johar dominate the region, though dairy farms and cattle ranches have become increasingly popular since the wheat-jacket epidemics of the late TN 1890's. The produce of these farms is processed and packed in the southeastern sectors of the city and forms Swanscombe's largest physical export. It is frequently argued, however, that the city-state's most valuable export is knowledge. Places at Swanscombe University are highly sought after, with courses ranging from archaeology and history to plasma physics and strategic studies. The college is most famous for its business school and its media studies unit. Because of the large number of non-Swanscombe students, the university is one of the few places in the city where equality of the sexes is the norm.

► Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 692
Joined UMF:	TN 1567
Method of Government:	Matriarchal Oligarchy
Head of Government:	Mother Superior Frances Hamilton
Population:	390,000
Principal Industries:	Agriculture, trade



Map of Swanscombe ◀



Location	Description
1. St. Justine's	A massive 10th century cathedral dominates the site, attached to which are the cloisters, the nuns' accommodations and St. Bridget's Jerusalemite Primary school, a free school supported by the convert for the city's underprivileged. The complex forms the core of the city's administrative district, housing the chambers of both the Ecclesiastical Council and the secular council. Over the cycle since Thor Hutchison's assassination, the low wall that surrounds the complex has been repeatedly daubed with anti-Jerusalemite slogans and shows numerous scars.
2. Swanscombe U	The campus of the most prestigious institute of higher education in the UMF is a mixed bag of architectural styles, ranging from elegant seventeenth century buildings to gaudy modern accommodation blocks that back onto the city's military district. The university's educational record — and social life — are regarded as second to none and, despite the city's social policies, attract thousands of students each cycle.
3. Stock Exchange	The Eastern Mercantile Stock Exchange is a tall building of glass and chrome, sharply contrasting with the low-rise sandstone buildings that dominate the city.
4. Central Police	Swanscombe's all-female police has adopted a policy of community policing, building up a rapport with a particular neighborhood. Their civilized and caring veneer hides a core of steel, however, and they are willing to use deadly force — as several male rebels have discovered.
5. Portman Trading	Though a relatively small concern, Leigh Portman has built an enviable reputation, though her competitors have questioned the legality of the operation, especially her two caravan escorts army-surplus Hunters. Portman is in fact employed as a local agent by Vanessa Forzi-Polo and Dayvid Bogdanov, agents of the Forzi Cartel.

• HIS MISTRESS' VOICE

Only females can own property or hold public office in Swanscombe, giving them a stranglehold on political power. Each family is headed by the family's senior female, known in the city as the Housemistress. Whatever her age, the males of the family are expected to obey the Housemistress and it is not uncommon for a young girl to inherit the title on the death of her mother and to dominate males three or four times her age. Over the cycles this has become an accepted part of the city's culture, though there are occasional revolts by dissatisfied males. More problematic is the situation of male visitors to the city, who are expected to "know their place" and who find the city's culture offensive. Indeed, to smooth relations with the city authorities, the local UMFA and Northern Guard military commanders are traditionally female and great care is taken to avoid offending the populace (e.g. males visibly ordering female soldiers around). Neither military wishes to repeat the debacle of the city's one male commander, Brigadier Daryn Judd, who found himself repeatedly snubbed by the city authorities and the population during his short tenure in TN 1784, effectively paralyzing the CNCS military in the region.

The city's discriminatory policies have brought it into conflict with the UMF government on a number of occasions, but the right of the city to maintain its unique social structure was central to the diplomatic negotiations that prompted the city-state to ally with the UMF in TN 1567. The problems between the city and the UMF are minor, however, compared to those with their neighbors in the staunchly revisionist NLC. The government in Valeria, and the Revisionist church in Sorrento, find the concept of a 'minority' religion holding power over a population dominated by Revisionists repugnant (see 3.3.3 *The Swanscombe Jerusalemite Church*, p. 25). There have been repeated claims of religious persecution by some groups in the city, but it seems likely that these claims stem from gender rather than religious disputes. This has not, however, prevented Revisionist sympathizers from agitating against the Jerusalemite government, prompting major unrest in the city.

5.12 ZAGREB

Zagreb was founded in TN 1017 by a group of winners of the Terranovan Lottery, a Terran Concordat initiative to broaden the population base of the colony, moving away from the corporate employees that had hitherto dominated the world. Provided with housing materials and seed stocks by the authorities, the lottery winners established an agricultural commune whose simple lifestyle proved attractive to many potential colonists, resulting in the establishment of the city of Zagreb. Under the leadership of its three-man executive the city prospered, building up a reputation for self-sufficiency and cooperation that would later stand them in good stead during the reconstruction.

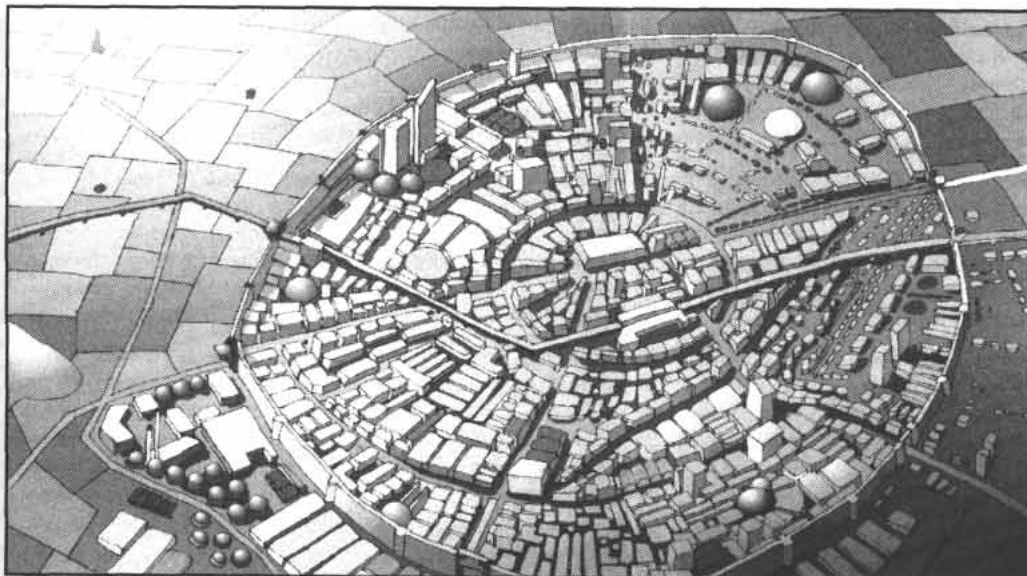
However, in the chaos of the cycles that followed Earth's withdrawal, Zagreb's policy of deciding all major issues through communal gatherings and voting proved cumbersome. On the urging of council head Gorge Chekov, the system was discarded in favor of a specially trained aesthetic ruling class, whose sole responsibility was the governance of the city. Many of the city's socialist institutions — the strong public health system, communal farm work and so forth — remained intact, and other institutions grew in importance, particularly education which became the central tenet of the Censor's doctrinal control over the city-state.

Even this failed to prevent the domination of the city-state by the United Mercantile Federation, membership of which the Censors were forced to accept or else see the city in financial ruin — the city had been devastated by an earthquake in TN 1610 and faced bankruptcy. Provisions of the UMF Charter allowed Zagreb to maintain its culture and political system, save for the appointment of a head of state, the Chief Censor (hitherto the censors had all been equals) and the liberalization of some economic policies to allow Mercantile interests to operate in the city. It quickly became apparent to the Caucus that though Zagreb had sacrificed some of its principals in order to survive, its population remained staunchly socialist and thus at odds with the core tenets of Mercantile society. Indeed, when several UMF agencies attempted to intervene to halt the abuses in the city's reeducation camps, they found themselves hamstrung by the charter provisions.

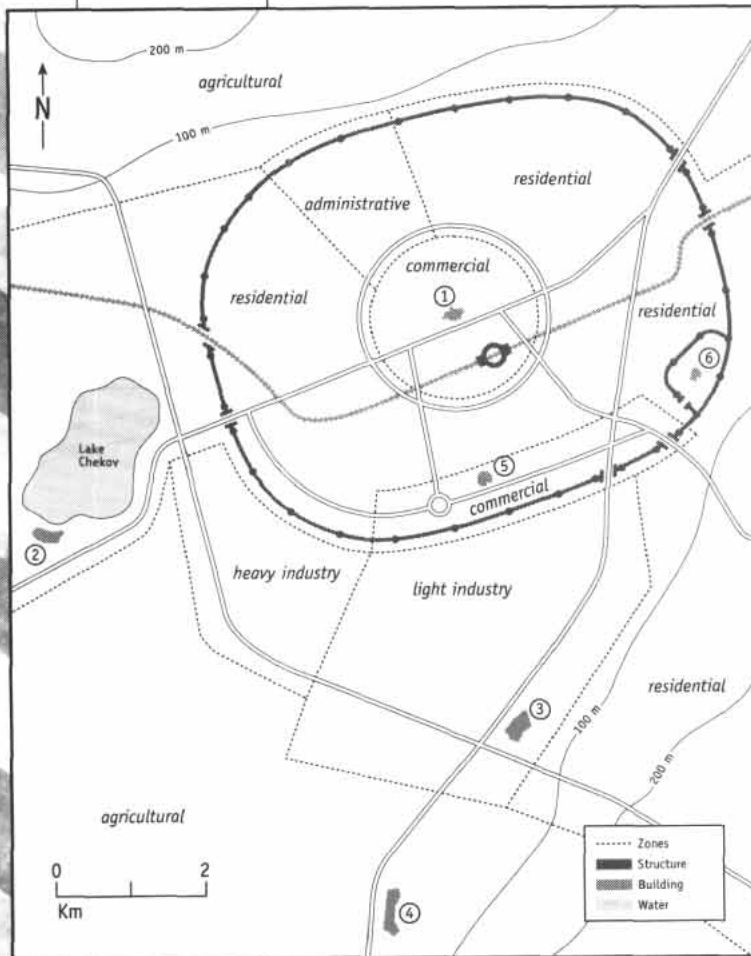
Zagreb's relationship with the UMF, and indeed the CNCS, has never been good, strained particularly by Zagreb's membership of the Socialist Economic Pact, a mini-league co-founded with much-despised Timmins and several Badlands communities, but recent cycles have seen it take a notable downturn. The rise of the communist secessionist faction known as the Rodinists since the War of Alliance has made the city a dangerous place for corporate Mercantilists. Both companies and individuals have become the targets for a wide range of activities, ranging from dirty tricks like hoax calls to the fire brigade or guardians, to arson and, in the case of UMFA personnel, assassination attempts.

► Vital Statistics

Founding Date:	TN 1017
Joined UMF:	TN 1611
Method of Government:	Self-Perpetuating Bureaucracy
Head of Government:	Chief Censor Johan Duvall
Population:	530,000
Principal Industries:	Agriculture



Map of Zagreb



Location	Description
1. People's Market	A complex of low buildings rather than a single edifice, Zagreb's People's Market serves as the center for the city's economic activity, where the population purchase goods and collect their weekly food rations.
2. Camp 17	This lake-side camp is one of more than two-dozen intended to teach 'deviants' the error of their ways. Its idyllic setting and modern buildings rest in stark contrast to its purpose, and UMF's human rights investigations are frequent.
3. Customs House	The Zagreb customs house is the largest in the UMF, charged with restricting the flow of Timmins' knock-off goods into the UMF and CNCS. Despite their numbers, the customs staff are hard pressed to examine even half of the merchant caravans that pass through the city.
4. Camp 4	Conditions in Zagreb's main criminal work camp are harsh. Its rough concrete walls and corrugated iron roof house almost a thousand workers, most of whom are assigned to quarries in the foothills of the Pacifica Range. Despite its reputation among the locals, the camp's nominal status as a criminal penitentiary serves to deflect official criticism of the conditions.
5. Caravansary	The Caravansary is the focus for traders heading into the Badlands, where they trade goods, hire guards and store their merchandise. Despite its location within the walled city, the building is shunned by many in the native population, regarded as a necessary capitalist evil.
6. UMFA Compound	The city's military redoubt, constructed during the St. Vincent's War, has come under a virtual siege since the rise of the Rodinists. Only within its walls are UMFA and Northern Guard troops safe from sniper attacks and attempted bombings, though the compound itself has been the target of numerous sabotage attempts.

• WE THE PEOPLE

Always dominated by socialist policies, Zagreb enacted a number of harsh laws during the reconstruction, establishing a rigid cultural and political orthodoxy loosely based on the principals of Plato's Republic, namely autocratic rule by a self-perpetuating elite whose sole duty was rational decision making and the education of the population. The dictates of the ruling class, known as the Censors, are enforced by Guardians (more akin to the AST's political commissars than the Humanist Alliance's preceptors and who are widely regarded in the UMF as 'thought police') and the city's re-education and labor camps. Every major work group, corporation or society is assigned a Guardian to monitor its activities, though the city-state is renowned for its lack of trust and often assigns additional covert agents to monitor the Guardians.

The standard of living in Zagreb is lower than in the UMF as a whole but the city's extensive social service and education provisions have effectively eliminated the underclass that exists elsewhere in the league. Luxury goods are scarce but every citizen is guaranteed food and shelter, though the "rational communism" practiced in the city rewards those who work hard and show dedication to their duties. Such rewards usually take the form of better housing (most accommodation in the city is state-owned) or increased food allocations. Indeed, public displays of wealth are considered inappropriate and if brought to the attention of a Guardian or Censor will likely result in a spell in an education camp.

Alcohol is readily available, particularly a cheap local johar-based whisky, and bars form a central part of life in the city. Alcoholism is common, though both the Guardians and the local police punish intoxication at work and drink related crimes severely. The distinctions between crime and deviation from established doctrine is somewhat blurred, and the traditional punishment for both is sentencing to one of the camps that surround the city. While criminals are sentenced to hard labor, deviants — those who fail to comply with accepted moral and political standards — undertake relatively light duties and attend doctrinal classes. On the surface they appear to have the easier time, but unlike criminals who are fully reintegrated into society after their time in the camps, attendance at a reeducation camp remains a matter of public record for ten cycles, coloring their relationship with other citizens.

• FOR REASONS OF STATE

The Censors form a distinct group within an otherwise egalitarian society, taken from their families at a young age and raised by the city with its own interests at heart. Notable for their white robes and staff of office, they forswear the ownership of property and power, giving their all to the city and relying on the city to support them. Unlike the monarchy of Ashington, the post of Censor is not a hereditary position and any child who shows sufficient aptitude may be inducted into the caste, regarded as a great honor for the family. Intelligence is a key requisite for becoming a Censor, but physical and artistic abilities also play a part; the Censors are, quite literally, the judge of public morality and tastes and must be able to make reasoned decisions on a wide range of subjects.

While most Censors serve as administrators, fifteen senior censors form the politburo that governs the city. The admission of new members to the council is determined by the existing sitters, who also elect one of their number as Chief Censor for a five-cycle period. The Chief Censor serves as chairman for the politburo sessions and also as head of state, but as 'first among equals' the post's powers are strictly limited. Although the Censors nominally work in harmony for the good of the city-state, their much-vaunted neutrality is often little more than a polite fiction. Power struggles in the politburo are no less bitter than in councils throughout the UMF, each Censor holding their own views on an issue, though their aesthetic lifestyle minimizes corruption.

The rise of the Rodinist faction (see 3.3.2 *The Rodinists*, p. 24) has provoked considerable tensions within the city. On one hand the Rodinists' agenda, breaking away from the UMF, is broadly in line with the politburo's long term goals, prompting tacit support from a number of the council. However, their methods are considered dangerous and disruptive, running contrary to established policy. Indeed, the movement may have been counterproductive, combining with the Interpolar War to give the UMF and CNCS a long sought after excuse to flood the city-state with troops and intelligence agents.

• FIELDS OF GOLD

Situated on the rolling plains between the Downing and Pacifica mountain ranges, Zagreb has an agrarian economy operating on the cooperative model. All citizens are expected to work on the massive grain farms, making their own contribution to the society, helping the city feed itself as well as ensuring sufficient surplus for export, bringing hard currency into the local economy. The city's membership in the Social Economic Pact provides a ready market for the city's exports without having to trade on the Federation's cutthroat markets. Many farm workers also hold down jobs in local industry and also form a local militia. Grossly inferior to the UMFA, the fanaticism of the Zagreb Levy goes some way towards offsetting the Federation's military stranglehold on the city. Relatively poor security, however, allows the Rodinists to equip themselves from Levy armories, exacerbating the tension between the city and the UMF. The terrorist attacks have restricted UMFA operations — most often the troops remain in the relative security of their redoubt — placing the Chief Censor in a difficult position.

Despite their poor welcome by the locals, a number of Mercantile concerns maintain offices in the city. Most are trading concerns, exploiting the city's trade links with the SEP and Badlands communities. Zagreb is the principal import route for Timmins' low quality goods and also serves as a major center of smuggling activity. Both the Forzi and Granis Cartels maintain agents in the city, despite the formidable UMF and CNCS presence.

► The Great Earthquake

(*Rapid City Guardian*, 7 Summer TN 1610) — Seismologists in Canterbury yesterday reported a massive earthquake centered on the Mount Lowen massif in the Pacifica Range. Shocks from the quake, which registered 7.3 on the Richter scale, were felt as far away as Marathon and Swanscombe, though damage was restricted to the immediate area. The independent city-state of Zagreb is reported to have been devastated by the quake, with many buildings destroyed and thousands believed dead. The city's consuls have declared a state of emergency but have so far refrained from seeking outside help. The extent of the damage to the region's farming communities is currently unknown, but satellite imagery shows numerous landslides and considerable ground fissuring, suggesting widespread devastation. While the region suffers hundreds of minor earthquakes every cycle, most only register on seismographic equipment. Incidents of this magnitude are rare, and this is the most severe since records began in the 11th century. Most quakes in the region are associated with volcanic activity, and this incident is believed to herald a new active phase for Mount Lowen.

(*Rapid City Guardian*, 17 Winter TN 1611) — Struggling to cope with the aftermath of last summer's devastating earthquake and the ensuing eruption of Mount Lowen, the city-state of Zagreb has accepted membership in the United Mercantile Federation. UMF officials have visited several times in the past to offer such an agreement, but had always been turned down — up to now. The devastation wrought by the disaster has left no choice but to consider their offer more seriously, though negotiations have been rumored to be extremely difficult and complex. Mercantile grants are expected to play a major role in the reconstruction of the city, though the ruling Censors are adamant that they will not allow the UMF to eradicate the city's socialist culture. The city's new status will be finalized in a short ceremony that will take place later in the week.



THE CAMERA NEVER LIES

Sensation returned gradually, and for a moment Andre wished it hadn't. He was lying face down, his face crushed against the hard, cold floor and his hands and feet tightly bound behind him. His face and ribs were sore and he could taste blood, no surprise given the pounding the thugs had given him, but at least he was alive. *For how much longer, though?* he wondered.

Opening his eyes was a painful process. The right did so grudgingly, but the left was swollen shut. It was dark, though enough light spilled from cracks around the wooden trapdoor in the ceiling to illuminate the room. Wriggling like a snake he was able to turn and survey his surroundings, but the pain was considerable and he almost blacked out again. From the rough construction and pervasive damp he seemed to be in a cellar, most likely in one of the lakeside warehouses. Assuming, of course, he was still in Lyonesse; knowing who he was involved with, that was a big assumption.

There was a constant crashing of machinery, but he slowly became aware of another sound, voices in the building above. There were several sets, seemingly locked in a heated debate. *How to kill me*, he thought. They continued for a minute or two, and then were replaced by footsteps, drawing steadily closer. The screeching of hinges signaled the trapdoor being dragged open and the sudden flood of light forced Andre to squint. A dapper and easily recognizable young man came down the rough steps, flanked by two equally well-dressed gorillas. The young man carried a canvas bag, which clunked as he set it down.

"Enjoy your nap, Mister Croft?"

"Screw you, Forzi." Andre coughed, spitting blood on the rough floor.

"Really, Mister Croft. You know sweet Tessa has that privilege. After all, you went to so much effort to get that picture." As soon as the thugs had set on him in his apartment, Andre had guessed what this was about. He'd spend days camping out at the Isolde Spa on a tip-off that he would get evidence of high level links between the Forzi Cartel and the Lyonesse city administration. He'd gotten slightly more than he bargained for when the City Administrator herself, Tessa Niedlich-Lywin, had walked in hand in hand with Roman Forzi's son. He'd been so shocked that he managed to get only one shot, and that rather grainy. It had been printed in a number of scandal sheets, prompting rumors to run riot through the city for the last week. *A better picture and I would've been rich beyond my wildest dreams*, he thought ruefully.

"Marco, release Mister Croft's hands. I'm sure he's uncomfortable like that." The gorilla on the right drew a long-bladed knife and after unceremoniously pushing Andre on his face, cut through the plasticuffs with an easy motion. Pins and needles shot up Andre's arms as the circulation returned.

"Get it over with, Forzi. Just shoot me or whatever you want to do."

"Shoot you? I don't think so, though my associates here were staunch advocates of that course. No, we're not barbarians after all." Forzi lifted a hammer from the bag he'd brought downstairs and handed it to the nearest thug. "Tell me Mister Croft, how easy is it to operate a camera with no fingers?"



6.1 NATIONAL CHARACTER

It would be easy to classify Mercantile citizens as greedy, but while that certainly describes their most well-known character trait, it does little justice to this complex and pragmatic society. The UMF's willingness to allow member city-states to retain their own cultures and governments results in the "typical Mercantilist," a hard nosed corporate executive willing to do anything to turn a profit, being little more than a caricature. Such individuals do exist, but they are in the minority. Instead, local traditions such as the Jerusalemite Matriarchy of Swanscombe, the nobility of Ashington and the socialism of Zagreb provide the defining characteristics of the population.

The drive to succeed appears as a constant factor in the UMF, applying equally to corporate, socialist and noble alike. The principal of "there's no such thing as a free lunch" also dominates Mercantile thinking, prompting a selfish attitude that colors the relationships between individuals and groups. Everything in society has to be earned and few Mercantilists will willingly help others. The giving of gifts, however, pervades both corporate and private life in the Federation. To outsiders it appears as endemic corruption — for a business deal to even be considered, a substantial gift must change hands — but such gifts are intended to ease deals and personal interactions. Depending on the circumstance they can be a thank you or request for attention. Despite this, charitable concerns in the Federation find fundraising difficult, and when individuals or corporations make donations it is usually associated with a high-profile public relations exercise.

Mercantilists believe wholeheartedly that the ends justify the means and will willingly push the accepted social and legal boundaries, resulting in a very flexible system of morality. This attitude is particularly prevalent in corporate bodies but appears equally applicable to farmers and artists. Lying, cheating and theft are accepted practices, provided one central tenet is followed: do not get caught. In the media-conscious UMF, image is important to most citizens, and blackmail (known as *kompromat*) is an accepted part of UMF culture. Citizens and corporations alike are constantly alert for information they can use as leverage against their rivals, or to offset leverage applied against them.

The Mercantile sense of honor, strong albeit rather twisted, prevents the excesses of the drive to succeed from having too great an impact on the Federation as a whole. Each Mercantilist citizen, while seeking to advance their own position within their social circle and work group, is also seeking to advance that group within the overall framework of society. Thus while a corporate citizen may scheme to usurp the place of his immediate boss, he also seeks to advance his team or department within the company. The same applies to companies, who constantly jockey for position but work together through the Corporate Council to further the aims of the Federation at large. Balancing personal and group status is a difficult proposition, and many break under the strain.

The desire for success and self-advancement forms the core of the Mercantile work ethic. Corporate employees work long hours, often up to 18 hours a day, as much to demonstrate their commitment to the job and their value to the company as for the pay. Those who do not work long beyond their contracted hours, usually unpaid, are viewed with suspicion and usually find themselves limited to minor positions or even out of a job. Such conditions result in a high level of job-related stress, with mental breakdowns and heart disease commonplace.

► The Northern Inquirer

Although headquartered in Valeria, the Northern Inquirer maintains branch offices in Canterbury, Marathon and Lyonnese and produces local Mercantile editions. They specialize in lurid stories about the rich and famous, and pay handsomely for compromising video footage and stories, but also serve as a forum for conspiracy theories and fringe groups. Recent stories range from the bizarre — "Trideo star ate my grassrunner" — to the ridiculous — "Secrets of stonehead power cult." They have been sued repeatedly by personalities across the CNCS and AST, but retain a top-notch defense team who usually manage persuade the plaintiff to settle out of court. In addition to the weekly trideo show, broadcast on local networks and the Hermes 72 system, the Inquirer publishes a print edition. As well as providing more detail on stories from the show, NI Hardcopy contains many stories deemed too lurid or extreme for the family-oriented broadcast version.

► The Art of Kompromat

Kompromat — the practice of gathering and utilizing compromising material — is almost an art form in the Federation. At the simplest level, knowledge of an opponent (or potential opponent) gives a valuable insight into their psyche, allowing a reasonable prediction of their actions. In corporate circles such knowledge is invaluable, often making the difference between profit and loss on a venture. Given the impact of simply knowing the actions of an opponent, the ability to manipulate that person (or organization) is almost priceless. Most corporations thus have whole departments investigating the background of almost everyone and everything, looking for items that can be used as leverage. The media-conscious Federation actively encourages the practice, with numerous scandal sheets reporting the latest gossip. Of course, the material gathered by the corporations is not squandered away. Instead it is used to wring concessions from other departments or corporations, or as counter-leverage to offset *kompromat* applied against them. Many individuals seek 'the goods' on their colleagues, knowing that in order to climb the promotion ladder someone needs to be knocked off it.



6.2 CUSTOMS

Mercantile customs are diverse, a product of a cosmopolitan society and willingness to borrow the facets of other societies that have proved financially successful. Many customs and traditions are limited to specific geographical areas, institutions or elements of society, but still have a considerable impact on Mercantile life and how it is perceived by outsiders. Mercantilists are seen as slaves of rampant capitalism, enthralled by profit and the power of the corporations. While this is certainly true of many facets of UMF society, it is a sweeping generalization, and any who take it at face value should be prepared for the consequences.

6.2.1 FAMILY

Mercantilists are strong believers in the family, usually having three or four children, but their work ethic, particularly in the city-states, places considerable strain on family life. Adult Mercantilists work long hours to demonstrate their commitment to their job, and with provisions for maternity leave minimal (though this varies from company to company and individual circumstances), most children are raised in crèches from a very young age. These corporate-sponsored institutions serve as surrogate families, weakening the biological bonds and replacing them with loyalty to the corporate family. Rural families stand in stark contrast to their urban equivalents, often numbering as many as eight children and maintaining strong parent-child relationships. Many such families never live far apart, marrying within the community and forming close-knit extended families akin to the Clans of the WFP.

All Mercantile parents make particular effort to be with their offspring during holidays, with visits to friends and relatives particularly important. Among Mercantile Revisionists the practice of creating Bond Twins remains strong, usually between members of a corporate crèche. The bond-twins play together and provide each other with companionship, often becoming closer than biological siblings, and marriages between bond-twins are not uncommon.

The status of marriage in the UMF is unusual. Like much in Mercantile society, it is regarded as a business transaction. UMF law calls for a contract to be drawn up between the two parties prior to their marriage, stipulating any restrictions on their activities, ownership of property and conditions under which the contract can be dissolved. Failure to comply with the contract's provisions can be construed as grounds for divorce or a legal case, though few Mercantile couples take the procedure that far. Indeed, strict adherents to the Revisionist and Swanscombe Jerusalemite faiths, both of which condemn divorce, often stipulate "none" as a condition under which the marriage contract may be terminated.

6.2.2 PREJUDICE

Mercantile society is the most diverse in the CNCS, but this variety among the population has allowed prejudice to take root. At the most basic level, Mercantile society is generally prejudiced against the poor. There are no social security provisions for individuals not belonging to a corporation, resulting in a considerable underclass in many Mercantile cities. These individuals are forced to work for many of the Federation's less reputable groups and often find themselves drawn into crime syndicates. Any attempt to escape this life and gain useful employment is halted by prejudice: corporate culture regards these disenfranchised citizens as lazy and unemployable, thus perpetuating the cycle. Furthermore, Mercantilists regard wealth as an indication of status to be flaunted as much as possible. Expensive houses, the latest designer fashions, and hosting lavish parties form the key elements of creating an image of conspicuous wealth, though conspicuous ownership of major stockholdings is perhaps the most important element. Those unwilling or unable to partake in the public display of wealth are perforce regarded as of lower status. The major exception to this is Zagreb, where any conspicuous display of wealth is frowned upon and regarded as bourgeois.

With little empirical contribution to society, religious bodies have been widely scorned, even among their adherents. This has led to both the Revisionist and Jerusalemite churches, and by extension the governments of the city-state of Swanscombe and the NLC, being held in poor regard. The upsurge in Revisionism in the UMF has prompted a re-appraisal of this stance among many individuals, but for every Mercantilist who now accepts the role of religion in society, another decries the role of fanaticism.

Swanscombe is also notable for its strict matriarchal society. Only females are allowed to hold positions of authority, own property or vote in elections (though a male may serve as a proxy). The UMF constitution strictly forbids the federal government from acting to promote sexual equality in the city-state, but this has not prevented the city's male population from staging occasional uprisings against the female government and police force, the last of which was in TN 1883.

To a lesser extent, the monarchy of Ashington and the nobility that surround it embrace another form of regional prejudice. Only nobles are allowed to hold senior posts in the city-state's government, and by local law, any company headquartered there must have at least one noble on the board of directors. The personal freedoms of modern Ashington commoners, however, are a far cry from the serf status they had prior to the city-state joining the UMF. The Prince quickly found that with his people virtual slaves, other Mercantile concerns were loath to invest locally. The Emancipation Proclamations of TN 1624 granted the commoners their freedom and formed the Privy Council that advises the Prince.

6.2.3 RELIGION

Though religion plays only a minor role in UMF politics, the Federation has the most diverse religious base of any Northern league. Revisionism dominates, but the Federation's acceptance of differing cultures has allowed many religious groups to gain a foothold. This does not sit well with the church in Sorrento who feel the UMF should follow the lead of the NLC and name Sorrento Revisionism the state religion. The Caucus has made it clear it has no intention of doing so, citing the constitutional rights of differing city-states and enclaves to retain the social organization they enjoyed when incorporated into the UMF.

• REVISIONISM

The Sorrento sect of Revisionism is the largest religion in the UMF and has seen a considerable rise in its number of adherents over the last few cycles. The more pacifistic Massadan form of the religion, however, continues to exert considerable influence in the communities of the Badlands fringe and around Zagreb. Both groups believe in the existence of a benevolent universal force, known as the Gentle Spirit, which enlightened Mamoud Khodaverdi; but whereas the Massadan variant of the faith is pacifistic, the Sorrento Church regards intervention in injustice or disharmony as essential. Furthermore, while Massadan Revisionism regards personal experience and decisions as central to the faith, Sorrento Revisionism emphasizes doctrinal orthodoxy over individual interpretations. Many Mercantile Revisionists allowed their faith to lapse, paying lip service to Revisionist holidays but rarely praying or attending services. Only the most devout Mercantile Revisionists have constructed shrines in their homes or undertake pilgrimages to Massada or Sorrento. The assassination of Second Follower Thor Hutchison, however, has prompted many token Revisionists to attend services and to acquire the religious icons needed to create a shrine. The Revisionist group formed by Hutchison known as the Prophet's Shield (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p. 27) has seen its influence rise since the death of its leader. Despite recruiting the Economic Development Secretary, Nanase Sumeragi, to their cause, the Shield is not strong enough to make a significant impact on Mercantile politics. About 12 million Mercantilists adhere to the tenets of Sorrento Revisionism, while a further 2.3 million are Massadan Revisionists.

• JERUSALEMISM

The alliance of faiths known as Jerusalemism has many adherents in the UMF, with the variant originating in the city-state of Swanscombe (a reformed Roman Catholicism), the most prevalent with almost 1.4 million adherents in the Federation. Clearwater Jerusalemism, a Norlight version of the faith centered on Muhammadian and Fatmian traditions (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p. 91), has made inroads in Lyonesse and Baton Rouge. Both traditions recognize Erzah Ibn-Muhammad as a saint, but some Clearwater imams (religious teachers) ascribe additional attributes to Ibn-Muhammad, namely those of the Mahdi, a spiritual and temporal leader who will restore religion and justice before the end of the world. With the rise of Revisionist Fundamentalism in the NLC, many Clearwater Jerusalemites have relocated to the more tolerant UMF and since the death of Thor Hutchison and the religious persecution that followed, particularly attacks on the communes, the trickle of Jerusalemites has become a torrent. There are now believed to be in excess of 400,000 Clearwater Jerusalemites in the UMF.

• OTHER FAITHS

With around 150,000 adherents, Buddhism is the UMF's third largest religion. Unlike the militarized Buddhism of the Southern Republic, Mercantile Buddhists follow the Mahayana Buddhist tradition and believe that only through kindness and compassion will they achieve enlightenment. Part of their beliefs is that all life is sacred and worthy of protection and they find all war abhorrent. The Mercantile Buddhists believe it is their duty to object to the current Interpol War; led by Abbot Yeshe Howe, the Buddhist community has staged a number of peaceful protests in Baton Rouge. Their refusal to ship grain from their farms to the UMFA or Northern Guard has prompted considerable debate in the UMF Caucus.

The Blue Crescent (see **Into the Badlands**, pp. 66-67) has gained limited support in along the fringe of the Badlands and among the mercantilist youth. Although espousing a pacifist philosophy, its communist principals do not rest well with older Mercantile citizens. These principals — combined with the high profile shaved head and trademark tattoo — make the order ideal for young Mercantilists seeking to rebel against the establishment. Of the estimated 50,000 Blue Crescent members in the UMF, less than half are believed to be committed to the group's ideology.

Formed in TN 1876 by Carlton Galliard, a citizen of Pioneer, the Children of the New Dawn are currently the subject of a major FIA investigation. Like the Mekong Rotud movement (see **Mekong Dominion Leaguebook**, p. 71) Galliard claimed to have discovered the origins of the Terranovan stoneheads. Unlike the Rotuds, Galliard was willing to share his revelations — for a small fee. An FIA investigation at the time widely suspected that the cult was little more than a means of conning money out of gullible citizens. Federal attempts to close the cult down were blocked by Galliard's lawyers using the UMF's cultural preservation laws, claiming the groups membership of almost five thousand (now approaching 30,000 across the CNCS) and regular ceremonies qualified it as a religious organization. However, the disappearance of several cultists while on CotND 'expeditions' have prompted the FIA to reopen the case.

6.2.4 JUSTICE

The judicial system in the UMF revolves around three sets of laws: civilian (criminal and civil), corporate and military. Civilian law is in fact a collection of laws, some operating on the federal level, while others apply only within city-states. The constitutional guarantees to city-states that allow them to maintain their own system of government prevents a full integration of civilian law in the UMF, though the Judicial Secretariat has campaigned tirelessly to harmonize laws across the league. Corporate law is a homogenous and well thought-out body of laws, written to provide controls on trade within the UMF. It is principally concerned with crimes against property — theft, plagiarism and so forth; it also governs matters such as insider dealing, fraud and bankruptcy, as well as providing a framework for financial regulation. Enforcement of corporate law is carried out by the FIA, though many corporations enact a form of self-policing. Military law is principally concerned with the maintenance of order, but also includes provisions for treason and espionage. In peacetime, civilian and corporate law work side by side, taking precedence over military law. In times of war the roles are reversed; non-military trials require the approval of the FDC and cases not resolved at the time may still be revised after the hostilities.

All cases are tried by a panel of three advocates (or in the case of military trials, three officers of whom at least one must be a colonel or higher rank), who listen to arguments and evidence for and against the case. Witnesses may be cross examined by councils for both the defense and prosecution, and the three advocates may take an active role in proceedings, asking questions of their own. To limit costs, the timetable for the proceedings is agreed upon beforehand by the defense and prosecution. When all evidence has been heard, the panel will come to one of three conclusions: guilty of the charge, innocent of the charge, or a referral to a higher authority (the Caucus, the Corporate Council or the FDC). To prevent frivolous corporate or civil cases, the loser must pay the winner's costs. If they do not do so, the court may declare them bankrupt (itself a corporate offense) and seize assets sufficient to meet the costs.

The UMF divides offenses into three groups; minor, major and capital. Minor offenses are little more than misdemeanors and are punished by fines or community service, though in extreme cases a prison sentence may be imposed. Major offenses are more serious, with the range of punishments increased to reflect this. Capital offenses are the most serious crimes, usually against the state. Those convicted of capital crimes in absentia may receive the "death mark." This signifies a suspended sentence of execution, and 'recipients' are often the target of covert operations by the SOE or UMFA. Furthermore, the UMF posts a substantial bounty for the death of each target, often in excess of 500,000 marks. This is intended to encourage the recipient's allies to turn on them.

UMF Crimes and punishments

Crime	Penalty
Affray / Rioting	Fine (2000 marks)
Assault	Fine (500 marks)
Assault with intent to kill	Imprisonment (2-5 cycles)
Bankruptcy	Community service (150 hours)
Child Abuse	Life imprisonment
Driving while intoxicated	Imprisonment (1 cycle) + Community service (200 hours)
Embezzlement	Imprisonment (5 cycles)
Espionage (Corporate)	Imprisonment (5+ cycles)
Espionage (Government)	Death/Life imprisonment / Death Mark
Incitement to riot	Imprisonment (5+ cycles)
Manslaughter	Imprisonment (5+ cycles)
Murder	Life imprisonment
Murder (premeditated)	Death
Mass murder / genocide	Death
Pilferage	Fine (1000 marks)
Rape	Death
Reckless driving	Fine (5000 marks) + Community service (100 hours)
Sedition	Imprisonment (5+ cycles)
Speeding	Fine (1000 marks)
Theft (under 10 marks)	Community service (50 hours)
Theft (11-50,000 marks)	Imprisonment (5 cycles)
Theft (Over 50,000 Marks)	Imprisonment (8 cycles)
Theft with menaces	Imprisonment (10 cycles)
Treason	Death / Death Mark
Vandalism	Fine (100 Marks) + Community service (50 hours)
Vehicular Manslaughter	Imprisonment (10 cycles)



6.3 LIFESTYLE

The UMF allows its people considerable freedom in their lifestyles. It makes no value judgments about an individual's desires or aspirations. It only asks one thing. Do you have the money? The corporation forms the center of Mercantile life, acting as employer, teacher and surrogate parent. It asks much of its workers, but it also gives a lot in return. The absence of taxes gives corporate employees the highest average wages in the CNCS. This combines with the pressures of work to manifest what amounts to a split personality in many corporate workers. In the office or the factory they are sober, respectable, hardworking corporate employees. Away from their place of employment they live life to the fullest, singing and dancing, often with their teammates. Even the most straight-laced corporate drone is likely to be found cruising the bars and clubs with his colleagues. Indeed, avoiding such activities is a sure-fire way to damage career prospects.

Life in non-corporate circles is very different. Almost seven million Mercantilists (twenty-five percent of the population) do not work for a corporation, and with no government 'safety net' they form a veritable underclass. They are barred from the best education, and those without education are ignored for the even the most menial corporate jobs. Parents cannot get jobs, so their children are denied education and in turn cannot get jobs. A self-perpetuating poverty trap whose victims gather in distinct ghettos riddled with violence, it is a ripe breeding ground for organized crime. Only in the isolated farming communities of the Marathon Basin of the Badlands fringe can non-corporate employees eke out a respectable living, trading the dangers of the ghetto for the equally real dangers of the Badlands.

6.3.1 LANGUAGE

Anglic serves as the language of government and commerce in the UMF, but it is not the only one used in the league. Equatorial Hispanic, the language of the Western Frontier Protectorate, is spoken by many communities along the UMF's western borders, and local laws in Mainz require all public notices to be in both Hispanic and Anglic. Eurogermanic has long been the language favored by the nobles of Ashington and the spread of 'royal culture' throughout the league's corporate upper echelons has led to its adoption as a mark of sophistication and social status. Few can speak the language well, however, leading many to simply drop occasional words into conversations. In stark contrast, the Russoslavic spoken by Rapid City's founders remains in use in the city and has become an essential part of Northco's corporate culture.

Several other languages are used for specialist purposes in the UMF. Indo-Arabic is used for some Revisionist ceremonies and all Revisionist priests can speak the language. In an attempt to increase the religion's accessibility and maintain the influx of worshipers generated by Thor Hutchison's assassination, local services are normally given in Anglic. Easy to learn and understand, the Humanist-developed Intralingua is learnt by many Badlands traders. Government or corporate diplomats and trade negotiators are expected to learn the language of their destination state, be it Mandanese, Universal French or Hispanic.

6.3.2 EDUCATION

The education standards of the UMF have always been high. It is in the corporations' best interests to maintain a highly educated workforce, and to that end each company sponsors the education of its employees' children from a very young age. Basic education begins in the corporate crèches, providing intellectual stimulation, and true schooling begins at around six cycles. The largest companies own and operate their own education facilities and a number of 'Education Corporations' exist to meet the needs of those who do not. Early education follows the same pattern for all pupils, but after elementary school (5-10 cycles of age) the children are streamed according to their abilities. Personal choice plays some part in the process, but educators will attempt to steer a pupil away from training for which they show no aptitude — and their methods for dissuading stubborn children are very effective.

By the age of fourteen cycles, the delineation between those destined for physical occupations and those for other tasks is clear. This can foster a "them and us" mentality among the students, but effective segregation of the pupils minimizes disruption and the chance of violence. At sixteen cycles, schooling for the manual workers is deemed complete and the new workers are assigned tasks in their sponsoring corporation. Their initial contract, intended to pay the corporation back for their investment, lasts for five cycles, during which they are considered on probation. Any attempt to leave the company before this period is complete usually results in a breach of contract suit and a substantial bill.

Pupils intended for careers in management, research or service occupations remain in education until at least twenty cycles, at which point the most promising will likely spend a further five to ten cycles in higher education. There is a clear seniority among universities, with Swanscombe topping the list, closely followed by the Galland School of Engineering (Rapid City) and the Federation Technology Research Institute (Marathon). The UMF's universities are all privately run institutions and funding for places is much sought after. The Mercantile government provides no funding to educational institutions other than universities, and even then funding takes the form of research grants. Several city-states run their own education programs, but these lack the funding and resources of the corporate programs. As such, non-corporate citizens are effectively given a second-class education.

6.3.3 RESIDENCE

Housing in the UMF demonstrates the influence of corporate affairs on Mercantile life, even for those not directly associated with a company. Corporate-owned housing forms distinct enclaves, usually associated with other company assets and leased to employees as required. Apartments blocks dominate these districts, frequently rising to a height of thirty stories. Most have direct access to shopping malls and entertainment complexes, forming an inter-linked series of residential and commercial units that is virtually self contained and to which access is tightly controlled. Small three- or four-room apartments are the norm in such areas, comprising a bathroom, kitchen, living room and bedroom, though in the smallest the kitchen and living room may be combined.

These are comfortable for an individual or a couple but ill suited to family life, and though some larger apartments exist for those with families, most choose to move away from the corporate enclaves into low-rise suburbs. The purchase of a house is seen as one of the most important life-events of a Mercantile citizen, signaling a new degree of maturity and financial responsibility. Furthermore, the district in which the house is located as well as its size and style are considered major social indicators.

Non-corporate urban housing follows a similar pattern to that of the corporations, but where corporate apartments are compact, those in the private sector are claustrophobic, with one or two rooms and many facilities strictly communal. Most tenement blocks are poorly maintained, often flouting federal safety laws.

Rural housing in the UMF is little different than elsewhere in the CNCS. The emphasis is on extended families and courtyard-houses are the norm, often with three generations of a family living in a single building. Despite the number of occupants, these are large, spacious structures and are considered the ideal of many Mercantile citizens. Indeed, many urban houses attempt to mimic the courtyard house construction, often with four houses surrounding a communal space.

6.3.4 RITES

Over the cycles, many rites and traditions have emerged in Mercantile society. A few originate with the Revisionist or Jerusalemite churches but the majority are corporate in origin. Most are so deeply enmeshed in Mercantile society that they are often taken up by non-corporate citizens. Few are formal.

The foremost ceremony of a Mercantilist's life welcomes the newborn into the family. Often combined with the Revisionist bond-twinning ceremony, it centers on presenting the child with a gift intended to help them in later life. In corporate families this is usually shares in the parent's corporation but can also be a money gift, placed in trust until they reach their majority. In other groups the gift is largely symbolic — a gift of seeds is common in rural communities — but nonetheless is considered important.

Graduation from school and entry to the workplace is also the subject of a semi-formal ritual. The child-pupil packs a bag and leaves the family home for a short period, often going on vacation with friends and classmates, though a brief stay with relatives is equally common. The graduate is supposed to reflect on his life to date and the future that lies ahead. In practice most graduation holidays are little more than an extended party. On returning to the family home, usually to a family celebration, the graduate is deemed an adult and a full member of society.

Marriage occupies a strange place in Mercantile life, partly religious and partly legal. Though most marriage ceremonies are carried out by Revisionist or Jerusalemite clerics, UMF law regards marriage as a legal institution and requires a formal contract to be drawn up between the couple. Mercantile law also allows couples to be married in civil ceremonies, but though equally valid under the law, they are seen as somehow inferior to those involving religious ceremonies. Nonetheless, civil ceremonies have become the norm, particularly in corporate society. Whether the ceremony is religious or civil, it is traditionally followed by a reception and party to which the guests are expected to bring practical gifts for the couple to aid them in their new life together.

Housing is also surrounded by a number of rites. When a couple purchases a house they traditionally invite their friends and neighbors to a "house-warming" celebration. In a reversal of traditional practice — when visiting someone else's home it is traditional to take a small gift for the hosts as a thank-you for their hospitality — the householders give their visitors small gifts in gratitude for their friendship, though the visitors are expected to bring food and drink for the party.

Promotions and the receipt of the annual bonus are also cause for celebration, usually in the form of small parties or meals. Many corporations organize more formal celebrations to fete anniversaries, large contracts and other business objectives, often at considerable expense. The most significant events are marked by a company-wide holiday, though most corporations are loath to disrupt their work schedule. Many agricultural communities also hold rites associated with sowing and harvesting, though timing and details vary from community to community. The pre-harvest rites are intended to ensure the success of their crops and the prosperity of the community and usually take the form of a religious service. Harvest celebrations are more lively affairs, usually involving an upbeat thanksgiving service followed by a large banquet.

6.3.5 FOOD AND DRINK

Food and dining out plays a significant role in Mercantile culture. Breakfast serves as the principal family gathering in Mercantile households and the traditional cooked breakfast — fried barnaby steak, eggs and wheat pancakes — is intended to provide energy throughout the day. The size of breakfasts has led to the replacement of lunch by a series of daytime snacks, a practice encouraged by many corporations. Though considerable effort is made to gather the family for evening meals, the workload of Mercantile citizens often results in a staggered series of meals during the evening. Children are fed early and packed off to bed while the principal wage earners often do not eat until late at night.

Meals are ideal occasions for business meetings, ranging from business breakfasts between corporate managers to contract negotiations over lunch and lavish dinner receptions for corporate and media personalities. Catering to such needs has become an art, with food choices dictated by both season and fashion. Much of the food consumed in the Federation is grown locally, but Mercantile concerns also import rarities from across both polar regions. For example, Dominion-grown tea or Republican cawfee are status symbols, particularly given their current scarcity. Likewise luxury products of Terran origin grown in Pioneer's hydroponics domes are held in high regard despite their high price.

Tour guides claim that every Terranovan cuisine is represented somewhere in the UMF, and judging by the range of restaurants found in most city-states this may well be true. Anything from Western grillhouses to Dominion-style sushi bars can be found in most commercial areas, though fast food is even more prevalent. MainzFood dominates such concerns in both the UMF and across the CNCS, operating several chains to cater to different segments of the population.

Meat forms a central part of the average Mercantile diet, with cattle, springers and barnabies forming the largest portion, while hopper and snake dishes appear as regional delicacies. Pasta and root vegetables are the traditional accompaniments to meals but soy products have increasingly gained a foothold in the market.

Alcohol is widely available in the UMF and often accompanies meals. It is illegal for bars or shops to sell alcoholic produce to minors (those under 20 cycles), but weak alcoholic beverages may be served to children during part of a meal provided they are supervised by a legally responsible adult. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to their CNCS neighbors, there are no restrictions on the days when alcoholic drinks may be sold though recent Revisionist pressure has brought calls for restrictions on Gentle Day (Wednesday). Ales and lagers form the staple of Mercantile bars and pubs, often from local microbreweries, though wine and whisky also play a significant role. Fashion often determines the range of produce stocked. In the early TN 1930s locally produced dark beers were all the rage, but their place has been usurped by lighter ales from the NLC. There has also been increased demand for Southern products like sake and Feu-de-nuit liquor. Pioneer Ice Mead remains the drink of choice for those wishing to flaunt their wealth.

6.3.6 FASHION

Fashion has always played a part in the Mercantile dichotomies of work versus leisure and corporate employees versus the underclass. Most corporations impose a rigid dress code on their employees, producing a virtual uniform of business suits. Indeed, a few companies, most notably in the service sector, provide uniforms for their employees. These range from the functional but gaudy outfits of MainzBurger staff to the restrained elegance of the Bank of Marathon. Most companies allow employees to purchase their own clothes within the guidelines laid down. Even within these seemingly stringent conditions there are a host of ways to express personal tastes and status. Differing colors, materials and cuts from double-breasted jackets to tuxedos form the most basic distinctions, but the suit's manufacturer confers true status. Off-the shelf outfits are the norm among the most junior employees, but designer labels and custom made clothing become increasingly important with status. The suits of Lyonesse's Marco Flugi are the most sought after in the Federation and the young designer, famous for his clean lines and daring use of color, commands prices in excess of 5,000 marks for a suit. Many senior corporate officials prefer the more traditional work of Canterbury's Antonia Guz.

Accessories play a major role in establishing individuality, but they can also be used to reinforce corporate identity. For example, ties, cravats and scarves are sometimes used to accentuate and personalize business clothes, although high, stiff collars are now standard for business suits, so jewelry and watches now serve to personalize. Many corporate employees, however, wear pins unique to their company, bearing the company logo or insignia, which provides a common link between the staff. The pins are traditionally also worn outside of work, and they provide a ready means of identifying corporate affiliation. Furthermore, they contain micro transmitters that communicate with Personal Interface Technologies (PITs) as well as building security systems to restrict access to sensitive areas.

Outside of the corporate environment, fashions are wild and ever changing. According to *Mode*, the Federation's leading fashion magazine, the current 'in thing' on the street and in clubs are bright colors in daring cuts, replacing last cycle's demand for vidfabric. The most popular designers are JiB and Wallace, both of whom favor velvets, though style-leaders seem to be moving toward the stylish silk creations of Nishi Sui. *Mode* also reports the rise of so-called 'military chic', styles and colors intended to resemble the military uniforms and popularized by UMFA publicist, Sadie Dholakia. Unlike the 'royal fashion' popular among the corporate elite and driven by the nobility of Ashington, 'military chic' is most popular among junior executives and is widely predicted to be little more than a brief fad.

6.4 ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The cultural diversity and social freedoms of the UMF foster a diverse array of arts and forms of expression. When combined with corporate marketing techniques and the endless desire to make money, it is little surprise that the UMF is the entertainment and media capital of CNCS and a major force across Terra Nova. Mercantile corporations are involved in a wide range of projects, from trideo shows and movies to sports and books. Furthermore, several corporations exist solely to exploit the media and entertainment trends, while most companies have active public relations and marketing divisions.

This is not to say the UMF media is entirely free. Considerable care must be taken to avoid libel suits, and most media consultants employ legal staff whose responsibility is to vet the legal impact of material prior to publication, and to fight any suits that ensue. A few of the most sensationalist publishers work on a "print and be damned" policy, aware that the controversy surrounding what they print will encourage more people to tune in or purchase their publication, outweighing the negative impact of any fines that may be imposed. The rise in power of the Revisionist Church also poses an obstacle to free expression, attempting as it does to provide moral guidance. The church has attempted to exert its mortality on the Mercantile population as it has in the NLC, but to date the UMF government has upheld the constitutional rights of its citizens to free speech and social diversity.

6.4.1 MASS MEDIA

With minimal regulation and considerable profits at stake, the UMF's broadcast media is diverse and competitive. There are more than four hundred trideo channels across the Federation, though most city-states are limited to less than a hundred. A mix of free access, subscription and pay per view, these cater to a wide variety of audiences: news, entertainment, sports, music, information and even religion. Without the moral censorship of the NLC, violence and pornography are rife. If people want to pay for it, Mercantile interests can provide it.

Comedy and drama programs are the Federation's strong suit, exported throughout the CNCS and even to the rest of Terra Nova via the Hermes 72 network. One of the most popular shows is *Paulson Ridge*, a long-running soap-opera/drama set in the Badlands community of the same name. Now in its 60th cycle of broadcast, it shows the trials and tribulations of the settlement's families, dealing with a whole range of issues from teenage pregnancy to religious intolerance. The show's Badlands setting makes it easily accessible for most Terranovans, prompting major overseas sales. Indeed, early episodes of the show are being re-broadcast on the Hermes 72 network.

Many Mercantile children's programs are renowned for being little more than marketing exercises. They are derogatorily referred to as "toy of the week" shows because of the constant stream of new gadgets used by the principal characters, replicas of which are sold in chain stores like *Toys for All!*. Indirect merchandising, such as clothing, books and artwork is also common and applies equally to many adult-oriented shows. Such media tie-ins are regarded as part and parcel of the Mercantile entertainment business.

The Federation's holofilm industry, based in Canterbury, is equally advanced, producing a wide range of movies, ranging from art-house productions for the intelligentsia to big-budget blockbusters guaranteed to draw in the audiences. The major studios have been criticized for their reliance on the blockbuster premise, sacrificing plot and characterization for sex and violence in an attempt to draw crowds and rake in money. The companies counter that it is this type of movie, often making a considerable profit, which funds the production of more artistic (and less commercial) work. Indeed, the healthy festival season that helps support so-called real film is largely subsidized by the major production companies. Treasurer Banderas, once a movie star and executive, had been a fixture at the major festivals before his untimely death.

Electronic and print media is also very advanced in the UMF, ranging from daily newsfaxes to books and on-line information services. Much of this material is written by hacks, seeking little more than a quick buck. The openness of Mercantile society has allowed the publication of a wide range of literary works that would be considered morally unsound in other CNCS leagues. Indeed, the prejudices of other leagues, particularly the NLC, has led many writers and artists to seek refuge in the liberal UMF.

The liberalism of the UMF media has recently come under attack with the outbreak of the Interpolar War. With many Mercantile troops involved in the unsuccessful push into the Mekong Dominion, both Solomon Davi in Lyonesse and Victoria Edden-Smythe in Valeria are very concerned that public support in the Federation might swing away from the war effort. Military authorities have used the provisions of the War Powers Act to suppress media broadcast of the full extent of the bad news from the front. Northco's Natalya Korolov has advised against this tactic, however, rightly fearing that the truth will eventually become known and be an even greater blow to morale for having been concealed. Davi has responded by taking a positive route and has encouraged coverage of the more successful push into the Eastern Sun Emirates, although UMF units are in the minority there. Davi has also ordered the SOE to draw up a "black list" of reporters and media executives who can no longer be trusted. Just what he intends to do with this list remains unknown. Assassination or outright intimidation would be too risky at this point, because it would threaten morale and erode the UMF's position within the CNCS.

6.4.2 FINE ARTS

The Mercantile appreciation for fine art is well developed, and many corporate executives serve as patrons for artists and performing groups. Painting and sculpture are particularly highly regarded, and many corporations commission works by famous manufacturers to decorate their offices, particularly the public areas. The Federation also has the highest number of galleries per capita in the CNCS, with each city hosting several major collections. The most significant collection is held by the National Gallery in Lyonnesse, including works from across Terra Nova and some Terran works left behind when Earth withdrew. The Lyle Gallery in Rapid City has gained a reputation for daring, displaying the works of many Norlight artists forced to flee their homes because of the supposed moral or religious deviancy of their work. The gallery has repeatedly been the subject of vocal attacks by the Revisionist Church and in recent unrest, extremists damaged several of the most controversial works.

Attendance at the theater, ballet and opera is considered an essential part of life for the Federation's corporate elite. Premieres and first night parties are the place for Mercantile socialites to be seen, particularly in Lyonnesse, and this ensures a steady stream of corporate patronage. Furthermore, many companies sponsor individual productions or entire theater seasons, writing off the expense as a charitable donation while reaping the rewards of "free" advertising. The reputation of Mercantile venues makes them attractive to foreign groups, and a constant succession of touring acts visit the Federation. Before the war, Republican plays were popular, as was kabuki from the Mekong Dominion. Indeed, the world-renowned Yang Dancers made several highly successful tours of the Federation.

6.4.3 MUSIC

Musical tastes in the UMF are eclectic, ranging from trad-classical movements like 20th Century jazz and 31st Century balance, through neo-classical composers like Sheng (responsible for the Federation anthem, *Ad Eternam*) to modern forms such as primal dream, rage and the latest phenomenon, shock music. Like opera, both trad- and neo-classical are seen as the province of the rich, with tickets for live performances costing hundreds of marks. Primal dream, and to a lesser extent rage, form the mainstay of corporate tastes, particularly middle-management types seeking to recapture their youth.

Shock forms a counter-culture in the UMF and is extremely popular with the young, corporate and otherwise. Its mix of power and melody, combined with biting lyrics, challenges the established order, questioning the militarism of the WFP, the morality of the NLC and the capitalism of the UMF. The permissiveness of the UMF and its acceptance of 'wild' social behavior have weakened shock's impact in the UMF. Indeed, on some levels the Mercantile way of life has begun to corrupt some shock music groups, with recordings becoming commercially available and several shock radio stations open for business.

The UMF is also infamous for deliberately reviving old musical forms by using them in advertising and jingles. Once the ad and its music has reached sufficiently high awareness among the population, digital recordings are made available for purchase.

6.4.4 ARCHITECTURE

Mercantile architecture varies considerably from city-state to city-state, reflecting local conditions and prejudices. In Mainz, for example, the 'fort architecture' of the WFP is apparent, utilizing solid construction and concentric rings of massive fortifications. A similar principal holds in Ashington where the need to defend against both the elements and Badlands raiders prompted formidable fortifications. Unlike the functional construction of Mainz, Ashington's architecture was elaborately decorated, reflecting the power and prestige of the Ash family. Many of Ashington's most famous buildings were wrecked by the repeated attacks of the CEF during the War of the Alliance, and have been replaced by modern structures that lack the charm of the pre-war buildings.

Lyonnesse is also decorated in an elaborate manner, having been rebuilt in the gothic style in the 16th century. Also notable for its canals and forestry preserves, Lyonnesse was built to radiate power, and manages to do so even in the near-perpetual rain. Though attacked by CEF orbital artillery, most of the UMF capital survived the war intact.

The most unusual architecture is found in Pioneer, where buildings have to be constructed to cope with the cold and the ever-present snow. Most buildings are small and well insulated, constructed on piles driven into the permafrost to prevent subsidence in the temporary summer thaw. Building roofs are sloped at a sharp angle to halt the accumulation of snow.

Corporate offices throughout the UMF are built to demonstrate the wealth and power of their owners. They are designed by the Federation's leading architects and built of the best materials, and as such are the 'palaces' of the UMF. No one style dominates, but most are tall, between thirty and sixty stories. As befits the most powerful corporation in the UMF, the Northco Tower in Rapid City is 700 meters — almost 100 stories — tall and 320 meters wide at its base.

6.4.5 SPORTS

Outdoor pursuits and winter sports are also very popular in the UMF, exploiting the Federation's diverse geography. The sedate sport of golf is particularly popular among corporate executives, and golf matches often provide the ideal venue for relaxed negotiations. Mercantile corporations regularly sponsor tournaments in the CNCS pro-tour, both gaining unofficial advertising and a free venue for corporate hospitality. A number of climbing centers exist in the northern Downing Range between Marathon and Lyonesse, with Mount Alban the most vaunted target. The mountain is regarded as one of the most difficult in the CNCS, and most climbers restrict themselves to the smaller surrounding peaks. Numerous small settlements on the Byerst Plain and in the Arctic Basin serve as the Federation's principal centers for sailing and water-skiing. Scuba diving is also popular there, though local groups throughout the UMF dive in the McAllen network.

The only city-state on Terra Nova with year-round snow, Pioneer attracts tourists from all over the planet for skiing and other winter sports. Pioneer is also home to the Trans-Arctic Challenge. A biannual event, the TAC is typical of Pioneer citizens' quest for new adventures — or new madness, according to Mercantilists from more temperate latitudes. It involves the crossing of over 700 kilometers of snow and ice on foot, snowshoe and ski, and is regarded as one of the most grueling events in the CNCS. Even so, it attracts more than a fifty teams (groups of four), though many fail and are evacuated by the ever-watchful rescue services. In recent years the challenge has become something of a grudge match between members of the UMFA's 119th Gear regiment and the Northern Guard's 92nd Infantry Regiment, each with three victories out of the last ten competitions. The most recent challenge, held in TN 1935, went to Wallace N'go, a civilian adventure holiday guide from Pioneer and former a member of the 119th. The UMFA regiment has unofficially claimed the victory as its own, prompting angry exchanges with their Guard opposite numbers, but N'go has made no comment on the situation.

Many co-workers play soccer together in interdepartmental matches. As with group socializing, this helps to foster a sense of camaraderie among workers and is encouraged with both financial incentives and holidays. Corporations also sponsor professional teams who form the Mercantile Soccer League. These teams, some forty in all, make up two leagues and over the period of a cycle play every other team in their league. At the end of the cycle the winners of each league meet in the Stadium of Gold in Lyonesse for a final match. The winner of this encounter receives the MSL trophy, a highly prized golden statuette.

Gear Dueling is a popular spectator sport, with each city-state fielding two teams supported by corporate sponsorship. The teams compete in the Northco-sponsored Mercantile Dueling Circuit, divided into two leagues, the winners of which meet in a championship match for the Yanders trophy. MDC matches are broadcast across the UMF and to sports fans elsewhere on Terra Nova, and are also the subject of major merchandising campaigns.



Antonio Mano



Antonio Mano was born to a middle class family in the Mekong Dominion, the first son of a moderately successful marketing agent. To his father's despair, he showed no aptitude for the business, preferring the company of numerous girlfriends. His family despaired of him ever amounting to anything, until he discovered a talent for athletic competition. Mano was soon discovered to be a champion-class runner, and he became one of his school's star athletes. His father immediately saw a marketing opportunity, and pushed him to begin an extensive training program that would lead him to high profile competitions — and endorsements.

After a series of successful local competitions and events, Antonio Mano eventually made it to the TN 1930 Terranovan Olympics, where he competed as one of the Dominion's premier athletes. He had lost none of his taste for romance, however, and soon became the center of numerous complaints from irate trainers and officials. Though he completed the events, winning two silver medals, the rumor that he had seduced Humanist child prodigy Miranda Petite, who was underage at the time, pretty much ended his career. He denied any wrongdoing, but the damage was done.

Estranged from the local sport community, disavowed by his father and shunned by his family, Mano decided to move on to greener pastures. He moved up North over the following two cycles, working here and there in menial jobs. He finally ended up in the Mercantile Federation, which reminded him so much of home that he decided to settle there. He worked for a time as a trainer, and quickly built up a reputation as a dependable individual in the Northern athletic community. Mano now has his own training agency, which also runs a gym in Marathon. He remain well-connected in numerous sport communities, where he can call on a number of favors.

Mano has participated once in the Trans-Arctic challenge, but did not finish the event. His team was picked up by a military rescue squad when they strayed too far from the general path taken by the rest of the competitors. His infuriated protests were largely ineffectual, and the team was denied the opportunity to re-enter the race. To this day, Antonio Mano remains convinced that he and his team were cheated by the UMFA.

6.5 TECHNOLOGY

Technology and innovation are bywords of the Federation. Mercantile corporations perpetually seek new technologies that will give them the edge over their competitors, and this constant striving for improvement has made the UMF the technological powerhouse of the CNCS.

Mercantile concerns have pioneered some of Terra Nova's most important technological developments, the most notable of which are the Heavy Gear and optical NNet. Even today, 267 cycles after combat walkers were first deployed, the Federation and in particular Northco remain at the pinnacle of Gear design and manufacture. Northco has faced serious competition since the War of the Alliance, both from Northern companies like Shaian Mechanics of Kenema, and Badlands-based Paxton Arms. The rise of non-Mercantile Gear manufacturers is a major economic concern for the UMF and is the subject of several ongoing projects.

UMF materials chemistry is advanced, ranging from new generations of alloys and smart glues used in vehicle construction to designer drugs intended to combat the latest epidemic. Several UMF concerns maintain orbital factories which allow the production of ultra-pure compounds, though since the War of Alliance jurisdiction over such facilities has fallen to the UMFA Space Directorate and the Northern Guard Space Service. Despite such facilities, Federation research is far from the cutting edge in both areas though Mercantile companies have proved adept in making practical use of developments and in marketing them to the public.

High technology goods, particularly optical NNet and microelectronics, also play a major role in Mercantile concerns. Companies like Abaline research are at the cutting edge of such technologies, and the city of Marathon and its data net serves as a showcase for many emerging technologies. It is consumer goods, however — trideo and video equipment, telecommunications apparatus and personal computers — that serve as the backbone of many companies. This applies equally to heavy industry, where companies like Northco are as reliant on automotive and civil walker manufacture as they are on advanced military technologies like Gears. Mass-market goods feed the research into new generations of equipment that are cutting edge today and commonplace tomorrow.

Many Mercantile products are little more than gimmicks, designed to exploit ever-smaller niches in the market. The driving force behind such products is more than base commercialism, however. Fashion, the desire to have the latest thing and the on-going race to be a style leader create an ever-present demand for such goods, creating a self-perpetuating loop of supply and demand. Most of these gadgets are regarded as little more than curiosities once the craze has died down, often simply discarded and recycled. Over the cycles, however, a few such items have proved their worth and a part of daily Mercantile and Terranovan life. Modern data gloves and personal assistants both began life in the UMF, though neither are truly innovative and have numerous antecedents over the last several millennia.

The quality of Mercantile design and manufacture is unrivaled, with high standards viewed as the best way to ensure repeat business. By necessity, this involves a price premium counteracting the higher wages of Mercantile citizens. Furthermore, low-quality products made by companies based in Timmins and the Mekong Dominion can easily undercut Mercantile prices, though this is widely regarded as false economy.

► Industrial Espionage

Industrial espionage is part and parcel of inter-corporate politics. Every company wishes to know what the others are working on, the nature of their practices and their pricing structures. Knowledge of what a competitor is going to release next cycle, or plans to release in five cycles' time, is a powerful tool. It can help plan research and marketing strategies, often making the difference between massive profits and horrendous losses. Knowledge, quite literally, is power.

Though technically a crime, corporate espionage and other such practices are accepted as part and parcel of Mercantile life. All but the smallest companies maintain some sort of active intelligence arms, charged with both gaining access to the secrets of others and protecting their own interests. Many such personnel are recruited from the FIA, SOE and even the NGIS, bringing considerable expertise to the business.

Methods range from placing listening devices and tapping communication lines to bribery and deception, while special ops teams also carry out sabotage, kidnapping and theft. The government generally turns a blind eye to such operations, though they crack down on cases where lethal force has been used, particularly assassinations. As a result fatalities are rare, but this does not stop senior executives and scientists from hiring bodyguards.

The greatest act of industrial espionage went beyond corporate politics and into treason. Recruited by SRID, Andraya Stephany Krayton-Ash (a.k.a. Charity) was a minor Ashington noble who came to view the UMF as an occupying force. Rising through Northco's ranks, she became part of the UMFA's Joint Military Development Committee (JMDC) and was in a prime position to betray the secrets of ONNet technology to the Southern Republic. Furthermore, after being fired from Northco for ordering a major technology review of the ONNet system, she joined the JMDC's civilian staff and was thus able to betray the Western theft of the Hunter P5 prototype to her Republican masters, allowing them to acquire a fully-functioning Heavy Gear (for more details see *Southern Vehicles Compendium 1*, pp.13-14).



ALL PART OF THE SERVICE

"This is C-SAR 192, inbound Point Juliet. No sign of the bailouts, but we have their beacon signal. Where are Blue seven?" There was a squawk as Lana Nahas released the talk button on her control yolk, swiftly drowned out by the whoop-whoop sound of the Rock Beetle's rotor as it skimmed the desert. They were NOE — Nape of the Earth — flying low to avoid enemy detection. Alongside, her crewman Chang Yodl monitored the helicopter's sensors, alert for anything that might threaten the aircraft.

"C-SAR 192 this is control. Blue Flight report ETA at your position as three minutes."

"Roger, control. Our ETA at Point Juliet is now forty seconds."

The Beetle sped across the desert towards the ridge beyond which — they hoped — were the crew of a downed Redjacket, ready and waiting for pickup. Their C-SAR — Combat Search and Rescue — team was tasked with extracting the stranded servicemen and returning them to base near Mainz. Aircraft could be replaced; experienced crews could not. They crested the ridge and saw they had indeed found the plane, but so had the enemy. Muzzle flashes were clearly visible, bursting from the rifles of the patrol who had discovered the crew, probably following up the AA-battery's report and homing on the smoke that billowed from the wreck.

"Control, this is C-SAR 192. Point Juliet is hot. Repeat, Point Juliet is hot. We're going to support but tell Blue Flight to be here yesterday."

Pulling the nose up, Nahas slowed the helicopter and banked over the downed flyer's position. The Beetle's port side door gunner fired a volley of LMG rounds towards the approaching hostile infantry, forcing them to duck behind cover. Several small-arms rounds pinged off the Beetle's armor, but the C-SAR modifications to the basic airframe took such eventualities into consideration and none penetrated.

A warning call from the starboard gunner prompted a sharp turn to the left as she kicked the pedals hard and yanked back on the collective. The infantry's APC — a Crocodile — had been hidden behind a low ridge and now maneuvered to bring its rockets to bear. Designed for anti-tank work, the system could theoretically bring down an aircraft. Lana didn't want to take the risk and threw the lumbering machine into a series of evasive maneuvers. The chatter of the LMGs behind her indicated her gunner's desperate attempts to cover the downed crew.

"C-SAR 192, this is Blue Flight inbound your position. ETA is 20 seconds."

Turning back towards the LZ, Lana saw the two Scorpions screech across the ridge, decelerating sharply and dropping towards the battle. A Damocles anti-tank missile dropped from the lead craft and sped towards the Crocodile, turning it into a ball of flame, while the autocannons, their distinctive buzzing audible even over their own rotors, drove off the surviving infantry.

As the Rock Beetle settled onto the ground and the downed crew ran towards the hatch, the pilot of the lead Scorpion gave a thumbs up. Lana called in: "Blue Leader, this is C-SAR 192. Thanks for the help, McKenzie."

"All part of the service. Enjoy your day"



7.1 DESIGNING A MERCANTILE CHARACTER

The culture and society of the UMF is broad and accepting, ranging from the ultra-rich to the destitute, and allowing the creation of a wide range of **Heavy Gear** characters. Campaign type will play a major role in character selection; military Players will find occupations such as Gear pilots, infantrymen and landsailors open to them, but those interested in civilian campaigns will find corporate execs, media stars and smugglers more appropriate. The UMF lends itself to corporate intrigues in which corporate security agents, undercover operatives and gangland enforcers all play a part.

Even those characters not directly employed by a corporation will find it difficult to escape their influence. The massive companies pervade all aspects of society and the Player Character's relationships and attitudes towards corporate interests will be a major factor in all Mercantile characters. Many Mercantile citizens have been raised and educated by corporations, making the quest for self-advancement and personal profit a central tenet of their lives, even if they are no longer directly working for corporate interests. Even characters drawn from the underclass of non-corporate citizens will share some of these traits, seeking to escape the trap of poverty. Indeed, many such individuals are seeking to prove their worth and make ideal Player Characters.

7.1.1 CONCEPT, BACKGROUND AND SUB-PLOTS

Corporate ties — good or bad — or the absence thereof play a major role in defining Mercantile characters, and should be decided during character creation. Such ties may play a minor role in a campaign, such as with a military unit on the fringe of the Badlands, or may be of critical importance, for example in a political campaign set in Lyonesse or Rapid City (or any campaign in socialist Zagreb). The decision whether or not to use such background aspects is purely at the discretion of the Players and Gamemasters, but often provides a useful “handle” for Mercantile characters.

Religion also plays a major role in some parts of the UMF and thus is of considerable importance in defining PCs. Most Mercantilists are lapsed Revisionists, but there is a sizable minority of Jerusalemites, particularly of the Swanscombe and Clearwater traditions, as well as Buddhists and members of the Blue Crescent Order. Traditionally religion has been a matter of personal preference, but recent cycles have seen an upsurge in pro-Revisionist sentiment, and a related worsening in the treatment of non-Revisionist characters.

In the **Heavy Gear** universe gender is largely irrelevant, with both sexes considered equal and same-sex relationships part of everyday life. The city of Swanscombe in the UMF is the last bastion of gender discrimination, albeit turned on its head from the traditional male chauvinism. All characters from that city are likely to have a skewed view of the relationship between the sexes, with the rest of the world challenging their beliefs. Such characters, particularly females, are likely to find the situation disturbing — with males allowed to get “above themselves” and female “rights” subjugated — and this can lead to very interesting dynamics between PCs.

7.1.2 ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS

An origin in the UMF should have little influence on Attribute choices, but the influence of Mercantile society, particularly its educational system, should be taken into account by Players and Gamemasters when selecting Skills. Business Studies are a core element of the curriculum and most Mercantile characters should have Bureaucracy and Business at levels 1 or 2 and Etiquette (perhaps with a Business Specialization) at level 1. Members of the underclass are unlikely to have such skills, but instead will have Streetwise and Hand-to-Hand.

All UMF characters receive Anglic free as their native tongue, though characters hailing from Mainz's old families may instead take Equatorial Hispanic (though they will need to purchase Anglic at level 1 or better to communicate with most other Mercantile characters). Characters from Rapid City receive the Foreign Language: Russoslavic at level 1 as their second language, while nobles from Ashington receive Foreign Language: Eurogermanic at level 1. Religious characters such as priests should purchase the language appropriate to their tradition at level 2: Indo-Arabic for Revisionists, Biblical Hebrew, Koranic Arabic or Latin for Jerusalemites. Characters from Pioneer should also purchase the Survival Skill and may choose the (winter) Specialization.

Players who wish to play corporate characters should spend their points developing appropriate Skills and Attributes. Corporate high flyers will likely have above average KNO and INF, and perhaps also CRE and PER. In addition to the traditional Skills of Bureaucracy and Business, Hagglng and Leadership are recommended. Specialization may or may not be appropriate. Lower-ranked corporate characters should have appropriate Skills: Computers, Craft, Earth Sciences and so forth.

Several of the Perks and Flaws in the **Heavy Gear Gamemaster's Guide** may also be appropriate for corporate characters, particularly Connections (p. 13), Favor (p. 14), Property (p. 15), Rank (p. 15), Subordinates (p. 16) and Wealth (p. 16). Media characters may also wish to consider Famous (p. 14). However, care should be taken with these Perks to avoid them becoming a crutch for poor roleplaying.

7.2 EQUIPMENT

The center of the CNCS' industry, the United Mercantile Federation has often been described as "gadget crazy". Many items are seized up on as status symbols, part of league-wide "conspicuous consumption". Others serve a practical purpose in the frenetic Mercantile culture, allowing people to work on the move and to remain in contact with their colleagues. All are high quality and reliable, but as might be expected with cutting-edge technologies, there is often a price premium on these goods.

Most Mercantile-produced tools and devices are easily recognized by the number of extra "features" and functions built into them. This makes the product more attractive to consumers, and the commercial hype often makes use of this. Engineers compete to devise clever ways of making the same components perform multiple tasks, giving additional functions and greater market appeal to the device without increasing its manufacturing cost — a plus for the profit-minded corporations.

The weapons and other pieces of equipment detailed over the next few pages are designed to give Players and Gamemasters a few useful props for their campaigns and characters. Many of these items can be found across Terra Nova in slightly altered forms and so can be used in any Heavy Gear campaign (at the Gamemaster's discretion). They are not provided so much for their Silhouette game statistics, but to provide additional insight into Mercantilist life and to add local flavor to characters who might use them.

7.2.1 WEAPONS

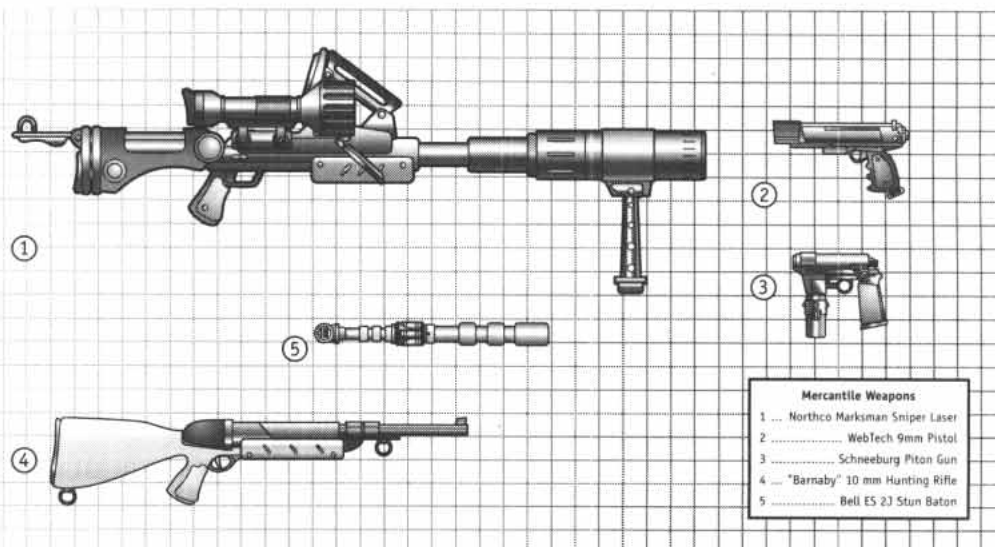
Though the UMF is the heart of the North's military-industrial complex, the UMF is not the center of the alliance's small-arms industry (that honor goes to the WFP). This is not to say such equipment produced in the UMF is inferior, rather Mercantile weapons tend towards hi-tech solutions and more specialist purposes than their Westerner counterparts. Many special-forces units use UMF-produced weapons, noted for their precision and reliability, as do big-game hunters and many sports shooters.

Mercantile Weapons ◀						
Weapon	Accuracy	Damage X	Range (m)	ROF	Ammo	Cost
Schneeberg Piton Gun	-2	8	1/2/4/8 0/2	1	100	
WebTech 9mm Pistol	+1*	15	5/10/20/40	0	18	900*
Bell ES 2J Stun Baton	0	AD+7**	Close combat	—	15	450
"Barnaby" 10mm Hunting Rifle	0	35	45/90/180/360	0	1	1200
Northco Marksman Sniper Laser	+2	35	250/500/1000/2000	0	Special***	12,000

*See description

Electrical Damage (see p.114 of the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook, though without the possibility of coma or death)

***Backpack capacitor pack contains sufficient power for 12 shots and costs 5000 Marks



7.2.2 CORPORATE PERSONNEL

Corporate society dominates the UMF, and many employees use a number of technologies to ease their workload. Business people often treat these items as status symbols, constantly updating their personal equipment to be at the cutting edge of technology. Many of these devices are expensive and, save for city-states like Marathon where the purchase cost is subsidized, are limited to senior executives. Corporate security troops are often better equipped than their UMFA and Northern Guard cousins, with individual companies willing to spend considerable sums to improve the efficiency of their personnel.

► Personal Interface Technologies (PITs)

A number of pieces of equipment fall under the classification of Personal Interface Technologies. Designed to improve communications between workers and to aid their productivity, they include a series of input and output devices that can be used on the move. The most common are the so-called earbugs, lightweight devices that feed audio information to the wearer. The smallest are little more than radio receivers, used in conjunction with a wrist- or throat-mike for voice communication. Larger and more complex versions incorporate transceivers that interrogate corporate pins, allowing the PIT user to access data on those nearby. Likewise, Head Up Display (HUD) monacles allow the presentation of visual data, ranging from stock prices and reports to maps or visual identity tags based on pin data. All are voice controlled, through built-in pickups or throat/wrist mikes, but many can also be slaved to personal computers or datagloves for ease of access.

► Corporate Pin

Brightly colored and bearing a design unique to the wearer's company, corporate pins provide an easily recognizable visual key and are habitually worn both in and out of work. The small badges, worn on either the collar or the jacket breast, also contain micro-transmitters that work in conjunction with office security systems to limit access to key areas and to track the wearer's movements. The pin's ID pulse also works in conjunction with PITs, providing an ID tag and allowing external access to a brief biography of the wearer.

► WebTech 9mm pistol

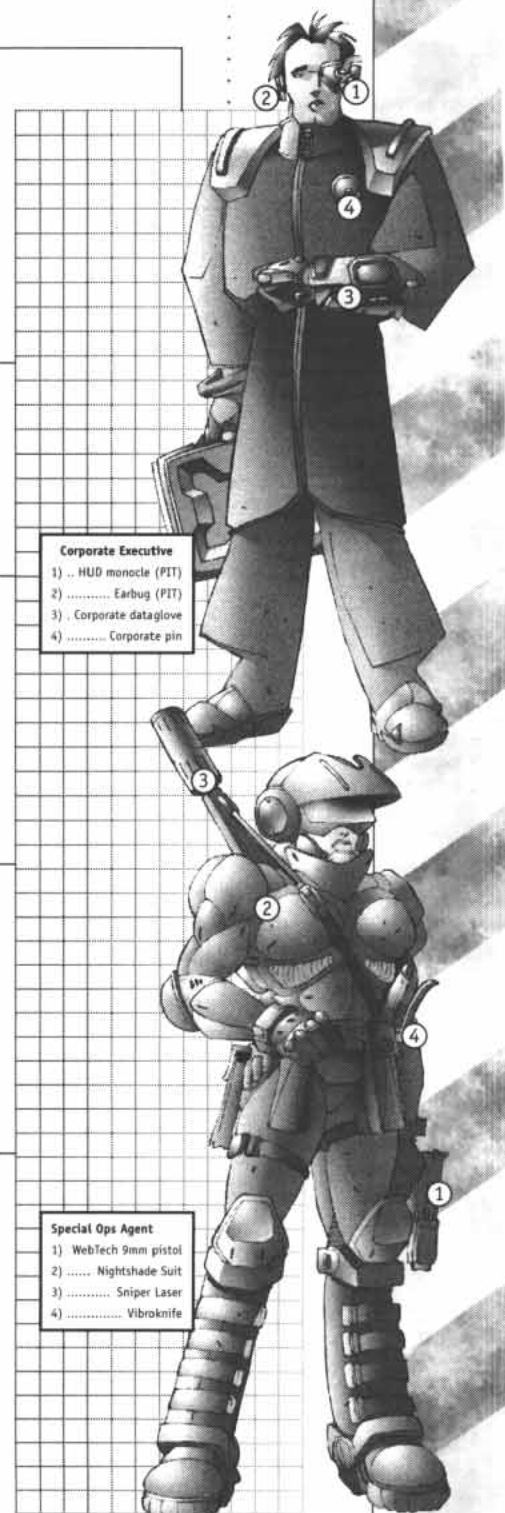
Ashington-based WebTech, a wholly owned subsidiary of Northco, is the UMF's best-known maker of precision small arms. Each gun is hand made to the client's specifications, with a wide range of calibers, magazine types and sizes, as well as finishes and grips. Several governmental and corporate security agencies use WebTech equipment, normally a low-reflectivity anodized version with a high-traction rubber grip. Unlike public-sales version of their weapons, these "security specials" lack any identifying marks such as serial numbers. WebTech pistols are considerably more expensive, but with each carefully tailored to the user's requirements they are supremely balanced and thus very accurate. As such, each gains a +1 Accuracy bonus when used by the person it was made for. Anyone else using the pistol treats it as an Accuracy 0 weapon.

► Northco Marksman Sniper Laser

Personal laser weaponry is the preserve of elite units, the cost and unwieldy power packs making them totally impractical for day-to-day use. Each comes in two parts: the weapon itself and a bulky backpack-style power pack. Using orbit-grown lasing crystals and a precision focusing mechanism, the weapon offers range and accuracy unparalleled in a man-portable weapon. Its capabilities make it a favorite of military and corporate special ops teams and SOE is alleged to have purchased several dozen sets. Based in part on captured CEF technology, Northco believe they could better even the Marksmen but are already pushing the limits of human capabilities — at the weapon's maximum range, even the operator's pulse plays a role in determining if a shot is on-target or not — but they are developing a servo-mounted version for use in perimeter defense.

► Nightshade Stealth Suit

The Nightshade is a Northco-produced derivative of the Mk 23 range of armor used by the Northern Guard. The suit is custom made for each wearer, minimizing discomfort and leaving the wearer's mobility unimpaired. The semi-rigid suit contains a number of systems used to minimize detection by electronic and IR sensors (+1 to Stealth against electronic and IR sensors). Most are passive measures — the use of radar absorbing materials (RAM) and an air circulation system that maintains the outer surfaces at ambient air temperature — but the suit also contains a selection of user-triggered narrow-band jammers and countermeasures. The Nightshade does not incorporate any visual camouflage systems, appearing simply as a jet-black sealed suit. It provides good protection against small arms fire (Armor 40) yet without encumbrance penalty. The suits are very expensive (at least 100,000 marks) and can only be worn by the person it was made for. The suit is fully sealed and contains a two-hour supply of oxygen, though helmet vents can be opened to allow filtered breathing to increase endurance. The helmet also contains a short-range radio, frequency-agile to minimize the chance of interception and jamming, as well as a tactical HUD and combined low-light and thermal goggles.



Corporate Executive
1) .. HUD monacle (PIT)
2) Earbug (PIT)
3) . Corporate dataglove
4) Corporate pin

Special Ops Agent
1) WebTech 9mm pistol
2) Nightshade Suit
3) Sniper Laser
4) Vibroknife

7.2.3 THRILL SEEKERS

Many jaded corporate employees — and no small number of the disaffected youth — seek escape from the drab routine of their daily lives, seeking out physical and mental challenges. Be they Djakarta Point's base jumpers or Pioneer's downhill skiers, they thrive on danger, seeking out ever more perilous pursuits to get the required adrenaline rush. A few choose to pit themselves against the worst Terra Nova can throw at them and eschew all but the most basic technologies. Others avail themselves of a wide range of systems, not necessarily to assist them in their efforts but to reduce the drudgery and allow them to seek out ever-greater challenges.



Big Game Hunter

- 1) Hunting Rifle
- 2) Stout clothes
- 3) Electronic Binoculars
- 4) Personal Comm

"Barnaby" Hunting Rifle ◀

First produced in TN 1772, the design of Matisson's 10 mm rifle has remained virtually unchanged over the cycles. Designed to stop large animals with a single round, the rifle quickly earned the name Barnaby for its alleged ability to stop a charging barnabus iguana in its tracks. The weapon sacrifices range for firepower, but as most hunters revel in the "close kill" few mind the relatively minor reduction in range. More problematic is the single-shot mechanism, particularly if the first shot misses. Matisson produces a six-shot clip-fed version of the Barnaby, but it is both less accurate (-1 Accuracy) and has been judged "unsporting" by several prominent hunters; sales have been poor.

Electronic Binoculars ◀

These Marx Industries electronically enhanced binoculars have proven extremely popular. Retailing for 1100 marks, they feature variable magnification and a light enhancement/thermal vision mode. These features allow swift location and identification of prey, though sports hunters rarely avail themselves of the built-in range finder. The sealed unit has proven extremely durable, capable of surviving immersion in water, falling impacts and cold temperatures.

"Spirit of Adventure" Clothing ◀

Lyonnesse-based design house Alexander Klyne produces a range of rugged and durable outdoor clothing that has proved surprisingly popular with those who favor an active lifestyle. Unlike many brands of outdoor clothing intended for the fashion market, items in the Spirit of Adventure line are rugged and durable, made of tear-resistant materials and manufactured to the highest standards. The line provides for a wide range of environments, including lightweight clothing for the Badlands fringe, waterproofs and cold-weather gear for mountaineers. The latter often include gel-pack heating elements, powered by a compact battery unit.

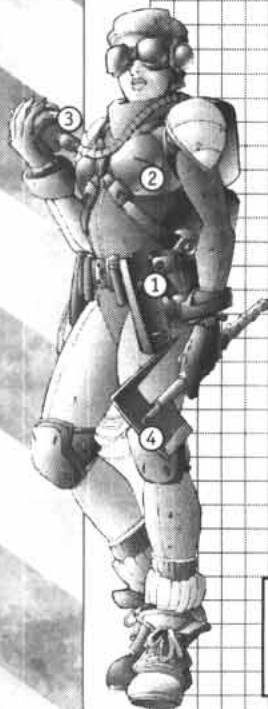
Sneeberg Piton Gun ◀

Most mountaineers are willing to take risks to accomplish their goals, but there are risks and then there are stupid risks; the Sneeberg piton gun serves a dual role in reducing the risks faced by climbers. At the most basic level it facilitates quick and easy placement of pitons to which safety ropes may be attached, minimizing the risk of a fall. It is also built to serve as an emergency weapon, particularly useful in unexpected encounters with venomous jumpspiders or hostile rock dragons. As a weapon the accuracy is poor and the range limited, making it a last-ditch option in such close combat situations. The gun uses a low-recoil mechanism to minimize the "kick" of driving in pitons while suspended by one hand hundreds of meters up a cliff face, so its damage capability is somewhat limited.

Climbing Gear ◀

While it is possible to climb a rock face with little more than bare hands, tackling a major mountain has become a very technical process. A girdle-style safety harness provides the basis of the former, serving as the attachment point for safety ropes and equipment, yet remaining comfortable to wear for extended periods. Ropes and pitons are the other essential items, lightweight but capable of withstanding considerable stress. Pitons fall into two groups: mechanical devices fed into cracks by hand, and power-driven pitons usable even on solid rock faces. The latter are frowned upon by climbing purists but have become an essential fixture on difficult climbs. To these basic items can be added boot spikes and ice axes, particularly in conditions of snow or ice. Most climbers carry a single ice ax, but a number of arctic specialists carry two.

A lightweight safety helmet provides protection against falling rock and accidental collisions with the rock face. Many feature integrated goggles as well as attachment points for a breathing mask, though the latter is usually only used in high-altitude climbs. A peculiarly Terranovan addition to the climber's equipment is the addition of an anti-venom kit. Jumpspider toxin can be a serious risk and each kit contains hypodermics filled with antidote, as well as equipment for removing the venom. Most climbers also carry a compact sleeping bag that can, if needed, be suspended on a cliff face by pitons, as well as lightweight cooking equipment and some method of summoning help (flares and a short-range radio).



Mountaineer

- 1) Sneeberg piton gun
- 2) Cold-weather clothing
- 3) Breathing apparatus
- 4) Ice Ax

7.3 MERCANTILE CAMPAIGNS

The United Mercantile Federation is geographically and culturally diverse, ranging from the frozen tundra to the halls of power in Lyonesse. Campaigns set in the UMF can utilize any of those locales, allowing for a wide range of campaign types. Several themes define the United Mercantile Federation: rampant capitalism, information, amorality, loyalty and tolerance. They dominate the daily routine of Mercantilists, forming an undercurrent that shapes their outlook and response to situations.

● RAMPANT CAPITALISM

If nothing else, the United Mercantile Federation is renowned for its quest for profit, and the concept that “there’s no such thing as a free lunch” pervades the society. Everyone contributes to society with remuneration commensurate with the value of the work. Federation society is the ultimate meritocracy: if you do well, you progress, if you don’t, you are cast aside. PCs will be expected to carry out their duties to the fullest and will be exploited by less scrupulous individuals. They may find themselves accused (justly or otherwise) of shirking their responsibilities or wasting resources, drawing the unwanted attention of the authorities. They will soon learn that the only way to avoid this is to play the game.

The flip side of Mercantile capitalism is extreme poverty. Mercantile culture is geared toward supporting the seventy-five percent of the population who are employed by the corporations, leaving the others to fend for themselves. A few eke out an existence in farms on the Badlands fringe, but the bulk form a veritable underclass, locked into a self-perpetuating poverty trap. There are few opportunities to escape, and those who do not are exploited by their peers or else are forced into crime to survive. Such individuals, however, do provide a mechanism for circumventing the established order.

● INFORMATION

The UMF is the most media conscious society on Terra Nova, and image and information play a key role in most people’s lives. There are those willing to exploit any advantage for an extra measure of profit, eliminating or weakening rivals, or gaining inside knowledge. Information is the primary means of leverage and the art of *kompromat*, literally the acquisition and utilization of compromising material, is ingrained as part of life in the Federation. Players will likely find themselves either the target of an attack or gaining access to such material. Progressing through society will involve judicious use of such information. Similarly, espionage is a part of everyday life. Corporations spy on each other and the government spies on the corporations. As a consequence, security is tight but the preponderance of such activities allows foreign powers to stage their own operations with minimal chance of detection, often masquerading as ‘harmless’ corporate intrigue. Again Players may find themselves involved in such operations; most corporations maintain sizable intelligence arms and also hire freelancers when deniability is a requirement.

● AMORALITY

Those who succeed are rewarded while those who fail are punished or even cast aside. With this in mind, any means of gaining success is considered — the end result, quite literally, justifies the means. At the most basic level this manifests as deliberate sabotage of other people’s positions, character assassination, the undermining of authority, and so forth. On a large scale, inter-corporate dirty tricks are common, ranging from the industrial espionage mentioned above, to theft, blackmail and sabotage. PCs may find themselves caught in the crossfire of such actions, or even the targets or instigators of some dirty tricks campaign.

● LOYALTY

Given the backstabbing and divisive nature of UMF politics, loyalty would at first glance appear to be an odd attribute for the Mercantile population, but while individuals bicker and fight they will often work together for the good of the whole, be it a community or a corporation. This sense of “greater loyalty” pervades the society, reigning in some of the excesses of the drive to succeed and preventing the UMF from collapsing under the weight of personal ambition. The willingness to put aside a private dispute while dealing with an outside problem is a typical Mercantile trait, and adds further depth to the league’s already Byzantine politics.

● TOLERANCE

The UMF is a diverse society, with constitutional guarantees regarding political and cultural freedom. Across the Federation as a whole, people are accepting of differing cultures and attitudes. For that reason the Mercantile population find the idea of an official doctrine, as espoused by the Humanist Alliance and even the Mercantile city-state of Zagreb, an aberration. Likewise, the biases of other nations, such as that in the NLC against non-Revisionists, are considered bigoted and small minded and characters who demonstrate such characteristics can generally expect to be shunned.

7.3.1 OURSELVES ALONE

The socialist city-state of Zagreb follows principles in stark contrast to the rest of the United Mercantile Federation and this often brings them into conflict with the authorities. Following their own path, the citizens of Zagreb have formed a loose alliance with the independent city of Timmins, establishing a subsidiary power block within the CNCS and its protectorates. To date the UMF has tolerated the Social Economic Pact, but with war raging in the Badlands, the Federation cannot risk any actions that would weaken the CNCS and both corporations and the military are urging action to bring Zagreb into line. Conversely, there are those within Zagreb who feel the city's 'special status' and the pact with Timmins are not enough, calling for a secession from the Federation and the formation of a new Northern league.

This murky political situation has recently degenerated into a low-level conflict between the rebels, known as Rodinists, and the UMF security services and military. Troops in the city are frequently the targets of terrorist attacks and ambushes, seemingly aided by the local population. There are dozens of Rodinist cells in the city, only a few of whom are on active duty (i.e. carrying out terrorist operations against the federal government, corporations and the military of the UMF and CNCS). The remaining sleeper cells await activation at a time of need.

Until now the Federation has had its hands tied, but with terrorism escalating and the entire league under military jurisdiction, the time for action is at hand. The UMF and CNCS have instigated a number of operations designed to place intelligence operatives into terrorist cells, intending to expose their membership and support network, and hopefully end the crisis. Such operations are extremely dangerous — any Federation agent captured can expect to be tortured and executed — but are vital to the security of the UMF. PCs will find themselves facing not only the Rodinists but also a hostile local population and an unfriendly government. The Censors' response will be erratic — some will block the CNCS operations out of habit while others genuinely support the rebels. A few may be cooperative, but those are the ones to be wary of ...

Starting Point: Hidden Agenda ◀

The Rodinist arsenal is dominated by material acquired from the local militia, but recent attacks appear to make use of equipment originating in the Southern Republic, a worrying development which suggests the AST are attempting to use the situation for their own ends while the Interpol War rages. Agents from across the CNCS are set to investigate the source of such equipment and shut down any supply chain from the South. Characters from any CNCS intelligence agency may be drafted, but the authorities may also hire private teams because the Rodinists seem to have an uncanny knack for uncovering government agents.

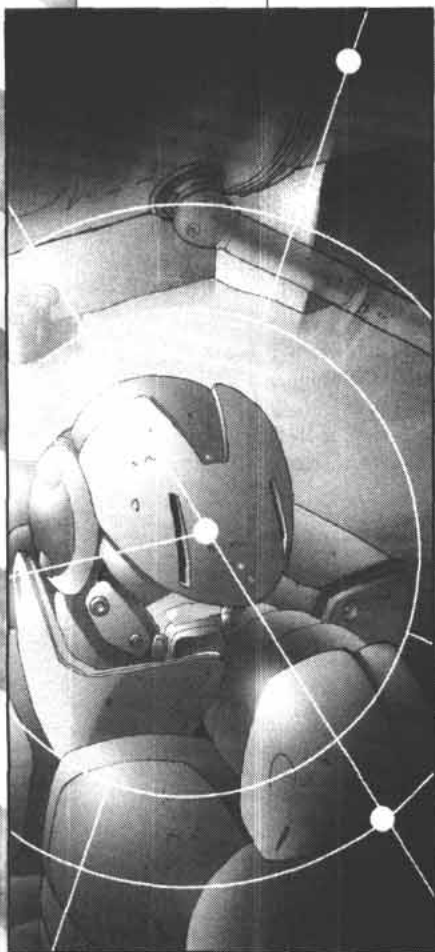
At first glance the task seems impossible — Zagreb is a major trade center with its caravansary busy 36-hours a day. Since the outbreak of war direct trade with the South has dried up, though some caravans work their way to the city through Timmins, Zagreb's ally in the Social Economic Pact. Investigating the handful of companies with connections to Timmins is a laborious process, but it soon becomes clear that there is more to several of them than meets the eye. Some are opportunist traders, seeking to profit from the war by smuggling small quantities of Southern goods, while others are little more than fronts for the Granis or Forzi Cartels. Any one of these could be the vector for equipment (and it is quite possible that several are) and it will take a side-trip to Timmins — even less friendly than Zagreb — to isolate the SRID agents involved in the operation.

Possible Campaign Variations ◀

Variation	Description
1	The Wounded Knee cartels are looking to profit from the situation and will not tolerate any interference.
2	A Mercantile company is using Rodinist attacks as a smoke screen for their own operations against a competitor.
3	The Chief Censor holds a meeting, inadvertently leaking their plans to the terrorist's leader (his aide, Marya Faraday).
4	A Mekong Ghost Squad arrives in the city and sets about exacerbating the situation.
5	The team find themselves being investigated by the city's Guardians.
6	The team's investigation disrupts a long-planned sting operation by Federal customs officers.

Suggested Player Characters ◀

Character Type	Description
1	FIA Agents sent into the city to identify Rodinist cells
2	Corporate security officers charged with protecting company assets
3	Visiting traders and their guards
4	Journalists reporting on the troubles
5	Southern agents working to destabilize the UMF
6	Rodinist sympathizers looking to lend support



7.3.2 CORPORATE WAR

Corporate rivalry is part of daily life in the UMF. Each corporation seeks to profit at their rivals' expense and will go to extraordinary lengths to gain an advantage. Industrial espionage and theft have become an ingrained part of the culture, ranging from gathering information on performance and future plans to detailed schematics and working models. Players may find themselves in possession of highly sensitive information and tempting them with offers of a major reward for revealing such information may make for interesting roleplaying opportunities. Do they turn the agent in or do they take the offer and hope to keep their activities secret? If they opt for the latter, is that the end of the matter or will the agent come back to them and use knowledge of their existing betrayal to blackmail them into doing it again?

Removing an opponent's advantages is another major strand of inter-corporate politics. If catching up proves impossible, then why not drag them down to your level? Direct sabotage is the obvious method of doing this, destroying research, prototypes and production lines, but political and economic actions may also prove effective. Players can thus be anything from black ops teams to political lobbyists or civil authorities. It should be noted that some corporate disputes, such as between Northco and Shaian Mechanics, stem from political disputes (in this case NLC attempts to reduce their league's dependency on UMF goods). Just because the political battleground does not use guns and bombs doesn't make it any less deadly.

Acquisitions and mergers, particularly the gobbling up of smaller companies by massive conglomerates, can make interesting campaigns, particularly from the point of view of executives in charge of the acquisition, or the management of the smaller company seeking to avoid the same. Acquisitions of small companies can often serve as a proxy for disputes between larger organizations, leading to a deadly tug-of-war in which the minor company is an expendable pawn. Corporate disputes need not be limited to actions between companies. Inter-divisional rivalries are common and encouraged in many companies to foster competition and innovation.

► Starting Point: To Catch a Thief

Northco has recently undertaken a massive operation to counter industrial espionage, code-named Fly Trap. In addition to rooting out moles, it has uncovered links to crime syndicates and foreign powers. While Northco continues to deal with those aspects relating to its own security, they have passed information to the Federal Intelligence Agency and the UMFA's Military Intelligence Branch who are in turn chasing down leads that relate to national security.

One such lead came from the discovery that Zagreb's Rodinist terrorists were using information extorted from a Northco employee to pay for arms and equipment shipped from the Southern Republic. This led to the collapse of a major SRID operation, but though the FIA netted a number of operatives, several remain at large. The authorities know the Republican agents will make further attempts to acquire the technical data they require and have thus bolstered security at the likely access points, including placing intelligence and security agents in the departments at greatest risk. All have received rudimentary business training but will find maintaining their cover a tricky proposition. Furthermore, will they be able to distinguish between the lies and manipulations that are part and parcel of corporate infighting within the department and those of the SRID agents? Will the corporate workers (who may include Player Characters) suspect the security plants or simply consider them threats to their own position?

► Possible Campaign Variations

Variation	Description
1	The Players' team becomes the subject of internal investigations.
2	Seemingly benign connections with another corporation/government are discovered.
3	Rivals within the company foil Player operations, either as part of a personal vendetta or something more sinister.
4	As field operatives, the characters may be sent on missions of dubious morality and questionable legality.
5	The higher-ups in the company use Player Character teams for their own personal or political gain.
6	The Players discover the company is a front for smuggler/AST operations.

► Suggested Player Characters

Character Type	Description
1	Corporate intelligence officers.
2	Security forces.
3	Investigative journalists.
4	Junior corporate executives.
5	Hostile agents working undercover as spies or saboteurs.
6	Trade negotiators



7.3.3 NOBLESSE OBLIGE

Ruled by a monarchy, the city of Ashington is steeped in tradition and protocol and makes an ideal setting for adventures based around intrigue and diplomacy. Relationships within the Estates, the city-state's nobility, are a volatile mix of honor, duty and ambition, often baffling to outsiders who enter Ashington's social circles. Friction also exists between the nobility and the bulk of the city-state's population, the once-disenfranchised commoners, who continue to press for further reform to the city's social systems. Players will find many roleplaying possibilities as part of either group.

Ashington is also a major corporate center, the home of the Ashington Power Corporation and numerous industrial and trade concerns. These companies involve themselves in local politics, but also play a role in the greater corporate affairs of the UMF. Indeed, APC has a seat on the *Corporate Council* and corporate characters may find themselves attending a meeting of the council, either as aides or security for the APC representative. Smuggling is also rife in the city, and characters can easily be part of one of the two local cartels, the dominant Forzi and the newly arrived Granis, each working to profit from the war while minimizing the other's influence.

Given the current Interpolar War, military operations will feature heavily in all campaigns set in Ashington. The city is a major military base for both the Northern Guard and the UMFA, with the large fort complex and landship docks serving as home for many of the units operating against the AST. The city is also deemed a strategically important resource, the power exported by APC vital to industry elsewhere in the UMF. A large contingent of troops is based in the city to guard against sabotage or direct attacks. Military may thus be stationed in Ashington, interacting with the local population on a regular basis, or else they may visit the city infrequently on R&R from their units at the front. Both present opportunities for mixing military, political and even corporate elements into a single campaign.

Starting Point: High Society ◀

Prince Ash holds a banquet to celebrate his birthday and anyone of any standing in the local community attends. UMFA officers rub shoulders with nobility, show-biz personalities and corporate executives. The guests mingle and the PCs have ample opportunity to socialize before the climax of the celebrations: a massive fireworks display. At some point during the evening the Players are introduced to the young commander of the Second Ashington Royals, Colonel Hannah Ash, the prince's daughter (see p. 89). Her youth and inexperience are clear and despite displaying a sharp intellect, she has obviously been promoted above her abilities. The characters should also encounter Ethan Lords, semi-legendary Duelist.

The PCs may also find themselves courted by members of the anti-monarchist faction. One topic which will almost certainly come up is the nepotism inherent in the Ashington system. The PCs should be careful, lest they bring down the ire of the other nobles by making out-of-hand remarks. Ethan Lords (use the Gear Duelist stats from p.92 of the **Second Edition Heavy Gear Rulebook** if required) will challenge anyone who casts aspersions on the honor of the Royal family or the Ashington Royals Regiment. Players may also encounter members of the pro-monarchy Order of the Chain (though they will not be aware of them as such) who will make it clear that 'foreign intervention' in the city is unwelcome.

Possible Campaign Variations ◀

Variation	Description
1	The influence of the Granis Cartel in the city has been growing and the dominant Forzi strike back.
2	An advance by the Southern MILICIA threatens Badlands communities in the city's sphere of influence.
3	A PC or associate is alleged to have criticized Edden-Smythe, prompting a backlash among the local population.
4	The city is the site of secret negotiations between CNCs and AST corporations, which may be considered treasonous.
5	The raging Interpolar War prompts accusations of collaboration during the War of the Alliance to resurface.
6	A media team arrives from Canterbury, seeking to report on military operations in the Western Desert.

Suggested Player Characters

Character Type	Description
1	Minor members of the city nobility (the Estates)
2	Prominent commoners
3	UMFA or Northern Guard officers stationed in the city
4	Badlands traders
5	Corporate executives
6	Prominent "independent businessmen" (i.e. Forzi or Granis cartel members)



7.4 STOCK NPCs AND PERSONALITIES

The most unique aspect of **Heavy Gear** is its underlying storyline. Over the course of the next years, readers, Gamemasters and Players will see the world of the game change and grow as the story threads scattered throughout our sourcebooks are woven together. While the storyline is intended to serve as an interesting background to individual Gamemasters' campaigns (which are the foreground), it does mean that not every character in the game can be used freely without worrying about the consequences. To give Gamemasters some indications of how best to use these introduced characters, every **Heavy Gear** product since the first **Life on Terra Nova** has featured the chesspiece system.

New characters are given one of five chess pieces as an indication of their importance in the storyline. This permits Gamemasters to understand how best to use these NPCs without worrying about disrupting the setting and having to retrofit upcoming source material. Of course, roleplaying is about creating one's own stories, so Gamemasters should feel free to disregard the limitations of the chesspiece system, as long as they understand that their Terra Nova may no longer mesh with Dream Pod 9's.

The principal use of the chesspiece system is to indicate each character's importance to the overall storyline of **Heavy Gear**. These pieces, however, also give some indication of how to use the characters as NPCs in roleplaying sessions, even if one is not concerned with remaining consistent with the background storyline.

► Historical Figures

Kings and Queens are characters who have died before the date featured on the Timewatch™ display. Their inclusion indicates that they have had some importance for **Heavy Gear**, either by setting events in motion that have influenced the storyline or by leaving a legacy still felt by Terranovans.

These characters have usually played some role which is important to the storyline, but may also have simply been a prime example of the spirit of their times. Often their legacy will play a role in the development of the **Heavy Gear** storyline, and their descendants, old allies and enemies might as well. Gamemasters running historical scenarios should treat these Historical Figures as Restricted Characters so as not to alter the main line of the storyline.

► Restricted Characters

Rooks are characters who are key to the **Heavy Gear** storyline and are to be used with care. Although they can still be useful in a roleplaying campaign — both as background elements and motivating forces — their survival until they can leave their mark on Terra Nova is critical to the storyline.

Although many Rooks hold powerful positions on Terra Nova, others seem utterly powerless or even insignificant. Small actions may have larger consequences later in the storyline. Gamemasters should tread carefully when using these characters in roleplaying scenarios, but they can become contacts, allies or even adversaries of Player Characters. Using them in purely confrontational scenarios, however, may prove unwise due to the chance for fatalities.

► Very Important People

Not everyone of note on Terra Nova is central to the storyline. Very Important People are those characters who have a significant impact on Terra Nova, but are not critical to the storyline itself. This does not mean they have no influence on it, however.

Knights may not play a central role in the **Heavy Gear** storyline, but they may well have some impact. As important people in the game setting, they can influence major players or simply be carried along by the storyline. Gamemasters can feel free to use Knights in their adventures, but they should remember that all will be well protected (in one way or another) by underlings and allies.

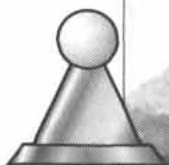
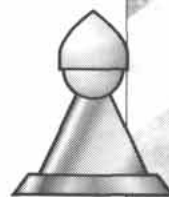
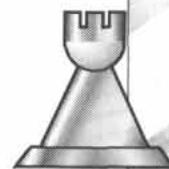
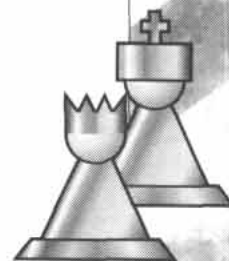
► Social Encounters

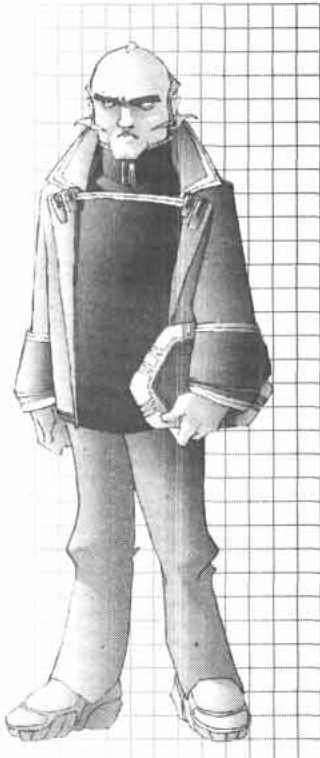
Social Encounters are those characters who are included in source material primarily to add flavor. They are rarely critical individuals and do not have a significant impact on the storyline, but they stand as symbols of larger trends on Terra Nova. They serve most commonly as contacts and background elements, rather than opponents.

Bishops serve as reminders of social forces on Terra Nova beyond the central plot of the storyline. From student movement leaders to fashion designers, these social leaders may have some secondary effect on the storyline but are mostly present to add flavor and reflect current events. Gamemasters may use social encounters as they see fit, although they are rarely designed for combat of any sort. Bishops may return in future products, but for purposes of atmosphere only.

► Expendables

In general, Expendables are "average" Terranovans. They have no personal impact on the storyline and are included in **Heavy Gear** products primarily to be used by Gamemasters. Although this category is used for faceless stock NPCs and typical citizens, many of the Pawns are anything but everyday. Some pawns are peripherally linked to the storyline, but they have no real effect upon it. Interesting pawns can even be used as Player Characters if the GM and Player wish.





CORPORATE LAWYER

Lawyers are the barracudas that attach themselves to corporate sharks. Mercantile law covers a broad sweep of subjects, but it is corporate law and litigation that pays the greatest dividends. Most corporate lawyers learn their trade in the massive legal departments of the big corporations, but in later life many strive to establish their own practice, often in partnership with former colleagues. Such businesses can be extremely profitable, growing to include a number of partners and junior practitioners in plush Lyonnese or Rapid City offices, or else may be crushed by existing companies and forced to fall back on representing clients in criminal or civil cases.

Attributes

AGI	0	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	+1	KNO	+2	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	2	+2	Etiquette (Bus.)*	2	+1	Notice	2	+1	Theatrics	1	+1
Business	1	+2	Interrogation	2	+1	Psychology	1	+2	*Specialization		
Dodge	1	0	Law (Corporate)*	3	+2	Streetwise	1	+1			

Typical Equipment

Reference books on military, civil, criminal and corporate law, data disks (10), personal computer, several business suits



FIA FIELD AGENT

The Federal Intelligence Agency's operatives are deployed to counter foreign activity and also monitor events within the UMF. They are widely regarded as "spooks," shadowy figures forming a pseudo-secret police taking whatever action they deem necessary to preserve the Federation. While some of the allegations are true, most FIA operatives are 'normal' people who blend into the background. FIA operatives are trained at an extensive complex on the outskirts of Lyonnese and they are one of the few government agencies not to have their headquarters in the Cathedral. A sizable minority begin their careers in local police forces and have an advantage in learning the field craft and procedures essential to becoming a good agent. The cosmopolitan nature of the UMF means members of the FIA have to be well versed in local laws and customs, capable of instantly recognizing and applying local legal codes.

Attributes

AGI	0	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+2	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	+1	PER	+2	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	5	AD	4

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+2	Dodge	1	0	Investigation	2	+2	Small Arms	2	0
Communications	1	+1	Electronics	1	+1	Law	2	+1	Stealth	1	0
Computer	1	+1	Hand to Hand	1	0	Notice	2	+2	Streetwise	2	0

Typical Equipment

Light flak vest, lock picks, military throat/ear comm. set, disguise kit, 9mm pistol, vibroknife, personal computer, 10 data disks, electronics tool kit

JUNIOR EXEC

To describe junior corporate execs as hotshots with something to prove is simplistic but nonetheless true. They are at the bottom of the ladder of corporate management and must work hard to gain recognition and stand any chance of reaching the lofty heights they aspire to. A few are solid and dependable, if a little unremarkable, almost guaranteed progression but not quickly. The majority, however, push hard, seeking spectacular successes to launch their career while at the same time attempting to avoid the pitfalls placed in their way by jealous peers and wary senior executives.

► Attributes

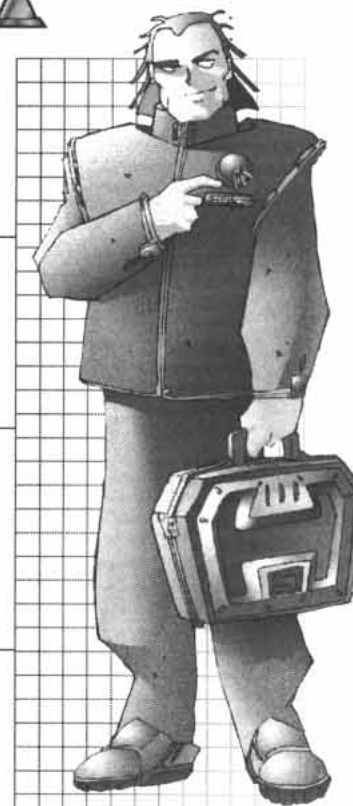
AGI	0	APP	0	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	-1	KNO	+1	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	3

► Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	1	+1	Drive	1	0	Haggling	2	-1	Notice	2	+1
Business	2	+1	Etiquette (Corp.)	1	-1	Leadership	1	-1	Social Sciences	1	+1
Computer	1	+1									

► Typical Equipment

Smart business clothes, briefcase, corporate pin, large overdraft; PITs (see 7.2.2, Corporate Personnel, p. 79)



LYONNESSE BARKEEPER

Barkeepers in the UMF range from students seeking part time employment to experienced owner-operators. All must be a friend and sounding board for patrons, often building up a repartee with regulars, and most are natural extroverts and flirts. They must be capable of judging when to make meaningless small talk and when to remain quiet, however, resulting in many becoming proficient at psychology. Lyonnaise is the center of the Mercantile social scene and work in the city, particularly in the bars of the Agora district, is much sought after. Many aspire to own a bar or pub in the city but few are able to afford the exorbitant property prices without outside help.

Attributes

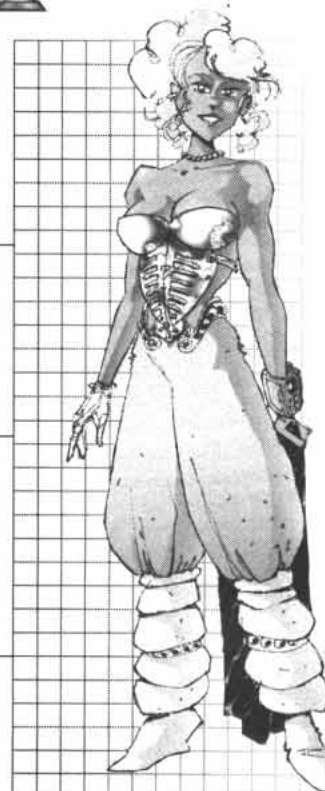
AGI	0	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	0	FIT	-1
INF	0	KNO	+1	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	4	AD	3

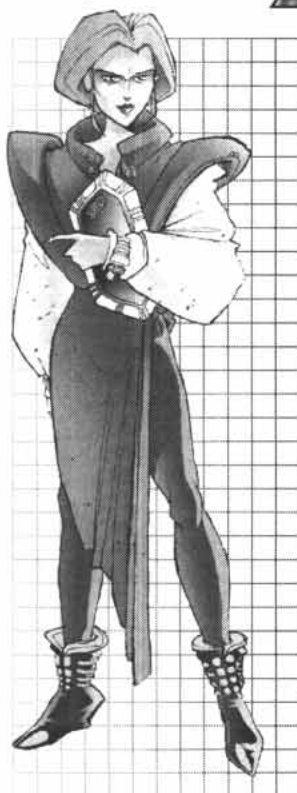
Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	1	+1	Drive	1	+1	Hand-to-Hand	1	+1	Sleight-of-Hand	1	+1
Business	2	+1	Etiquette	1	0	Human Perception	2	0	Streetwise	2	0
Computer	1	+1	Haggling	2	0	Notice	1	+1			

Typical Equipment

Smart-casual clothes, Tray Data System and bartender dataglove





MEDIA EXECUTIVE

Image plays a major role in Mercantile society and media corporations play a major role in making — and breaking — personalities across Terra Nova. Media executives form the heart of this process, responsible for the production of a wide range of programs and goods and constantly fighting to “sell” their program, product or station. Though their role is largely managerial, most have worked their way up through the industry’s backbiting politics and have experience in editing, production and even scriptwriting. By their nature media execs must maintain a high profile, and many have developed public personas to rival those of the stars they create.

Attributes

AGI	0	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	+1	FIT	0
INF	+1	KNO	+1	PER	0	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	3

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	1	+1	Drive	1	0	Notice	2	0	Media Skill A*	2	Var.
Business	2	+1	Etiquette	1	+1	Leadership	2	+1	Media Skill B*	1	Var.
Communications	1	+1	Haggle	2	+1						

* Choose from Computer, Literature, Music, Psychology, Social Sciences, Theatrics, Visual Art

Typical Equipment

Impeccable clothes, cellular phone, data disks (5), dataglove, professional trideo recording equipment



UNDERWORLD ENFORCER

Most criminal organizations rely on threats and intimidation to get their way, and despite the preponderance of military hardware, this often comes down to sheer physical presence. Most enforcers are chosen for their size and strength but their methods of operation vary from group to group. Some are uncouth, relying on their disreputable nature and the threat of force to intimidate the opposition and force compliance with their boss’ wishes. Others are no less violent but hide it behind a thin veneer of culture and civilization. The Forzi cartel make particular use of “sophisticated” thugs, who behave impeccably up to the point where they are ordered into action and who then display their ruthless — and very bloody — technique.

Attributes

AGI	0	APP	-1	BLD	+2	CRE	0	FIT	+1
INF	0	KNO	-1	PER	0	PSY	0	WIL	0
STR	+2	HEA	0	STA	35	UD	9	AD	8

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	0	Etiquette	1	0	Intimidate	1	+2	Small Arms	2	0
Dodge	2	0	Hand-to-Hand	2	0	Melee	1	0	Streetwise	2	0
Drive	1	0	Heavy weapons	1	0	Security	1	-1	Throwing	1	0

Typical Equipment

Poorly fitting Business suit, cellular phone, sunglasses, 13 mm pistol, knife

COLONEL HANNAH ASH

Born in TN 1905, Hannah Ash is the heir to the Ashington principality and her father's controlling interest in Ashington Power. An only child, Hannah was pampered when she was young and wanted for nothing. Evacuated to Lyonnese during the worst of the battles for control of the city, she returned to find her home devastated and vowed to prevent a repeat of the carnage. She had little difficulty persuading Hans William to allow her to join the UMFA — Ashington tradition dictates that members of the nobility, particularly the immediate royal family, have military experience — and she graduated in TN 1930. Since then her father has 'expedited' her career and she already holds the rank of colonel in charge of the prestigious Second Ashington Royals. Although a proficient Gear pilot, gaining combat experience from actions against Badlands rovers, she lacks the seasoning required of a commander and many regard her elevation as source of future problems for the Ashington Royals units.

► Profession

Hannah knows little more than the Ashington Royals, having never served with any other line unit. Under the nominal control of her father, the brigade and regiment commanders have cosseted her and taken action on her behalf to ease her career. As such, she has only marginally more experience than a raw lieutenant, making her blatantly unsuited to her current position. As such, effective command of the regiment lies with her XO, Lieutenant-Colonel Mica Redwood. Factions within the Ashington court are attempting to use her elevation as a lever against the Prince in dealings with Ashington Power.

► Attitudes

Hannah realizes she is out of her depth in command of the Second Royals and barely manages to contain her panic. She does not wish to disappoint her father or her troops and tries her best to grow into the position, with mixed results. On several occasions her 'best efforts' have taken the unit to the brink of disaster and she is scared that one day soon there will be no one to save her. With the outbreak of war she is undergoing a crisis of conscience and is giving serious consideration to resigning her post, but fears the accusations of cowardice from her father and the royal court.

► Combat Reactions

When piloting a Gear Hannah is a cool, calculating warrior, making the best use of terrain and allied units. When placed in overall command, however, her fear of failure takes over, and she is over-cautious, feeding small numbers of troops into engagements and withdrawing when threatened. Her battle-plans are sound but her tendency to second-guess herself has led to poor execution and has hampered operations.

► Contacts

Prince Hans William Ash (Age 67, specialties: business and bureaucracy), Prince of Ashington and her father; Major-General Tracy Headington-Ash (Age 54, specialties: bureaucracy and intimidate), Commander of the Quartermaster Branch and a distant cousin; Peri Corday (Age 32, specialties: etiquette and gambling), a minor noble and her fiancé; Levett Blaker (Age 32, specialties: hand-to-hand and small arms), her bodyguard.

► Vital Statistics

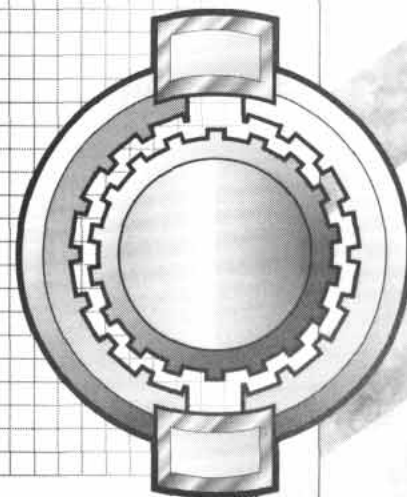
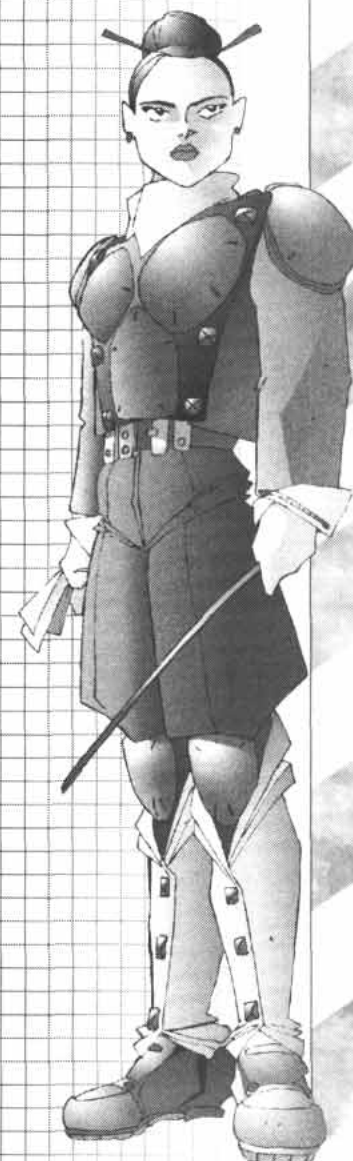
Age:	31 cycles	Height:	1.76 m	Weight:	62 kg	Hair Color:	Blue	Eye Color:	Blue
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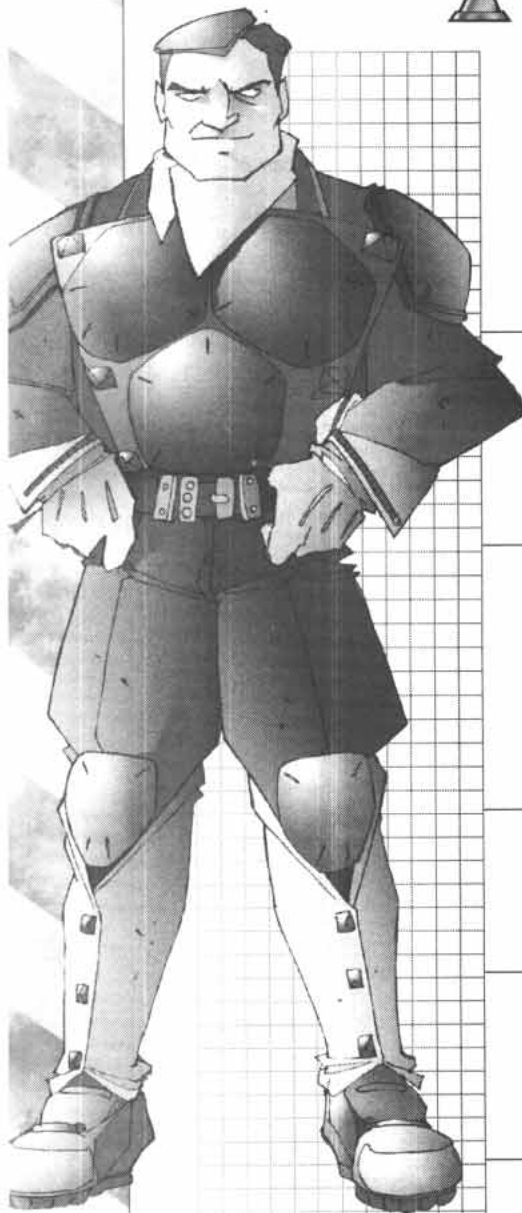
► Attributes

AGI	+1	APP	+2	BLD	-1	CRE	-1	FIT	0
INF	+1	KNO	+2	PER	0	PSY	0	WIL	+2
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	4	AD	3

► Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	2	+1	Computer	1	+1	HG Pilot	2	+1	Notice	1	0
Business	3	+1	Etiquette	3	+1	History	1	+1	Seduction	1	+1
Combat Sense	1	0	Gunnery (HG)	2	0	Leadership	2	+1	Small Arms	2	+1
Communications	1	+1	Hand-to-Hand	1	+1						





TREASURER / DIRECTOR SOLOMON DAVI

Born to a corporate family in Rapid City, Solomon Davi served with Northco's security force, the Gemeinsam Guard, before joining the UMFA in TN 1906. His seven-cycle stint with Northco honed his piloting and small unit tactics, but he chafed at the unit's inactivity and with war looming requested a transfer to the UMFA. Retaining his old rank — lieutenant — Davi took command of a Gear Section in the 103rd Gear regiment, but as an accomplished Gear pilot he swiftly rose through the ranks, commanding the regiment by the War of Alliance. Awarded the Lyonesse Cross, the UMFA's highest award, for his part in the second and fifth battles of Ashington, Davi's mix of military and political skill made him ideal to command the Heavy Gear Branch, a post he held from TN 1917 until TN 1931 when he was elected to command the UMFA in the Grand Plebiscite. In TN 1905 Davi married Elene Blaydon and the couple have three children. The oldest, Michael, is a Captain in the 119th Heavy Gear regiment but the younger two, Karol and Mercy, show little inclination towards military careers.

Profession ◀

Davi's elevation earned him enemies among the high command — he was a major general and most directors are previously thanes — but over the last six cycles he has consolidated the grip on the UMFA. Under the aegis of the War Powers Act Davi currently serves as UMF Treasurer pro-tem, following the death of Yves Banderas. Despite a relative lack of experience Davi has proved to be an able politician, managing the UMFA and making his presence known in the UMF Caucus.

Attitudes ◀

Director Davi is dedicated to the Federation and its military, doing whatever he deems necessary to preserve the status quo. He is a staunch advocate of the CNCS, believing the UMF can only survive by working with its neighbors, though he would rather do so from a position of strength. Despite Davi's pro-CNCS stand, his relationship with Grand Marshal Victoria Edden-Smythe is at best described as coolly professional, although "frosty" would be more truthful. The exact origins of the animosity are unclear, but her acceptance of fundamentalist Revisionist doctrine is the key element. Like many Mercantile citizens, Davi is only a token Revisionist and finds the Grand Marshal's fanaticism disturbing.

Combat Reactions ◀

Like most Mercantilists Davi will use any available resources if forced to fight, including bending or breaking the accepted rules. Adept at kempo, Davi uses his height and reach to great advantage, rarely losing a fight. He knows when he is beaten, however, and if overmatched he will seek to escape and fight another day.

Contacts ◀

Natalya Korolov (Age 58, specialties: business and bureaucracy), CEO of Northco; Martin Dudman (age 62, specialties: business and tactics), friend from corporate days and former commander of the Gemeinsam Guard; Marshal Piotr Paulk (age 75, specialties: leadership and tactics), head of the NLC armed forces; Annerie Sunneson (Age 42, specialties: dance and theatrics), occasional mistress.

Vital Statistics ◀

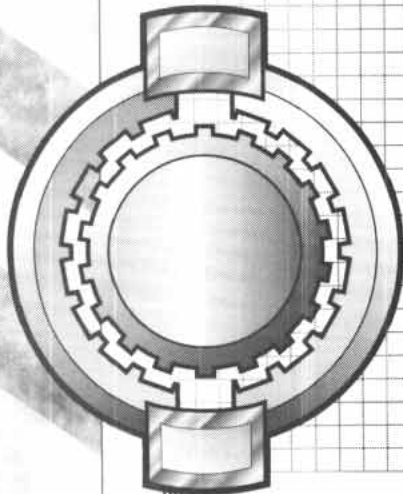
Age:	68 cycles	Height:	1.92 m	Weight:	82 kg	Hair Color:	Red	Black Color:	Blue
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Attributes ◀

AGI	+1	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	+2	FIT	+1
INF	+3	KNO	+2	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+2
STR	0	HEA	+1	STA	30	UD	5	AD	5

Skills ◀

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	3	+2	Computer	1	+2	HG Pilot	2	+1	Notice	2	+1
Business	3	+2	Etiquette	2	+3	Law	2	+2	Psychology	1	+2
Combat Sense	2	+1	Gunnery (HG)	2	+1	Leadership	3	+3	Small Arms	3	+1
Communications	1	+2	Hand-to-hand	2	+1	Melee	2	+1	Tactics	3	+2



CHRYSTOF DONNEL

Born in the in the underclass of Rapid City, Chrystof Donnel spent his formative years running with the city's numerous gangs, quickly using his sharp intelligence to forge alliances to his group's advantage. He soon came to the attention of the city's organized crime syndicates and was invited into the organization, placed under the command of a senior enforcer named Roman Forzi. Chrystof quickly learned the ropes, taking command of his own team of enforcers and operatives in TN 1902 and masterminding a number of highly profitable operations. He spent the War of Alliance managing the city's black market and when his mentor, Roman Forzi, became head of cartel operations in the NLC in TN 1918, Donnel was elevated to his post as head of the Rapid City "office." The first major challenge to his authority came in TN 1920 when a number of independent gangs attempted to muscle in on the Forzi's operation, prompting a series of bitter clashes which he put down with ruthless and bloody efficiency, earning the nickname of "the surgeon." With Roman now in charge of all Northern operations, Donnel's status is rising again. He recently became "manager" of Forzi operations against the other cartels (the Kolson and Granis), making him answerable only to Roman himself.

► Profession

Chrystof is a manager par excellence, but is quite prepared to delegate work and use his team's expertise. His new position is proving a challenge, but that is something he thrives on. He has found that his work binding the disparate members of the Forzi Cartel and their affiliates into a cohesive force capable of defeating the Kolson is much like his old days in Rapid City. He is meeting considerable resistance from blood-members of the Forzi Clan, most notably Roman's son Geraint who heads the Lyonesse office. Chrystof suspects that this may have been a deliberate ploy on the part of his old friend to provide a check on the new post's powers.

► Attitudes

Few meeting Donnel today would guess at his street origins. Instead his persona of cultured and sophisticated elegance suggests a youth spent in the highest levels of Mercantile society. In many regards this is a testament to how far an individual can progress in the UMF if they apply themselves, but his ultra-polite public personality hides his ruthless nature, leading many to underestimate his willingness to do whatever it takes to advance his cause.

► Combat Reactions

Chrystof's first reaction is self-preservation and if presented with a combat situation will seek cover, leaving the fighting to those hired to do the job. If forced to do so, however, he has no compunctions about the use of force even, if required, taking action himself though his skills have atrophied over the cycles.

► Contacts

Roman Forzi (age 60, specialties: Business and Human Perception), capo of the Forzi Cartel and his mentor; Geraint Forzi (age 27, specialties: Business and Etiquette), Roman's son, the head of the Lyonesse "office" and Chrystof's chief rival; Anton Rozam (Age 63, specialties: Combat Sense and Security), Northco's head of security and Chrystof's arch-nemesis.

► Vital Statistics

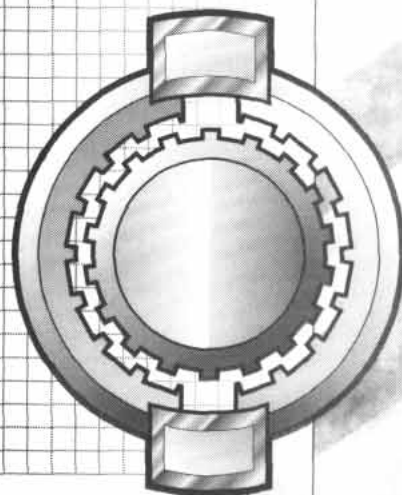
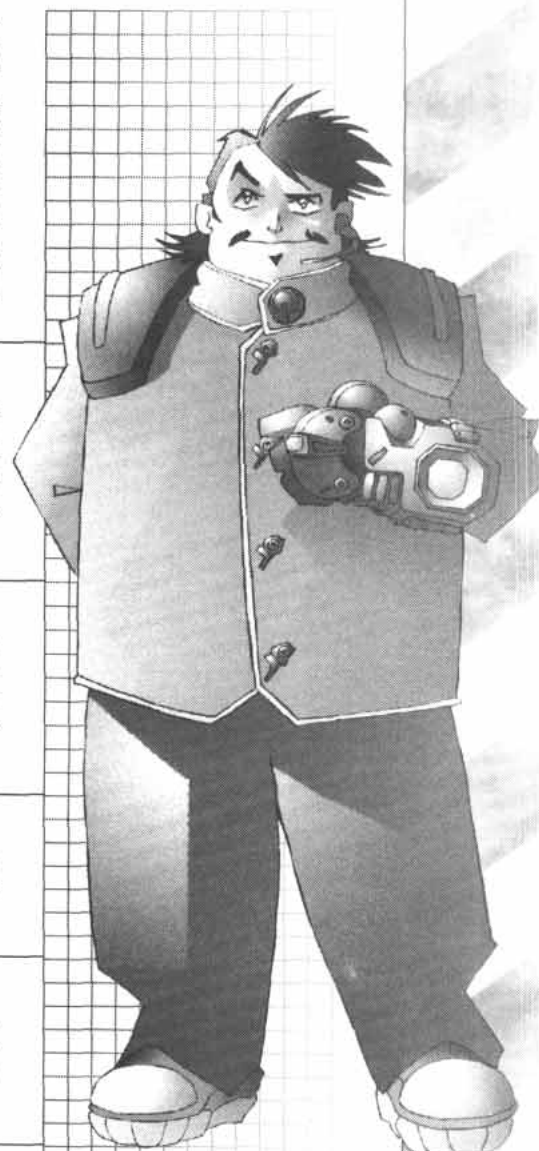
Age:	62 cycles	Height:	1.57 m	Weight:	71 kg	Hair Color:	Black	Eye Color:	Brown
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► Attributes

AGI	0	APP	+1	BLD	0	CRE	+2	FIT	0
INF	+2	KNO	+1	PER	+1	PSY	0	WIL	+1
STR	0	HEA	0	STA	25	UD	3	AD	3

► Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Bureaucracy	2	+3	Dance	2	0	Interrogation	3	+2	Notice	2	+1
Business	2	+3	Etiquette	3	+2	Law	2	+3	Small Arms	1	+0
Combat Sense	1	+1	FL: Uni. French	2	+3	Leadership	2	+2			



DUELIST NAED STAMENS

UMFA Lieutenant Naed Stamens was a young man with few prospects in the TN 1920. Born in the underclass of Rapid City, he had no real future, and on a whim accepted a job in a caravan heading into the Badlands. In the equatorial deserts, however, Naed found his destiny among the order of the Blue Crescent. Here was the sense of direction, community and peace this troubled young man needed to thrive. In TN 1924, he entered the Great Commune in Marigold and didn't emerge for three cycles. By then he wore the tattoo of the order and was married to Lyssara Maz, another initiate. The two returned to the UMF and Naed, now a calm, disciplined man, joined the UMF Army — mostly to ensure that his family would never be part of the underclass deprived of corporate benefits. In 1929, Naed transferred to a NorGuard training facility near Khayr ad-Din and became a Duelist. Studying under Katryne Sanz, he met many other warriors and realized there could be true honor in a soldier's life. Lyssara disagreed however, and elected to remain in Rapid City. Suffering from a crisis of faith, she ultimately returned to Marigold.

Profession ◀

When Naed returned from Khayr ad-Din, he was a supremely skilled pilot and respected Duelist, but his personal life was a shambles. Lyssara wrote to him in TN 1932 saying that she was returning to him, but then disappeared on the journey home — apparently the victim of rovers. Naed was desperate to find her and sought help from the military. The next cycle he began working for NorGuard Intelligence Service Major Dolores Ceritto in exchange for her help in finding Lyssara.

Attitudes ◀

Ceritto, he realizes, has been playing him for a fool and has yet to uncover anything useful about Lyssara's disappearance. Meanwhile, she has sent him on a series of morally ambiguous and psychologically damaging operations. In 1933 he was sent to Peace River to capture his friends Danghen and Maena Jarak, by then fugitives from the NorGuard. Two cycles later he was tortured by Arthurian Major Eva Bukharin when he attempted to contact her on Ceritto's behalf. Normally stoic and meditative, Naed has swung into morose depression. He almost welcomed the war because it brought him to the front and, he hoped, out of intelligence work. Ceritto, however, has stayed in touch.

Vital Statistics ◀

Age:	37 cycles	Height:	1.92 meters	Weight:	95 kg	Hair Color:	black	Eye Color:	gray
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Attributes ◀

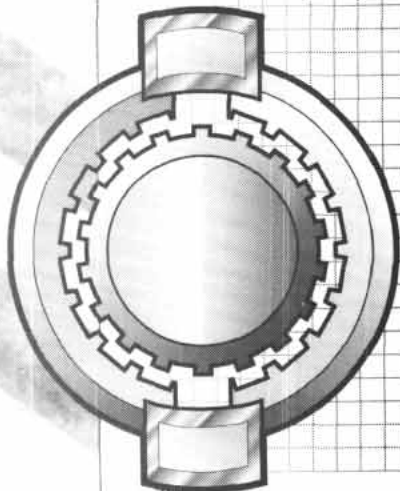
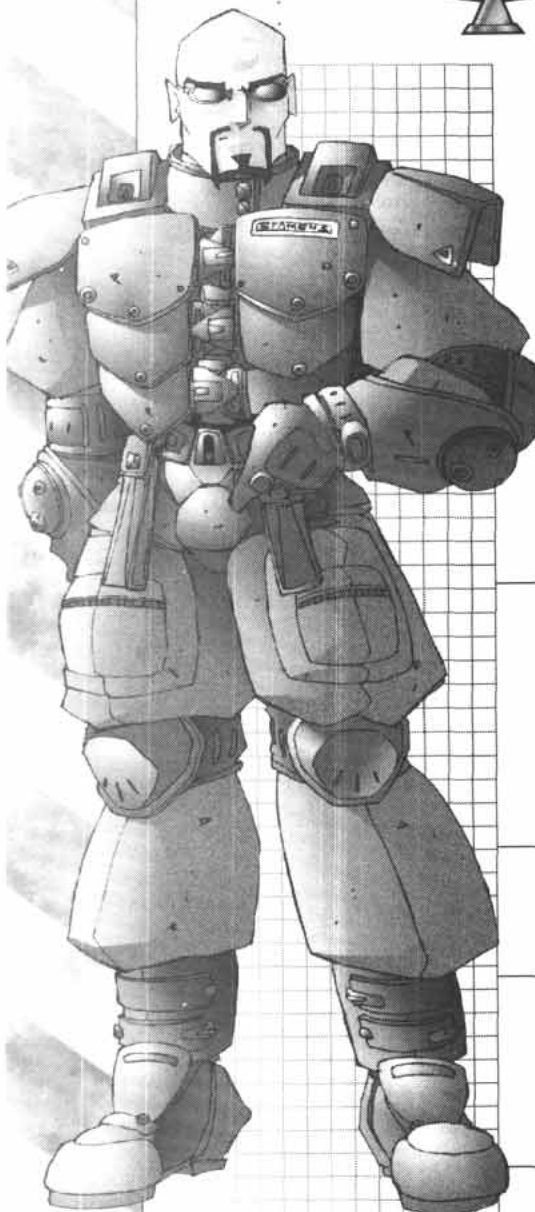
AGI	+1	APP	0	BLD	+1	CRE	-1	FIT	+2
INF	0	KNO	+1	PER	0	PSY	-1	WIL	+1
STR	+1	HEA	+1	STA	35	UD	6	AD	5

Skills ◀

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	0	Etiquette	2	+1	HG Pilot	3	+1	Soc. Sc. (Bl. Cres.)*	2	+1
Comm.	1	+1	First Aid	1	+1	Investigation	1	0	Stealth	1	+1
Dodge	1	+1	Gunnery (HG)	3	0	Navigation (land)	1	+1	Streetwise	1	0
Drive	2	+1	Hand-to-Hand	1	+1	Notice	1	0	Tactics	1	-1
Elec. Warfare	2	+1	HG Dueling	3	+1	Small Arms	2	+1	*(specialization)		

Dueling Moves ◀

Macromove	Acc	Def.	Dam.	Notes	Requirements
Block	-1	+2	Nil	(Combo to Strike)	SKL 2
Combo Block	0	0	0	Defend vs. Combo	-
High Stab	-1	-1	+1	Combo, Aux. or Crew hits	SKL 3; HARD: Punch. Arms
Jump & Smash	0	+1	Size+1	-	SKL 3; HARD: Acrobatic H.
Strike	0	0	-1	(Combo)	-
Vibrostab	-1	0	-1	(Combo), AP	SKL 2, HARD: Vibroweapon



ROCK DRAGON [GREATER TOUSSAIN]

The daks of the Westridge and Downing Ranges differ considerably from those found elsewhere on Terra Nova. They are both larger and more vicious, regarded by many as a distinct species. Rock dragons are solitary animals, usually gathering only to breed, though so called "hunting parties" of juvenile males are occasionally sighted in the early summer. When courting a mate, a process initiated by either sex, rock dragons put on spectacular aerial displays with a grace that belies their size. They will also drive off rivals, a process as vicious as it is beautiful. Rock Dragons are staunchly territorial and will fight to the death to defend their nests against interlopers, including any human mountaineers who stumble upon the. Despite their fearsome reputation, rock dragons are not aggressive unless disturbed, living off numerous small herbivores like rock hoppers and grassrunners. They have a natural antipathy with jumpspiders, however, and will drive them off or kill them and thus it is very rare to see both in the same region. Indeed, despite the risks of encountering them during a climb, mountaineers regard rock dragons as a lucky sign since it implies they will not encounter the venomous smaller animal.

► Attributes

AGI	1	BLD	-2	FIT	1	INS	0	PER	2
WIL	-1	STR	0	HEA	0	STA	15	UD	2*

*(+natural weapons).

► Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	+2	Dodge	1	+1	Hand-to-Hand	4	+1			

► Special Abilities

Bite (x6 Damage), Talons (x8 Damage), Flight (10 MP dive)



SAND FOX

A smaller relative of the dawg, sand foxes are a common sight in the Marathon Basin and on the plains that line the Badlands. Sand foxes form small close-knit families, living together in burrows or caves, and have one or two litters per cycle. Both the male and female hunt to feed the youngsters, often aided by the older juveniles until they strike off on their own after about a cycle. Occasionally, youngsters will overstay their welcome and be ejected from the den by their parents. Largely nocturnal, they hunt a wide range of small herbivores but supplement their diet with berries and roots. They are also willing scavengers and those living near human settlements have been known to raid garbage cans for leftovers. The mated pair often work together, one driving game towards the other, or taking it in turns to run down agile prey such as hoppers and grassrunners. Sand foxes have well-developed hearing and smell, using both in the pursuit of their prey, but poor eyesight. They are fiercely territorial, though their ranges are small, rarely more than 25 square kilometers.

► Attributes

AGI	+3	BLD	-5	FIT	+3	INS	+2	PER	+3
WIL	1	STR	-1	HEA	2	STA	10	UD	0*

*(+natural weapons).

► Skills

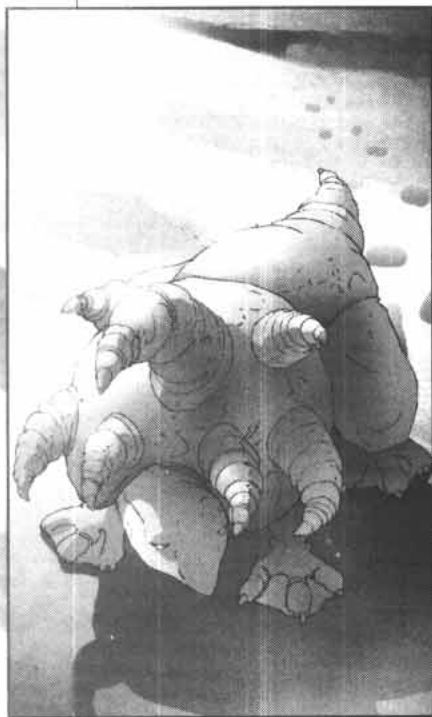
Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	3	3	Hand-to-Hand	2	3	Notice (tracking)	2	3	Stealth	2	3
Dodge	2	3									

► Special Abilities

Bite (x5 Damage)



SNOWSPRINGER



Sure-footed and adapted to life in the arctic basin, the snowspringer is perhaps the least numerous springer sub-species but also one of the most majestic. Similar in size to the rockspringer, the snowspringer has large shoulder "tusks," a long snout and powerful legs. The feet of the snowspringer are webbed to better support the animal's weight on loosely-packed snow, and its hide is thick to insulate against the perpetual cold and provide some protection against injury. Snowspringers gather in large herds, often numbering several hundred individuals of all ages, which roam the far north in search of food. Young male springers serve as outriders for the herd, chasing off smaller herbivores and providing early warning of predators like dawgs. Battles between these youngsters are common in the mating season and a number are badly injured and left to die. Though snowspringer hides are popular hunting trophies, their meat is fatty and is thus rarely consumed by humans.

Attributes

AGI	2	BLD	6	FIT	1	INS	1	PER	1
WIL	1	STR	3	HEA	1	STA	60	UD	10*

*(+natural weapons).

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Athletics	2	2	Combat Sense	2	1	Hand-to-Hand	1	2	Survival (Winter)	2	1
Camouflage	2	1	Dodge	2	2						

Special Abilities

Kick (x7 Damage), Charge and gore (x12 Damage), thick skin (+10 Armor)

TREEHOPPER [ARBOREAL HOPPER]



Arboreal hoppers are petite cousins of the ubiquitous grassland hopper, having adapted to life in the dense saguaro forests of the NCNS. A mottled green-brown, they have well developed paws, which though lacking an opposable thumb have a powerful grip and are fitted with retractable claws to aid climbing. Despite their name, arboreal hoppers live in earthen burrows (though these are frequently dug in among tree roots) and use trees as their primary food source. The tender leaves of the saguaro are the hopper's staple diet and their antics to reach the juiciest leaves have been the subject of many trideo documentaries. Though principally herbivorous, a few sub-species have been known to eat bugs living in the trees. Arboreal hoppers are social animals and up to thirty may live together in a group known as a gang. In the deep woods they can be playful but in more civilized area the hoppers have learned to be wary of humans, who regard them as pests.

Attributes

AGI	3	BLD	-7	FIT	1	INS	1	PER	2
WIL	1	STR	-3	HEA	1	STA	10	UD	1*

*(+natural weapons).

Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Acrobatics	1	3	Combat Sense	3	2	Dodge*	4	3	Hand-to-Hand	1	3

*The Arboreal Hopper's small size gives it an additional +2 bonus on dodge rolls

Special Abilities

Bite (x3 Damage)

WHEAT-JACKETS [SWARM]

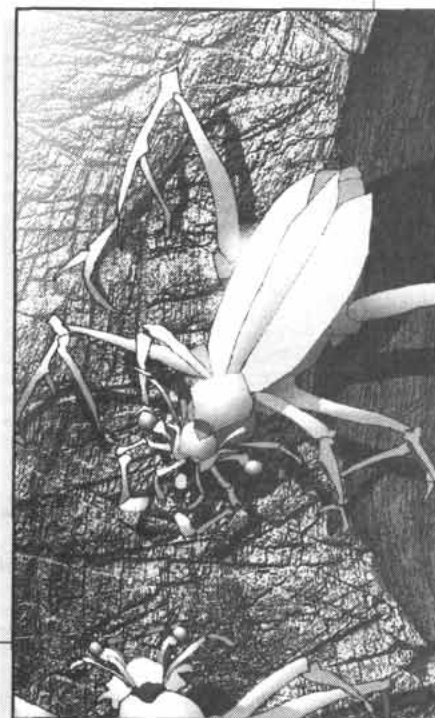
Though small, rarely more than three centimeters in length, wheat-jackets are regarded as the biggest threat facing arable farmers in the UMF. Up to four generations of wheat jackets can breed each cycle, usually from eggs (usually 10-20 are planted at a time) laid in the soft fleshy leaves of newly sprouted plants. Though originally hosted by several native species, wheat-jackets find imported Earth cereals irresistible and use them as food and nest sites almost exclusively. Up to a dozen larvae may grow from a single egg (a process known as polyembryony) and they have voracious appetites, often consuming the host plant within hours of hatching (usually about 10 days after the eggs are laid). These larvae then search out the nearest source of food and continue to eat, growing to almost ten times their birth weight within a dozen days, at which point they enter a pupae for a further week before emerging as fully grown wheat-jackets. The newly metamorphosed adults have equally voracious appetites and continue the damage wrought on the crops. Furthermore, each is fertile and, once they have found a mate, capable of starting the cycle over again.

They are the target of major pest-control programs in which chemicals and poison play a major role, as do modified (less tasty to the insect) strains of wheat. However, crop rotation is perhaps the simplest method: if denied their staple diet for more than a season the wheat-jackets move on in search of new food and nesting sites. This in itself can be a problem if large numbers are involved, and every few cycles there are reports of wheat-jackets wreaking carnage as they migrate in search of new crops. Fortunately, the absence of a centralized hive structure and the wheat jackets' short life span — most die within a week of laying their eggs — make large swarms rare.

Wheat-jackets have powerful mandibles, and though herbivorous are capable of inflicting a vicious bite. Individually this is insignificant, but swarms can inflict considerable damage on flora and fauna alike and it is possible, though rare, for them to kill large animals like springers or humans. Though both are regarded as crop pests, the wheat-jacket's long legs and double wings, distinct from their two sets of legs, clearly distinguish them from flappers (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p.124).

► Attributes

Aggressiveness:	2	Damage/turn:	x2	Threshold:	15	Random Horse Size:	6 x d6
Basic Swarm Size:	20						



WINGED GAR [TERRANOVAN SPEARFISH]

Sleek and deadly, the winged gar is a modified Earth species that has adapted well to life on Terra Nova. Measuring up to five feet long, the gars were released by early colonists as a means of controlling the native lakewasps (see **Northern Lights Confederacy Leaguebook**, p.126) which plague the north, thriving in the numerous small lakes and becoming the dominant predator. Although released in select areas, the winged gar has spread throughout the lakes and watercourses of the north, presumably via the McAllen network though encounters with the large fish in the subterranean watercourses are rare. Genetically engineered with the large fins that give them their name, they are fast and deadly, capable of devouring smaller fish in moments. Their needle-like teeth pose a threat to even human divers, though most gars avoid humans save when hungry or angry. Gars are edible, but their oily meat, combined with a size and ferocity that causes considerable damage to nets, has prompted the Mercantile fishing industry to regard them as a menace. Sports fishermen regard them as the ultimate challenge, however, and several companies offer gar-fishing trips on Lake Tristan.

► Attributes

AGI	2	BLD	-3	FIT	2	INS	1	PER	1
WIL	1	STR	0	HEA	1	STA	15	UD	*

*(+natural weapons).

► Skills

Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.	Skill	Level	Attr.
Combat Sense	2	1	Dodge	2	2	Hand-to-Hand	3	2	Swimming	3	2

► Special Abilities

Bite (x6 Damage)



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