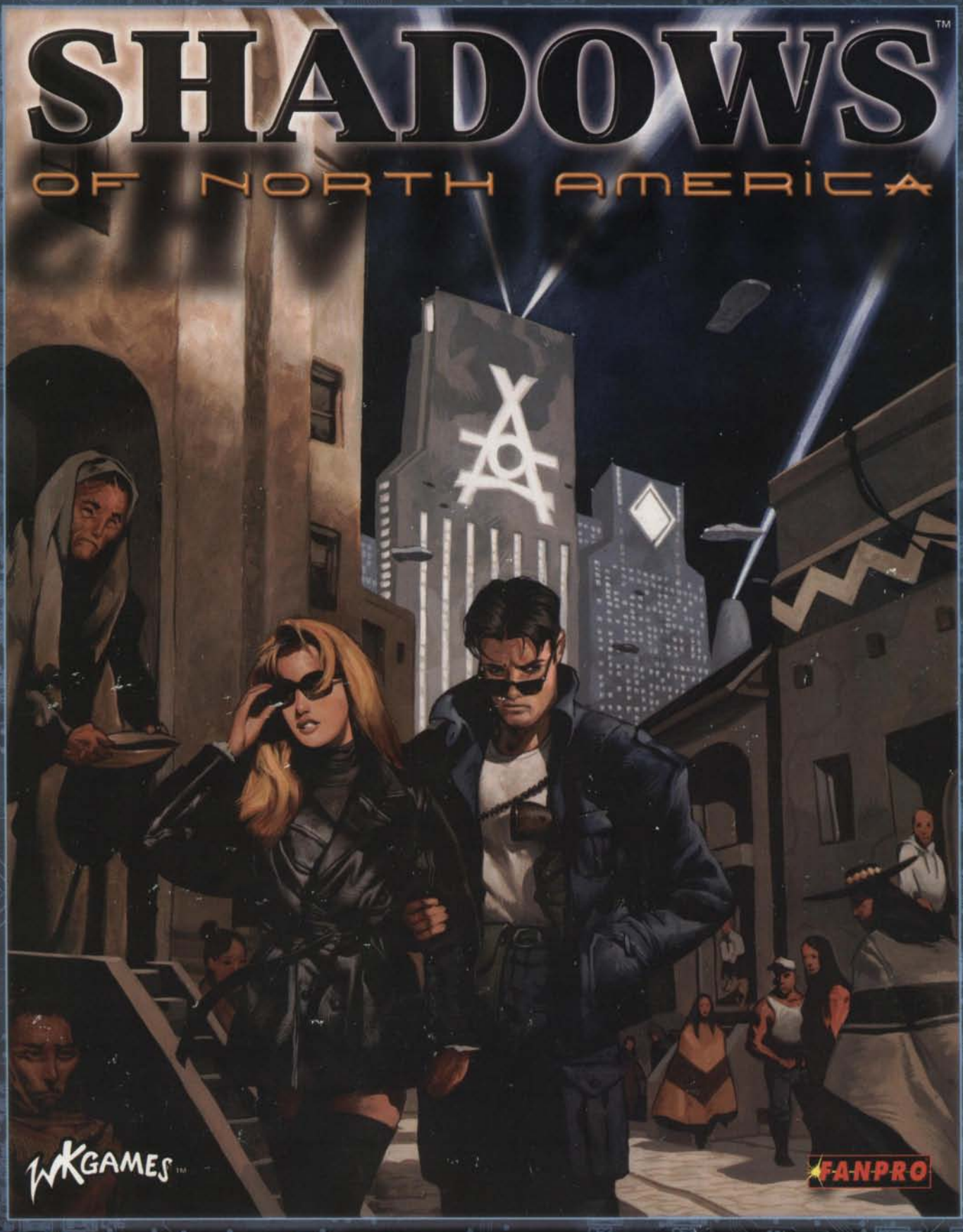
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INTRODUCTION

Shadows of North America focuses on the thirteen nations and city-states that cover the North American continent in the *Shadowrun* universe. The date is August 2062, and the nations are still feeling the aftershocks of both the passing of Halley's Comet and the fiftieth anniversary of the Awakening, not to mention events like the Corporate War and the death of Dunkelzahn. This book updates previous material that has appeared on these nations and describes the various upheavals, crises and power machinations that influence each of them internally. Some of the details are continuations of established plotlines and story arcs, while others are completely new and never-before described within the world of *Shadowrun*.

Shadows of North America is presented as a series of electronic documents posted by Captain Chaos, sysop of the vast Shadowland archive and data haven—the number one source for shadowrunners on what's going on in the world of *Shadowrun*. The documents come from the viewpoint of shadowrunners, for the consumption of other shadowrunners. These sources are each unique in outlook and perspective, influenced by their own particular prejudices and interests. Each article is marked up with a running commentary by other shadow denizens who add to, revise and contradict the original post. These inserted comments add innuendo, allegations, opinions, rumors, misconceptions, misinformation, lies and sometimes even the truth to the information presented. It is left up to the gamemaster to decide what information is correct and which is just filling, as appropriate to his or her game.

The first document, *Continental Divide*, touches on some key points relating to the most important events in recent North American history—the Ghost Dance War and the Treaty of Denver. It describes the terms of the treaty and the repercussions of dividing the continent, especially in terms of Native American Nation (NAN) internal divisions and Anglo assimilation. It also briefly covers the Sovereign Tribal Council (STC), both historically and where it is at today.

The chapters that follow detail each of the nations in turn, including recent events, power players, key places, underworld figures and things to do. This information provides hundreds of plot hooks and background setting ideas. Here is a brief rundown of the countries covered:

Algonkian-Manitou Council: This quiet NAN nation is now on the brink of civil war as the secessionist Manitou tribe raises the stakes.

Athabaskan Council: This cold NAN smuggler haven is known for its natural beauty and natural resources—and is ground zero for conflict between megacorps and eco activists.

California Free State: Once independent, much of this state has been usurped by the rogue forces of General Saito while the rest bunkers down for the coming invasion.

The Confederation of American States: This is not the South of "the Good Ol' Days," but a bastion of political intrigue and a movement to reclaim "American" ideals.

Denver: Now under the rule of the great dragon Ghostwalker, the underworld alliances in this divided city are in flux as everyone adjusts to the new boss.

Pueblo Corporate Council: This NAN state is a successful mix of high technology and traditional magic, but a split at the upper levels of power threatens the nation's stability.

Québec: A popular new regime threatens to dismantle Francophone domination, throwing the country into turmoil.

Salish-Shidhe Council: A NAN state known for its tribal autonomy and smuggler support, the SSC is embroiled in a bitter border conflict with Tsimshian.

Sioux: This militarized state vigilantly guards the NAN and STC against outside aggression, while internally the shadows are abuzz with spy games.

Tir Tairngire: This elven nation is suffering for its isolationist policies. A near economic collapse has created a growing mass of disgruntled subjects and forced the princes to open the borders.

Tsimshian: This repressive police state has allowed the megacorps to strip its land without restraint. Now it is feeling the consequences of this near-sighted greed.

The United Canadian and American States: Though hard hit by events of the last decade, this diverse nation is on the road to recovery.

Ute: This Anglophobic NAN country is suffering from devastating weather and economic instability, but the current powers are paralyzed until a new catalyst can shake up the system.

Following these chapters, the *Game Information* section provides information on getting in and out of each nation as well as basic ideas on using each country in your *Shadowrun* campaign. This chapter also provides information on crossing borders—legally or otherwise.

THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE



With all the changes that have been happening of late, I felt it was time to revisit the shadows across the North American continent. Most of the patrons of Shadowland make their home among this sprawling mess of cookie cutter nation states, but I'm still surprised at how little some of us know about the folks on the other side of some randomly-drawn border. This entire continent is still a melting pot of cultures, with each local area having its own distinct styles, traditions and peculiarities, not to mention laws and power brokers. It's all too easy to walk into a situation that you know nothing about, breaking rules of etiquette or stepping on the local mob boss's toes. So do us all a favor and scan this compilation so you at least have an idea of what to expect here and there. And if you know you're going somewhere in particular, do your research—there are going to be gaps in this data, and if you're not careful you may fall into some of them.

I've broken down this file collection by nation states. The compilation wouldn't be complete, however, without some history to explain how we got where we are today—the real thing as opposed to the published tripe that masquerades as popular history for the masses. Rather than re-hashing all the major events that we already know about, such as the Crash and the Night of Rage, I felt it would be better to focus on how exactly the NAN was formed and how the Treaty of Denver split the continent apart. More than any other time, that period defined and shaped the political landscape of North America. Decisions were made and implemented on a grand scale, with far-reaching repercussions. Some of these created animosities and grudges that still last to this day. It's important to know the facts behind them so that you don't get caught in the middle when the firefight breaks out.

To that end, I've contacted an acquaintance of mine to start us off with a little refresher course. This is a topic my friend is very familiar with, having studied it for longer than most of you have been around. Remember that those who don't know their history are doomed to be the victim of it, especially in the shadows. Enjoy.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 15:00:53 (PST)

by Ayita Brightsong

Before I offer forth the history lesson that Captain Chaos asked for, let me introduce myself. I am one of the Aniyunwiya, or Tsa-la-gi. That's Cherokee, to any non-tribals out there. I'm a citizen of the Sioux Nation, and I've made a career out of studying the birth and life of the Native American Nations (NAN). Like any student of history, I have my own perspective and my own biases on what occurred and how. I will attempt to deal with facts here, and to dispel some illusions and false claims of the past. I am not unbiased, however, so you should not take anything I say as other than an opinion. Examine the facts I present and make your own decisions.

• Ayita Brightsong is a wise woman, a Wolf shaman with a good amount of power in her own right. She teaches history at the University of Cheyenne. She's led a quiet but persistent movement to get a larger degree of recognition for her tribe within the Sioux government. She was a kid when the re-education camps came about, so she lived a lot of what she's telling about. Good choice, Captain.
• Rising Eagle

I make this disclaimer because many previously published historical examinations have been largely unreliable. You see, in order to gain exclusive NAN approval and access to reports, officials, cities and travel authorization, publishers have been forced to give the Sovereign Tribal Council (STC) final approval on their manuscripts. STC bureaucrats have been known to censor, rewrite and substantially modify reports to glorify the NAN and spread lies among the STC's enemies.

• Take, for example, the Danchekker Primer on the Native American Nation series. Danchekker's manuscript went through some hefty changes in the STC's hands, and in return Danchekker and his publisher received a good amount of pocket change ("grants") to ease their creative consciences. That fine piece of NAN propaganda has become responsible for most of the misconceptions about the NAN today.
• Nuyen Nick

• Who says the Amerinds never learned the white man's ways, hmm?
• Anglo

• You know, your scalp would look dandy on my wall, pinkskin.
• Black Horse

Some historical accounts have also slanted information in favor of one tribe at the expense of another. In some cases, tribes have even been completely written from the picture. For example, a decade or so back, the Sioux Nation was in danger of fracturing into nothingness due to the lack of a clear leader among the tribes. The "Five Civilized Tribes," as we were once known, threw in our lot with the Sioux in order to lend support to the Council, stabilize the government and strengthen the nation as a whole. But the Sioux attempted to usurp the voting rights of the Cherokee tribe, claiming our strength as part of their own tribe in many "official" reports in order to give their tribe legitimacy. Officially stripped of both our identities and our former lands, we have been forced to struggle for our own heritage ever since.

• Brightsong is grinding her own axe here, for those who are tempted to believe her. She may be a citizen of the Sioux Nation but she's also a known dissident who is linked to more than one subversive group plotting to bring about the downfall of the NAN—specifically the Yvwi terrorist group. Remember, coyotes can look a lot like wolves when you're not paying enough attention.
• Sequoyah

• Yvwi is a peaceful group that protests the corruption and injustice with which the Sioux government is rife. I'm an old woman, Sequoyah. Don't waste my time with this drivel. And next time, choose a name derived from your own tribe instead of stealing one from ours.
• Brightsong

Still, Captain Chaos did not ask me to go into my own personal cause here, so I'll move on. I trust that I have made my point clear—in these times, all data is suspect, unless you fully trust the source.

• So much for tribal unity, even within a single country.
• Anglo

• What did you expect? Before the turn of the century, these were all independent "nations" with their own laws, schools, religions, languages and culture. Some even had their own land, in some cases with lucrative mineral rights. You can't just assume that because they're all tribal, they're going to decide to give up independence in the name of presenting a unified front. They lived on their own terms for hundreds of years before the Europeans came to this continent. I'm surprised that you expected them to stop now.
• Holly

FOUNDATION: THE TREATY OF DENVER

I intend to begin this discussion with the Treaty of Denver, the point of inception for the Native American Nations. While the events that preceded it provided important catalysts for the treaty, they are common knowledge and don't directly influence the NAN itself. Given the audience for this lecture, I'll keep to the items that are most likely to be relevant.

• Not directly influential? What about the Great Ghost Dance?
• Coyote Pup


Marc Fasso
©

MAJOR EVENTS IN NORTH AMERICAN HISTORY

2002–2008: The Resource Rush—aided by the government, corporations begin gobbling up natural resources previously protected by Native American reservations or Federal parklands.
2009: The Sovereign American Indian Movement (SAIM), responding to corporate aggression, captures a Shiloh nuclear launch facility, resulting in the "Lone Eagle" incident.
2009: The Re-Education and Relocation Act is introduced in the US (and the similar Nepean Act in Canada).
2010: Thousands of Native Americans are interned.
2010: VITAS hits, 25 percent of the population dies by the end of the year.
October 31, 2010: Québec secedes from Canada and becomes a republic.
2011: Unexplained Genetic Expression introduces dwarfs and elves. The Awakening soon follows.
December 24, 2011: Daniel "Howling Coyote" Coleman leads an uprising in the Abilene Re-education camp.
2014: Howling Coyote announces the formation of the Sovereign Tribal Council (STC) and Native American Nations (NAN) and claims responsibility for the Redondo Peak eruption and other magical attacks. The Ghost Dance War begins in earnest.
2016: The US passes a Resolution calling for the extermination of all Native American tribes.
2018: The US and Canada surrender to the STC, and the Treaty of Denver is signed, acknowledging the sovereignty of the NAN over much of North America.
2021: Goblinization introduces orks and trolls.
2029: The Crash disables the world's computer networks.
October 15, 2030: The remnants of the US and Canada merge and form the UCAS.
2034: Several Southern states secede from the UCAS, forming the CAS. South Florida joins the Caribbean League.
2035: Tir Tairngire announces its independence from the Salish-Shidhe Council.
2036-2037: California secedes, becoming the California Free State, minus northern territory lost to Tir Tairngire and southern territory lost to Aztlan. Imperial Japanese Marines land in the Bay area.
2037: Tsimshian formally withdraws from the STC and NAN.
February 27, 2039: The Night of Rage—violence flares between humans and metahumans worldwide.
2058-2060: Corporate war shakes the world.
2061: The Year of the Comet, as Halley's Comet passes by the Earth. Also the 50th Anniversary of the Awakening.

• The Ghost Dance, as important as it was, wasn't the beginning of the NAN. Besides, you can look up fifty gazillion articles on the subject anytime you feel like it—not to mention three SIGs on Shadowland itself—if you want that information. Some of us have heard it already.
• Prickly Pear

In addition, I'll be skipping over the terms that deal with both Seattle and Denver. The partitioning of Denver and recognition of Seattle as a US city are outside the scope of this discussion; they've also been competently covered elsewhere.

After the events of 2017 and the cessation of hostilities that followed, the leaders of the governments of the United States and Canada met with the president of Aztlan and the representatives of the Native American sovereignty movement to agree on terms for peace and the creation of the NAN. After nearly a month of talks among the various representatives and their various legal counsels, the treaty was signed on 25 January 2018.

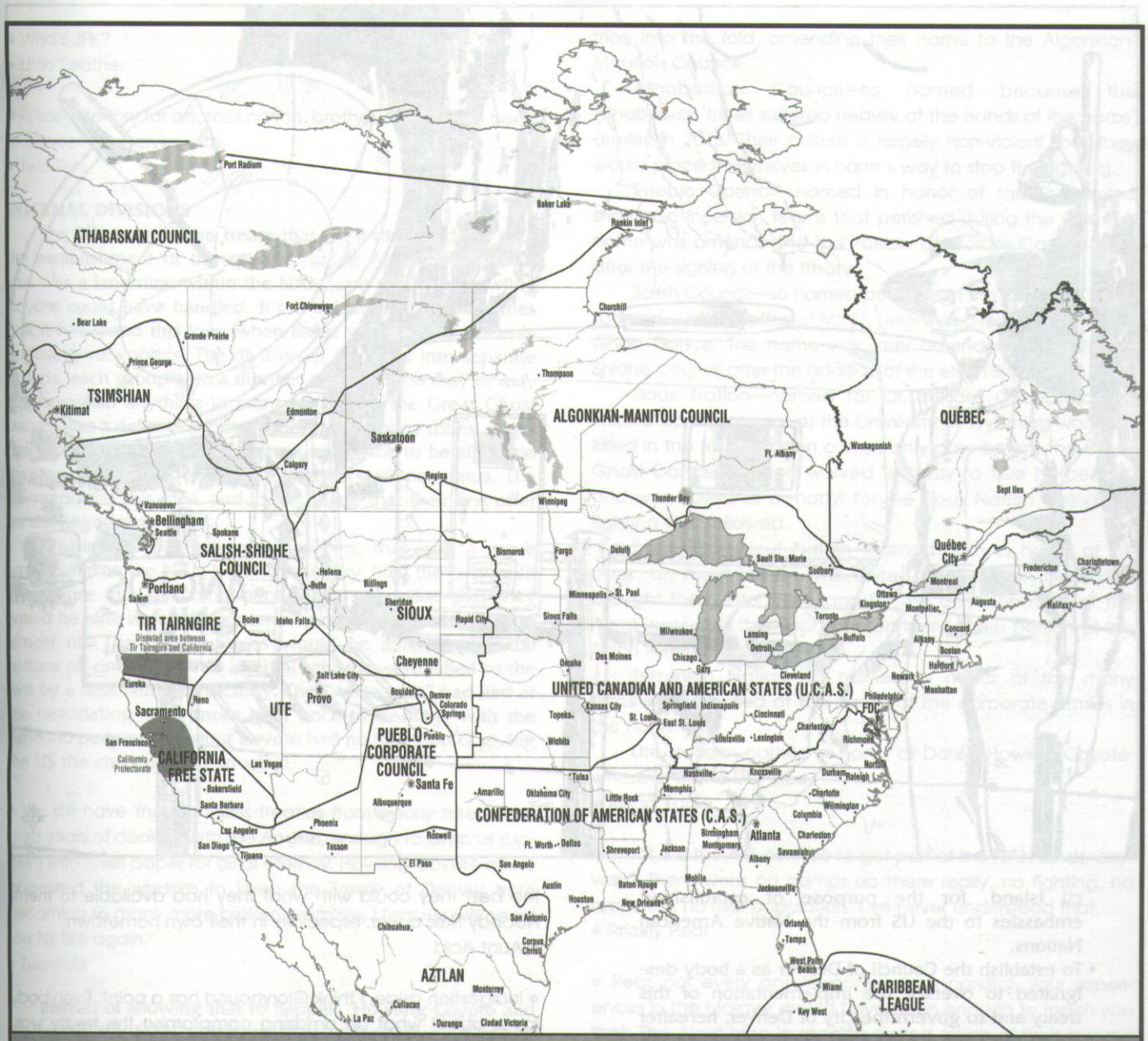
The Treaty of Denver itself is only ten pages long, though those are arguably the most influential ten pages of text written in this century.

• That's completely wrong. The treaty takes up something like 50 gigapulses of memory. It's fraggin' huge. I don't even want to think about how many printed pages it is.
• Liberty Belle

• No, she's right. The legal niceties regarding exactly how Denver would be split up and who gets what land and where borders are, etc., as well as exactly how and why and wherefore everything should be done are what take up so much room. Those aren't in the treaty, however; they are appended documents that are technically separate. The treaty itself is pretty simple, at least on its face.
• Holly

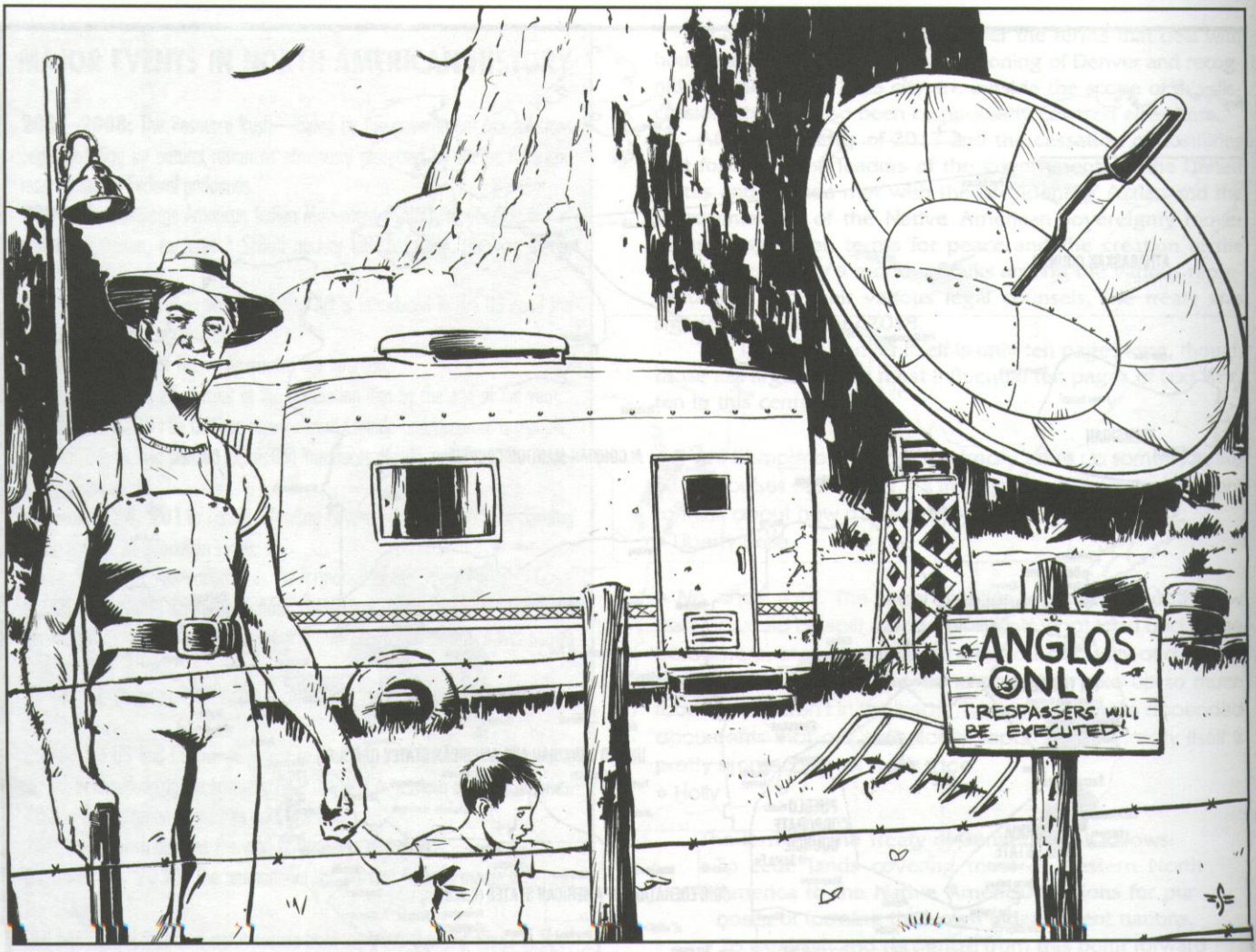
The terms of the Treaty of Denver are as follows:

- To cede lands covering most of western North America to the Native American Nations for purposes of forming their own independent nations.
- To establish and recognize from this point forward the legitimacy of the Native American Nations; specifically the Sioux Nation, the Pueblo Council, the Salish Council, the Ute Nation, the Algonkian Council, the Athabaskan Council, the Trans-Polar Aleut Nation, and the Tsimshian Nation.
- To establish the Sovereign Tribal Council as the international ruling body for the Native American Nations collectively, along with the duties and responsibilities entrusted to said Council.
- To relocate and remove over the course of ten years all United States and Canadian citizens not eligible for NAN citizenship from the lands ceded to the Native American Nations.
- To establish reserved lands within the Native American Nations for the residence of those people who wish to remain in NAN territory but who are not eligible for citizenship at this time.
- To establish Seattle as an extraterritorial extension of the United States of America with the exception of Mercer Island, which is ceded from this point forward to the Salish Council and renamed Coun-



MAP OF NORTH AMERICA

- NATIONAL CAPITAL
- Charlotte • CITY
- SPLIT CITIES
- INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES
- STATE BOUNDARIES (U.S.A. circa 1990)
- NOTEWORTHY AREA



cil Island, for the purpose of establishing embassies to the US from the Native American Nations.

- To establish the Council of Denver as a body designated to oversee the implementation of this treaty and to govern the city of Denver, hereafter called the Front Range Free Zone, and to divide control of the Front Range Free Zone among the signatories who share interests in that area; specifically Aztlan, the Pueblo Council, the Sioux Nation, the United States and the Ute Nation.

• You know, this whole thing is just so much drek. I mean, look at it. It's probably the most irresponsible political move in the history of the United States. This was supposed to be a compromise, not terms for the surrender of the old US. Damn politicians.
• Gloryhound

• Right, like you were there. Like Redondo Peak had just buried your best scientists. Like every weapon in your arsenal hadn't just been stopped cold. Get over it, already. They did the best they could with what they had available to them. Nobody likes a war, especially in their own hometown.
• Aunt Acid

• Indigestion aside, I think Gloryhound has a point. Everybody raves about what an amazing compromise this treaty was, but I'm not sure I buy it either. Was Jarman really that incompetent? I wouldn't be surprised to see that there was something else going on at the time. It just seems fishy to me.
• Liberty Belle

• If you're really interested, I have some information that you might find worth your while. Hit my Nexus drop box with a note and we can arrange a meeting.
• Jacob

• Yeah, and he might even throw in the secret of the JFK assassination and Jet Black's secret hideout.
• Sidewinder



• Who's JFK?
• Little Feather

• Ancient history for another nation, brother. Nothing we need to concern ourselves with.
• Two-Fists

INTERNAL DIVISIONS

The first term of the treaty that we'll discuss deals with the establishment of the specific Native American Nations. This was a landmine within the NAN, one that only Howling Coyote could have handled. It's a testament to his abilities that it has stood this long when faced with so many deeply opposing viewpoints. The division of the NAN into separate groups, each group with a number of tribes who may or may not have had anything in common before the Great Ghost Dance, was a delicate process. There were many tribes, especially the larger ones, who wanted each tribe to be allocated their own lands and retain independent national status. The US supported this idea, and in fact made that their first offer on the negotiating table.

Howling Coyote believed, however, that such a move would weaken the NAN beyond recovery. Had the NAN split once more into its component tribes, the odds that they would be able to join forces later against a US invasion were almost nil. The United States would be able to pick the nations off one by one, as internal schisms were lulled to the fore by a false sense of security. The "white man" had lied at the negotiating table more than once in dealings with the Amerind peoples. Howling Coyote had no intention of giving the US the chance to do so again.

• We still have the worthless treaties from nearly three hundred years of dealing with the Anglos, enough to keep us supplied with toilet paper for all of eternity. Howling Coyote alone possessed the wisdom to keep the Treaty of Denver from becoming so many more broken promises. I fear we will never see his like again.
• Two-Fists

Instead of allowing that to happen, Howling Coyote and the rest of the NAN representatives (a formative Sovereign Tribal Council, if you will) agreed upon a plan prior to the meeting. The tribes would band together, forming nations based on compatible traditions and geographic location. No nation already within the lands being granted would be required to relocate, while tribes moving to those lands would settle in places with compatible cultures and belief systems. The United States and Canada were not entirely pleased by the counter-proposal, but had no good reason to reject it.

• Brightsong doesn't go into it here, so I thought I'd add in a little about how the nations were named/chosen.

Algonkian Council—named for the languages used throughout those tribes, which were all part of the Algonkian language family. The tribe later accepted the Manitou elven tribe into the fold, amending their name to the Algonkian-Manitou Council.

Athabaskan Council—so named because the Athabaskan tribes suffered heavily at the hands of the corps' armies in 2016. Their culture is largely non-violent, but they would place themselves in harm's way to stop the fighting.

Pueblo Council—named in honor of the Pueblo-led shamanic incursion teams that perished during the war. The name was amended to the Pueblo Corporate Council soon after the signing of the treaty.

Salish Council—so named because of the losses the Salish suffered in the eruption of Mt. St. Helens as a result of the Great Ghost Dance. The name was later amended to the Salish-Shidhe Council after the addition of the elven Sinsearach tribe.

Sioux Nation—named for Dr. William Councilman, a Lakota Sioux professor at the University of Wyoming who was killed in the re-education camps only days before the Great Ghost Dance. He had worked tirelessly to free his people, and was hailed as a martyr for the Sioux Nation during the fighting that followed.

Trans-Polar Aleut Nation—named both in honor of Ininook, an Aleut leader who united the northern tribes and brought them into SAIM, and for the common roots of the Aleut language that spans the entire northern portion of the North American continent.

Tsimshian Nation—so named in honor of the many Tsimshian who died at the hands of the corporate armies in the north.

Ute Nation—named in honor of Daniel Howling Coyote, who was of the Ute tribe.
• Rising Eagle

• What did the TPA ever do to get part of the NAN lands, anyway? There were no camps up there really, no fighting, no real unity, no real population. I've never understood that.
• Prickly Pear

• Pear, not every answer comes from conflict. Your experiences in the Mojave should have been enough to teach you that. The Aleut tribe in specific routed much of their income from their mineral rights and corporate entities into fueling the NAN effort. While they didn't spend as much time interred or actively fighting as other tribes did, they did their part nonetheless. They simply did it quietly.
• Iron Eyes

• What I learned in the Mojave, old man, is none of your business. Funny, but I don't remember seeing you haul your astral hoop out to LA with the rest of us.
• Prickly Pear

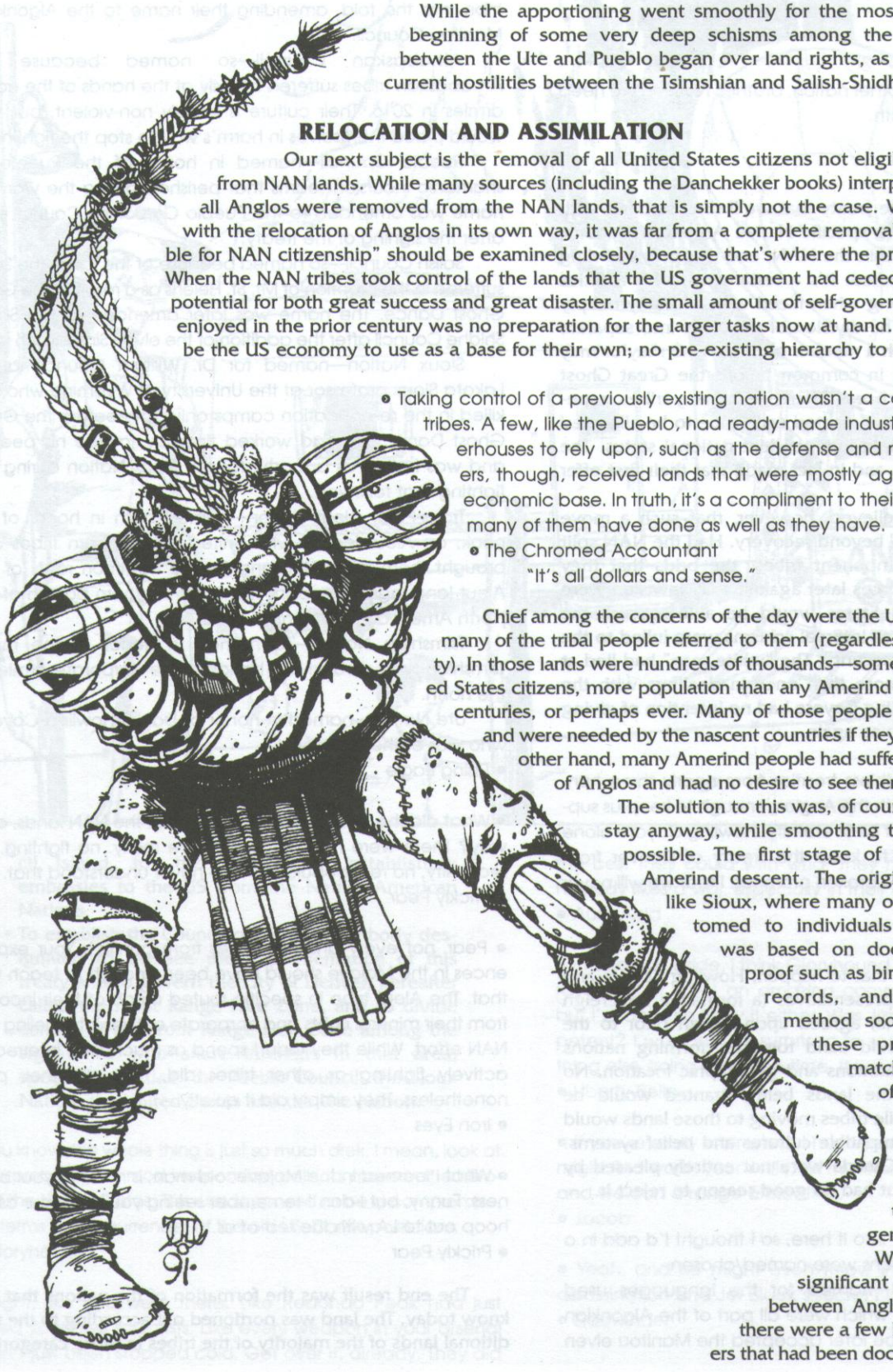
The end result was the formation of the nations that we know today. The land was portioned out according to the traditional lands of the majority of the tribes in those categories.

While the apportioning went smoothly for the most part, it was also the beginning of some very deep schisms among the nations. The division between the Ute and Pueblo began over land rights, as an example, as did the current hostilities between the Tsimshian and Salish-Shidhe nations.

RELOCATION AND ASSIMILATION

Our next subject is the removal of all United States citizens not eligible for NAN citizenship from NAN lands. While many sources (including the Danchekker books) interpreted this to mean that all Anglos were removed from the NAN lands, that is simply not the case. While each nation dealt with the relocation of Anglos in its own way, it was far from a complete removal. The phrase "not eligible for NAN citizenship" should be examined closely, because that's where the process starts.

When the NAN tribes took control of the lands that the US government had ceded to them, they had the potential for both great success and great disaster. The small amount of self-governing that the tribes had enjoyed in the prior century was no preparation for the larger tasks now at hand. There would no longer be the US economy to use as a base for their own; no pre-existing hierarchy to fit into.



- Taking control of a previously existing nation wasn't a cakewalk for most of the tribes. A few, like the Pueblo, had ready-made industry and economic powerhouses to rely upon, such as the defense and research industries. Others, though, received lands that were mostly agrarian with little existing economic base. In truth, it's a compliment to their resourcefulness that so many of them have done as well as they have.
- The Chromed Accountant

"It's all dollars and sense."

Chief among the concerns of the day were the US citizens, or Anglos, as many of the tribal people referred to them (regardless of their actual ethnicity). In those lands were hundreds of thousands—sometimes millions—of United States citizens, more population than any Amerind tribe had dreamed of in centuries, or perhaps ever. Many of those people had important skillsets, and were needed by the nascent countries if they were to survive. On the other hand, many Amerind people had suffered greatly at the hands of Anglos and had no desire to see them stay.

The solution to this was, of course, to let many of them stay anyway, while smoothing the process as much as possible. The first stage of this was to "test" for Amerind descent. The original method in nations like Sioux, where many of the tribes were accustomed to individuals seeking membership, was based on documented genealogical proof such as birth certificates, marriage records, and family bibles. This method soon fell out of favor as these proofs were based on matching centuries-old (and often incomplete) documents—another legacy of the mistreatment of the Amerind peoples. Instead, most of the nations adopted genetic testing.

While there are almost no significant genetic differences between Anglo and Amerind people, there were a few hereditary genetic markers that had been documented as being linked



with Amerind descent when the human genome was researched and mapped. It would be rare for any one person to exhibit more than a few of these, but two or three would be enough to claim citizenship.

• They still do this, by the way, for all those people who know their aunt's third cousin twice-removed was tribal and think it might apply to them. How strict the standards are vary from nation to nation. They can be faked, and the difficulty varies from nation to nation as well. If you've got great cheekbones, dark coloring and the right fake ID, you too can go native.
• Gitchigoomi

• Why didn't you just mention that you're in that line of work, Gitch? It's not like you to pass up a chance to drum yourself up a little biz.
• Cherokee Pride

• Suck wind, featherbrain. Try being subtle, sometime.
• Gitchigoomi

The second way for the original Anglos to become citizens was to be "grandfathered" in. Under this method, the existing residents of the area could receive provisional citizenship and be granted full citizenship at a later date, usually a year. In that way, those who wished to change citizenship from the US to the NAN nations could do so. Of course, this did not ease the social stigma caused by years of racist action on the part of the US government, so in some countries this method was barely applied. The Ute is a good example of a country that "encouraged" Anglos to move out, regardless of the good that might be gained by letting them stay. Most nations eventually granted citizenship to existing residents who stuck it out, though in almost all cases non-tribal citizenship is second-class, without the full rights accorded to Amerind citizens.

• It should be noted that people of Latino/Hispanic descent were considered to be native and automatically eligible for citizenship, since Aztlan was a member of the NAN at the time.
• Tumbleweed

• There are also immigration laws based on economic need, visas and other methods of obtaining permission to enter one of the nations. These laws vary by such a wide degree, however, that you should refer to the specific nation for that information.
• Traveler Jones

For individuals who did not want to stay in an Amerind nation, the US and the NAN arranged a 10-year relocation assistance period. This program was one of the least successful of the entire treaty, due in no small part to the fears and prejudices of both NAN officials and private Anglo citizens. Much of the violence that has marked our history as nations sprung from this time and these efforts, instigated by both sides at different times. The price we paid in both Amerind and Anglo blood was heavy, and many innocents were hurt or killed.

• Yeah, pity the poor Anglos who couldn't figure out that everything had changed hands. My brother worked on one of those relocation teams. He showed up to move some guy's furniture, only to be shot in the street because the guy thought it was another version of the bloodthirsty Apache raids against the brave white settlers. Seeing the SWAT team take the guy out was the highlight of my life. Fraggin' apologist.
• Two-Fists

ANGLO RESERVATIONS

For those who did not wish to renounce their US citizenship, but also did not want to leave their homes, the fifth term of the treaty provided for their welfare. By treaty, the NAN set aside "reservations" for the Anglos who wished to stay. These enclaves bore a greater resemblance to the expatriate worker cities in Saudi Arabia or military bases than they did to the reservations the US "gave" the tribes so long ago. They are autonomous and self-governed, making them little more than unnamed Anglo nations in tribal territory. They are all controlled by the Bureau of Non-Tribal Peoples, a division under the control of the STC. The BNTP deals with mediation between the enclaves and the NAN and is staffed by appointment from both the enclaves and tribal members with a history of tolerance.

• Security on these places varies from country to country. Usually, the perimeter is guarded both inside and out, just as foreign borders are. Depending on the reigning philosophy inside, though, you may find anything from armed guards to magical security to flower children holding the posts.
• Rising Eagle

• They also have their own Matrix systems, on occasion. Places like the PCC do their best to pull the plug on that, but in Athabaska, for example, you can pretty much do as you like.
• Silicon Spirit

• Some of these enclaves are experiments in social and political reform. Freed from national constraints, the people inside—whether they moved in at the beginning, were born there or moved in later—are taking advantage of their autonomous situation. The BNTP doesn't do much more than investigate issues of prejudice and make sure supplies are running freely. So you've got one that's a pacifist utopian commune, one that's an extremely conservative Christian theocracy and another that is petitioning the Salish-Shidhe Council to become a tribe of its own, saying that they've renounced their "mixed-breed inheritance." And there are more, covering the socio-political spectrum.
• Holly

• I've known some criminal types to attempt to use these reserves as shelter from NAN police. Sometimes this works, especially if the reserve locals are in your pocket and the NAN cops feel like humoring the reserve's sovereignty. Officially, the cops

are supposed to call in the BNTP for situations like this, but in most cases they simply waltz in and do what they need to do. After all, what are the Anglos in the reserve going to do, declare war?
• Roaring Mouse

• The NAN nations as a whole have been trying to pressure the people living in the enclaves to vacate them, either by accepting tribal citizenship or by vamoosing back to the UCAS or CAS. Many of the people living in those enclaves are coming close to being senior citizens, and any break in services hits them pretty hard. The nations that are more tolerant of Anglos have been offering nice repatriation deals, while those not so tolerant have been regularly hiring runners and gangers to cause trouble. I guess the tribals are tired of funding what are rapidly turning into Anglo retirement villages.
• Squeaker

• Try Anglo dens of iniquity. Where do you think a lot of the homegrown pharmaceuticals in the rural areas come from? Not to mention low-grade BTLs, prostitution, and a number of other social ills. Hell, I get more contract work taking out the scum that live in those places than I do corp work in this part of the country.
• Two-Fists

• Speaking of which, if you need to get hooked up with some cargo, I know of a couple great suppliers in the enclave outside of Santa Fe. Just ask for me when you get into town.
• Gitchigoomi

THE SOVEREIGN TRIBAL COUNCIL

The Sovereign Tribal Council's function in the NAN was a point of great contention during the original intertribal negotiations. Each nation felt differently about the idea of a group with an overreaching mandate. While some felt that such a group was necessary, others balked at the idea of interference from the other tribes. As Howling Coyote said once when asked about that time, "It is one thing to pull together in the face of a common enemy. It is another for once nominally-independent nations to continue working closely when self-sufficiency is near."

In the end, the STC was approved, taking the European Union from the late twentieth century as a loose model. Each nation has a single vote in council, with a council-elected Speaker who votes only in the event of a tie. The STC was given the following responsibilities and jurisdiction: international diplomacy, including mediation powers among NAN member-states; approval for and command of joint military efforts in the event of war with a major power; and the administration of the Native American National Reserve Bank (NANRB), including setting interest rates.

The main headquarters for the STC was placed in Cheyenne, Sioux Nation. That location is where the bureaucracy of the STC makes its home, and the source of most of the STC infrastructure as well as embassies from each of the NAN nations.

• Needless to say, the STC headquarters can make for some pretty nice work if you can get it. Anti-Anglo bias is pretty strong, though.
• Scag

• Speak for yourself. It all depends on who you talk to and who you know. Get a good rep going, and it's amazing how race-tolerant the Johnsons become.
• Rubik

The problem with the STC quickly became evident, however, just as with nearly all loosely constructed governmental bodies. While the STC could make judgements on NAN member-states, it had no method of enforcing those decisions. The whole of the Council's power rested in the member-states, and there was no mechanism in place for punishing a nation who refused to accept or abide by a ruling made by the STC.

In the beginning, the STC attempted to give themselves more clout through such measures as adopting a unified currency. The measure was defeated by the economically stronger nations, however, who did not want to suffer the drag caused by supporting the weaker ones.

• Wow. Just imagine it ... we actually could have had wampum.
• Scag

• Go slot yourself, you racist Anglo pig.
• Saguaro

• Geez, grow a sense of humor already.
• Scag

In the end, no unified currency was adopted, though each nation succumbed to economic pressures and has since adopted the nuyen as their primary currency. Similar unification measures, such as a universal NAN visa, were also attempted, but with the exception of a NAN citizen SIN registry, few passed. If anything, these issues fractured the council more than strengthening it, and in the end, the STC retains little beyond its original powers. While it serves to fulfill the duties the members allow it to undertake, the true power of the NAN lies within each nation, not within the Council.

THE COUNCIL TODAY

Despite its declawed nature, the STC remains an important forum for both inter-NAN relations and for addressing foreign relations through a common front. The councilors of each nation tend to be strong political figures in their own right, with connections at all levels of government and society. Here's the breakdown:

Mary Nightwind (AMC) is the longest-running Councilor, having warmed her seat for over a decade. A Dog shaman for the Algonkian tribe, she serves her country faithfully. The current crisis within her country, however, has laden her with conflicting loyalties. Her tribe expects her to keep the "Manitou issue" from reaching the STC's agenda, but her immediate boss, Ceremonial



Chief Hawksford, is sympathetic to the Manitou cause. It's not yet certain which way Nightwind will go.

John Collie (Athabaska) is of Inuit blood, though he may as well have been constructed in an Athabaskan Oil research lab. He's a slick and oily mouthpiece for corporate interests. He periodically engages in a pre-programmed rant about the threat of eco-terrorism to the NAN's stability and resources.

• Collie's a favorite target for eco cells. Somehow he's survived numerous hits and near-fatal "accidents." His luck's going to run out eventually.
• Green Piece

William Evehema (Pueblo) is a Hopi and a former Vice President of the Pueblo Corporation. He's a visionary, the type of guy who always has a plan and a way of convincing others to support it. Even without the economic weight of the PCC and the aid of the Speaker, Evehema could still dominate the STC on Pueblo's behalf by strength of will alone.

• Evehema easily sees through the schemes of other councilors—he has the eyes of Eagle.
• Cloud Top

Lona Xáwulets (Salish-Shidhe) is a Salish, the sister of the tribe's Chief Shaman, Leaping Salmon. Xáwulets used to be a calm, mediating force on the STC, but since one of her cousins was killed in the Tsimshian border clash, she's been an uncompromising war hawk.

Ray Simon (Sioux) of the Blackfoot tribe is an agitator, always seeking to stir up trouble between the STC and the UCAS. There's a lot of indication that Simon is racist towards Anglos. Word is that others in the Sioux feel that Simon is letting the Pueblo lead the STC around by the nose, so he can expect a smackdown soon.

• Simon really has a bug up his you-know-what about Ares. He often speaks out about Ares meddling in Sioux affairs, and he's been known to call Roger Soaring-Owl an "Anglo lackey." He's also suspected of hiring runners to stir up trouble with Ares or to run smear campaigns against them.
• Cheyenne Hustler

Mary Northstar (TPA) has sat in on STC business only twice a year over the past decade. Even then, she simply observes. The TPA hasn't registered a vote in many years; they officially abstain from all decisions, and for all intents and purposes are part of the STC in name only.

• They're playing it safe, though, keeping the seat warm in case anything comes up that they really want to stick their necks out for.
• Two-Fists

Ward Upchego (Ute) is allegedly a shaman, but if he follows any totem, it's Greed. Ward holds interest in two casinos in Las Vegas, putting him squarely in the pocket of the Comanche mob. Ward is constantly trying to push through trade agreements in the Ute's favor, though his efforts haven't kept the country from sinking into a major recession. Facing an early retirement, Ward takes whatever chances he can get to jab Pueblo for their annexation of Los Angeles.

David Blacksilver (Speaker), the former Pueblo Councilor, now facilitates STC meetings and makes the call in case of a tie. He talks a lot about "modern tribal thinking" and the need to adjust old customs to fit the changing times. He has to make an effort not to roll his eyes whenever one of the Council shamans backs up an argument with mystical overtones or claims of cultural heritage. Despite his biases, he is a shrewd negotiator when it comes to foreign relations—the NAN has had few foreign relations crises under his tenure.

• Since the TPA abstains from most STC decisions, tied votes between the other six nations are not uncommon. With Blacksilver's decisions pushing things in Pueblo's favor, you can see what power his position gives to the PCC.
• Rising Eagle

• Blacksilver's not just a Pueblo lackey. He takes his role very seriously and hires "freelance assets" to "independently verify" issues that are at stake. He likes to impress the shadow crowd by spreading the rumor that he used to run as a decker named Artemis. Don't believe the hype—Artemis was one of Blacksilver's first hires, and he set the poor slot up, betrayed him, then stole his reputation.
• FastJack

• What? Do you have proof of this? If so, I've got a 15-year old score to settle with Mr. Blacksilver.
• Iron Eyes

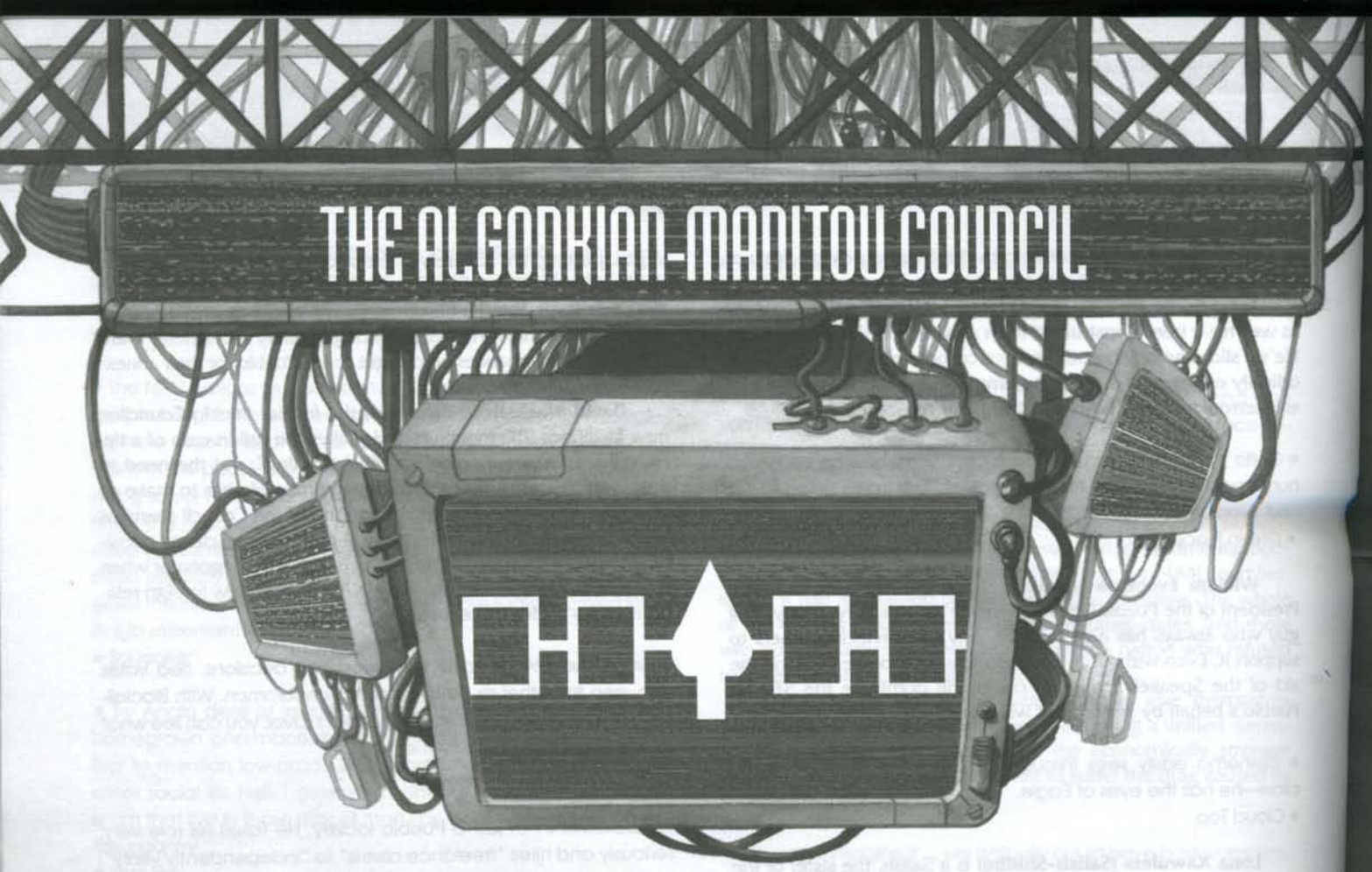
SUMMITS

Though the STC meets one week a month in Cheyenne, it also hosts a yearly summit between the government leaders of the NAN states. The privilege of hosting this mega-event is rotated among the NAN states (with the TPA declining as usual). The next summit is scheduled for November in the Salish-Shidhe city of Bellingham, just a short skip from Seattle.

The purpose of the STC summit is to set broad policy guidelines, discuss topical international issues and negotiate trade agreements. This year's summit promises to be a doozy, with a number of potentially inflammatory topics: Manitou secession, joint actions or sanctions against Tsimshian, and Pueblo-Ute border disputes. In preparation, some forces are doing their best to keep certain items off of the agenda.

• These summits draw a lot of action—from protestors and street-fighting rioters to spies and shadowrunner teams. A regular free-for-all. Don't miss it!
• N30ist

THE ALGONKIAN-MANITOU COUNCIL



The file that follows is an excellent cross-section of intel from the Land of Perpetual Frostbite and Very Nasty Mosquitoes, the Algonkian-Manitou Council. An old pal from my misspent youth, Billy Deuce, did me the favor of rounding up some local experts to compile this stuff. Pay special attention to Aztechnology's activities and the Manitou uprising—you'll need that info if you're in the neighborhood.

Let me repeat myself for the millionth time; if any of you roadhogs or runners have better intel than what Billy's scraped up, shout and let the whole world know. Happy hunting!

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 15:23:35 (PST)

by Billy Deuce

You're wrong, you know.

You used to think that the Algonkian-Manitou Council was a boring place. So did I. Well, ten years ago we were right. Not anymore.

I've lived here most of my life, chummers, and I can tell you one thing for sure: it's always a little drab up close to the Arctic Circle. Even the populated sectors of the territory have always been a "nice place to raise a family." Times have certainly changed. Welcome to a nation of eco-terrorism, megacorp bullying, and quite possibly a fragging civil war.

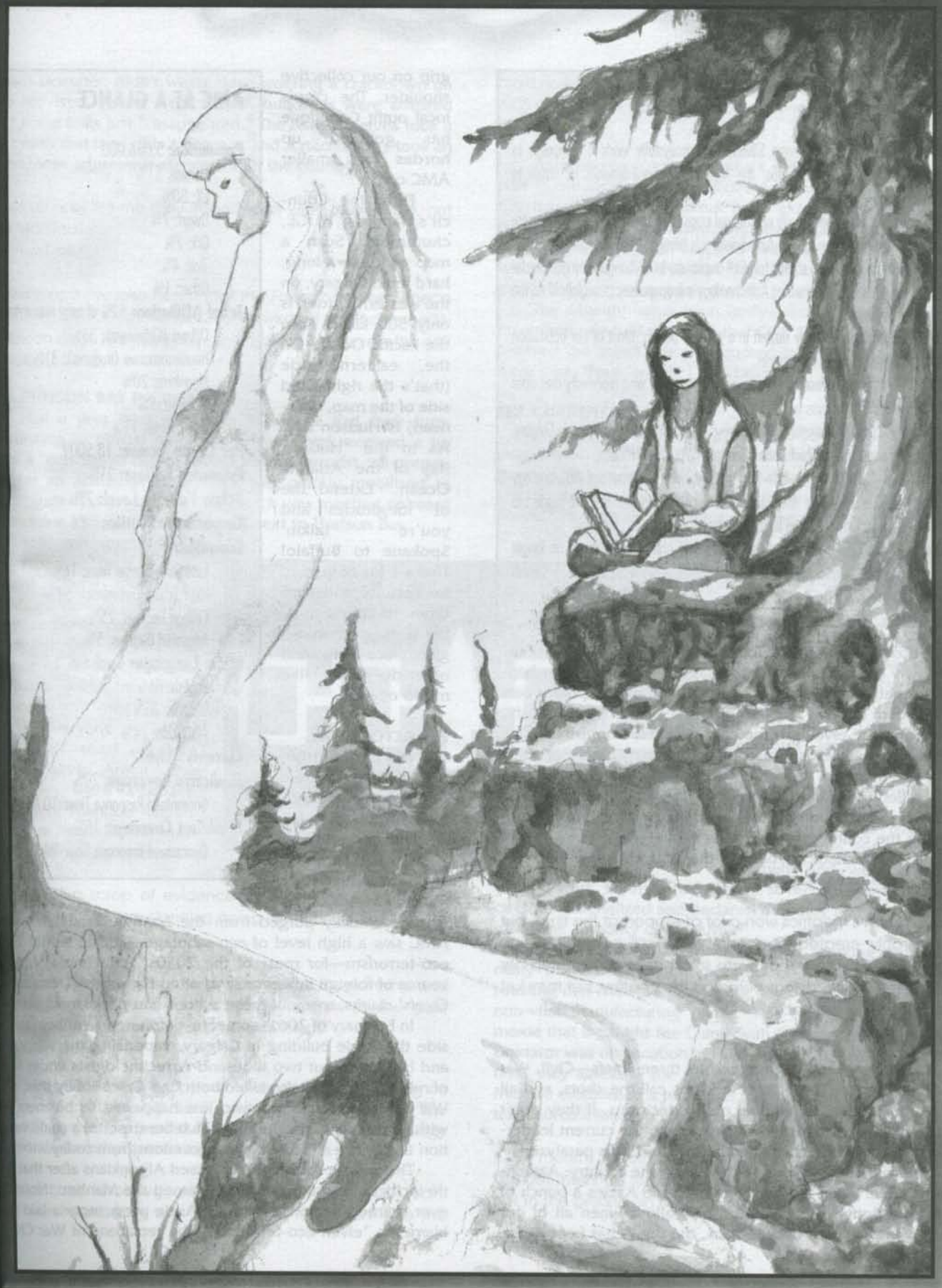
A NATION DIVIDED

Let's start at the top, shall we?

There's a few basic facts you need to know about the Algonkian-Manitou Council (AMC). First, the Algonkian tribe runs the country, and has since day one. The other tribes play their part, but the Algonkians have the real clout—at least until now.

• That's only true in the political celebrity sphere. Both the Iroquois and the Ojibwa have a lot of influence in the country, especially in the underworld with all the secret societies they have running around.

• Suitzman



AMC TIMELINE

2045: Elven shaman Adrienne Silvermoon successfully leads a campaign to establish the elven Manitou tribe; the Algonkian Council amends its name to include this new force.

2050: The country's genetically engineered crops suffer a drastic failure; the economy reels and starvation looms. Aztechnology is brought in to re-engineer genetic supplements and anti-viral strains for vital croplands; in exchange they gain exclusive contracts, effectively granting Aztechnology a monopolistic stranglehold on the nation's main export.

2050: Silvermoon is nearly ousted in a political putsch. Most of her opposition dies under mysterious circumstances.

2051: Derek Highsun leads a coup to oust Silvermoon, who reportedly dies after a spirit she summons turns on her.

February 2061: A terrorist bomb destroys the Aztechnology building in Calgary, killing both popular Civil Chief Bobby Bear and War Chief Hillborn.

November 2061: The Hudson Bay Incident, when military and Aztechnology troops attack a boathouse they suspect is used by eco-terrorists. All inside are killed. The dead turn out to be leaders of the Manitou tribe.

May 1, 2062: The Manitou Council is formed and declares it will no longer acknowledge the "Algonkian Council's" authority. The Manitou claim all land north of the Churchill River.

Second, the AMC is lousy with elves. No one's really sure why the population percentage is so high, it just happened that way. Given the stunts pulled by the pointy-ears down south (namely, Tir Tairngire seceding from the Salish), many of these elves got the cold shoulder from other tribal members. Daily racism also played its part. So be it, they said, and started a movement to establish a separate elven tribe called the Manitou. A smarmy environmentalist named Adrienne Silvermoon led the campaign to victory, even convincing the country to change its name. She also injected a strong anti-technology/back-to-the-land character into the tribe, which remains to this day.

• Silvermoon's theatrics won a lot of support at the time, but it inevitably created opponents who still hold a grudge against the Manitou. They were smart enough to dump her before her lunatic ravings polarized the country, but they just postponed the inevitable.
• Cree Dog

Third, the AMC is governed by three chiefs—Civil, War and Ceremonial. These three persons call the shots, and all three must agree to national policy decisions. If they don't agree, nothing happens—which leads to the current leadership crisis, with the chiefs deadlocked and thus paralyzed.

This brings us to the Fourth Chief in the country: Aztechnology. Ever since the chiefs granted the Azzies a bunch of exclusive rights in exchange for a bailout when all of our crops were failing a decade back, the Big A has kept a firm grip on our collective shoulder. The corp's local outfit Genetique has gobbled up hordes of smaller AMC corps.

Fifth, the Council's land is HUGE, chummers. Scan a map and take a long, hard look. Calgary, on the western border, is only 500 klicks from the Pacific Ocean. On the eastern side (that's the right-hand side of the map, drekhead) is Hudson Bay. As in the "Hudson Bay of the Atlantic Ocean." Extend the ol' longitudes and you're talkin' Spokane to Buffalo! That's a lot of ground for security and corp types to cover, making it easy for smugglers, eco cells and ne'er-do-wells like me to operate.

AMC AT A GLANCE

Population: 5,066,000
- Human: 51%
- Elf: 30%
- Dwarf: 7%
- Ork: 7%
- Troll: 4%
- Other: 1%

Tribal Affiliation: 52% of total population
- Ojibwa (Chippewa): 33%
- Haudenosaunee (Iroquois): 31%
- Algonkian: 20%
- Manitou: 5%
- Other Tribes: 11%

Per Capita Income: 18,500¥
Estimated SINless: 21%
Below Poverty Level: 22%
Corporate Affiliation: 18%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 16%
- High School Equivalency: 54%
- College Degrees: 25%
- Advanced Degrees: 5%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 86%
- Iroquois: 35%
- Algonkian: 24%

Currency: Nuyen
Medicarro Coverage: 20%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 10 Minutes

CrashCart Coverage: 15%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 20 Minutes

THE DETONATOR

Our present troubles stem from two sources: Manitou radicalism and Aztechnology meddling. Though Adrienne Silvermoon and other radical extremists were eventually purged from the Manitou leadership, the AMC saw a high level of eco-sabotage—and in some cases eco-terrorism—for most of the 2050s. Aztechnology, as a source of foreign influence, was often the target. Despite the Chiefs' claims, many of these actions had popular support.

In February of 2061, someone detonated a car bomb outside the Azzie building in Calgary, vaporizing the supports, and burying about two thousand Aztechnologists under tons of rubble. The blast also killed both Civil Chief Bobby Bear and War Chief Carl Hillborn, who just happened to be meeting with Azzie officials at the time. That bomb set of a chain reaction that we're still feeling repercussions from today.

There were some mighty pissed Algonkians after that little incident, and a lot of them blamed the Manitou. Nobody ever claimed responsibility, but Azzie press reports laid the blame on "elven eco-terrorists." The replacement War Chief,

Adam Doxtator, didn't waste time ordering a crackdown on eco-activists. Homes were raided, hundreds were arrested and some folks just "disappeared." The Manitou elves took a lot of flak that they didn't deserve, and Aztechnology took an even more aggressive stance within the country.

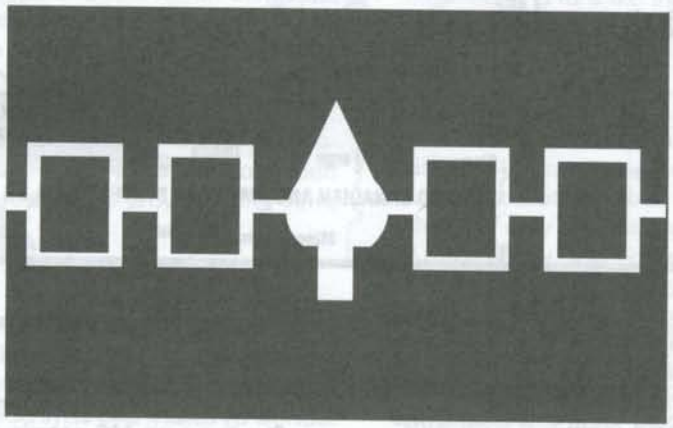
• My sources tell me the Crying Masks were responsible, not the Manitou.
• Snow Dolly

• Yeah, and I've also heard that the False Face, the Seneca Warrior Society, Ceremonial Chief Hawksford and Adrienne Silvermoon did it. Are there any other patsies we can pin this on?
• Hickory

THE HUDSON BAY INCIDENT

Half a year later, the boys in charge had their turn. According to official reports, the War Chief received a tip from a "concerned citizen" about an eco-terrorist cell preparing for an action. A large force was quickly mobilized to investigate and contain the cell, which was meeting onboard a rundown houseboat, dry-docked next to Hudson Bay.

You can guess what happened. The trigger-happy troops didn't do much investigating, and they certainly didn't give anyone inside the boat a chance to explain. They hit it hard with incendiary weapons and magical fireworks. Everyone on board was killed, most of them burned alive. Among the casualties were a dozen prominent Manitou leaders and five well-known anti-Aztechnology activists.



• And not a scrap of evidence that there was any illegal "eco-terrorist" action planning going on.
• Green Pixie

• Sez you. That little cabal was responsible for planning and ordering hundreds of eco-sabotage actions in the past decade. All the proof was burned with them.
• Hudson Hawk

Some trid station happened to catch the whole thing on video and publicized it, so it couldn't be covered up. The recordings clearly revealed that a company of Aztechnology Corporate Security guards tagged along on the outing.

• I was hired to bodyguard that "someone"—a KSAF team that were wondering why the hell they were sent into the frigid north to tape a boat and ice. There were more fragging ACS goons than regular army, by a long shot.
• Crooner

Aztechnology representatives did little to explain their part in the incident or apologize. Instead, they spoke about the fear their poor workers have experienced during the numerous acts of terrorism committed against their facilities. They made all sorts of law and order statements, sprinkled with implicit threats. Neither they nor any army troops were indicted for any wrongdoing.

The situation spun even further out of control when an unverified newsvid reported that Civil Chief Joseph Bear had ordered the attack. He was quoted by the inside source to have said, "Frag 'em all. I don't care."

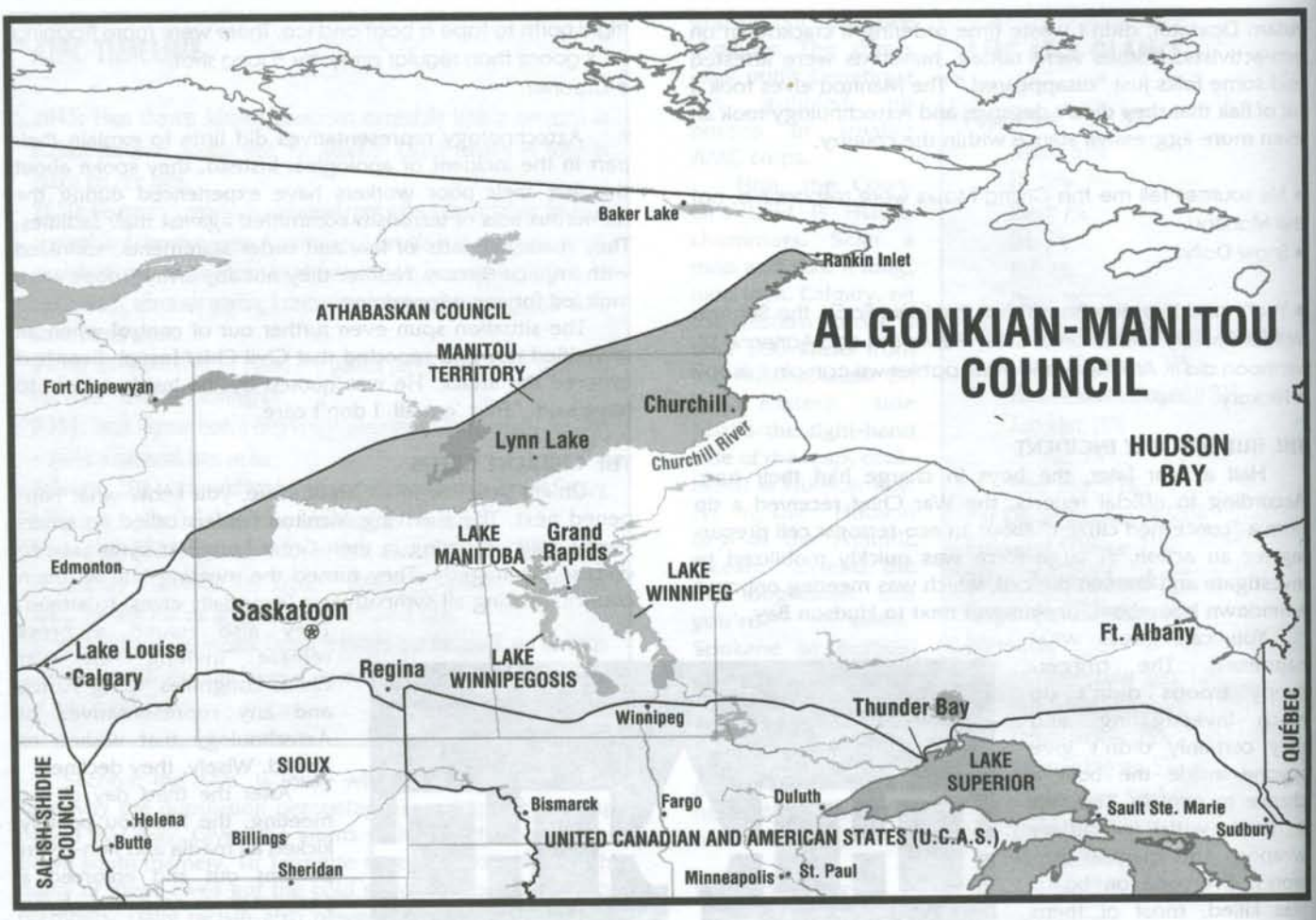
THE CURRENT CRISIS

Unless you live in an arctic cave, you know what happened next. The surviving Manitou leaders called an emergency policy meeting in their Great Lodge at Lynn Lake to discuss the tragedy. They turned the meeting into an open council, inviting all sympathizers (especially elves) to attend. They also issued a press release "inviting" the War Chief, Longmiles' Long Arms, and any representatives of Aztechnology that wished to attend. Wisely, they declined.

After the third day of the meeting, the Manitou politely kicked all media and non-elven persons out and enforced a perimeter around the Lynn Lake Lodge. What occurred over the next week has been the subject of much speculation. When it was over, the leaders left the lodge without comment and went immediately to work. Six months later, the sovereign Manitou Council (MC) materialized and declared that they no longer recognized the authority of the AMC.

On the first of May, Manitou tribes, working simultaneously throughout central portions of the territory, began rousting non-Manitou, occupying key points and blowing up non-vital manufacturing plants. This move was so full of moxie that it caught the Chiefs with their pants down (I hear Doxtator was on vacation in Palm Springs at the time). By the time they assessed the situation and mobilized troops, the MC had established a perimeter, claiming everything north of the Churchill River to the Athabaskan border.

• Six months to organize this thing, and in total secrecy? C'mon. They had to have help from outside. Anybody got an ear to the ground on this?
• Turtle



• I can make some educated guesses, half-shell. First, some of the illegal Haudenosaunee Warrior Societies have sympathies towards the Manitou; after all, they hold a grudge against the Algonkian for "keeping their people down." Second, the Manitou have lots of eco-cell and smuggler links.
• Snipe

• Aren't there some folks in the Athabaskan Council that would love to see this happen to the AMC? They've always had disputes over exact boundaries. Your answer is right next door.
• GlowGirl

• Haven't any of you chummers ever heard of Tir Tairngire?
• Cree Dog

• Unless the Athabaskans decide to invade, they're not getting anything out of this deal, and the Tir has their hands full with their own population. Besides, the Tir princes and the Manitou don't get along anyway; elven royalty and supremacist attitudes aren't the Manitou style.
• Jikohnsaseh

• Gee, guys, thanks. That clears it right up.
• Turtle

The current situation is tense, but stable. A few reports of conflict between MC patrols and AMC military forces have been exaggerated for media attention, but in reality both parties are maintaining an uneasy standoff.

• The word from the woods is that the MC leaders are putting together a formal proposal to the Sovereign Tribal Council asking for official recognition of their sovereignty.
• Peephole

• The STC will never approve it. If they do it once, every damn micro-tribe that feels it's being oppressed by a larger tribe in power will seize a chunk of land and declare independence. Before you know it, the entire NAN would be Balkanized into nations with populations just bigger than the population of my condo building. Then the UCAS rolls in, to "protect its interests" of course, and that's the end of the NAN.
• Anchorhead

THREE CHIEFS, NO TRIBE

by Balsa

So who's responsible for the mess the AMC is in? Let's name some names.

CIVIL AUTHORITY

The current Civil Chief is Joseph Bear, and he's certainly not the man his father was. That's right, the position is hereditary—the palefaces aren't the only ones capable of choosing leaders through outdated ass-backwards methods. Only the male heir of the Bear family of the Algonkian tribe gets this job, and he gets it for life. Joey Bear, as I affectionately call him, is just like a teddy bear—cuddly, full of fluff, and something you quickly outgrow. Frankly put, he's an indecisive pushover who publicly licks Aztechnology's boots so thoroughly that it's embarrassing. Oh yeah, he controls the civil services, from sanitation filth to police filth.

The Police

The contract for all city and state police services belongs to Long Arms, a local outfit. Long Arms is the brainchild of owner David Longmiles, who was a top advisor to Bobby Bear. Longmiles is the one with his arm up Joey Bear's back, and with the current crisis he has free rein to run things the way he wants to without pesky government bureaucracy or political backwash. The press loves him, and he's so damn squeaky-clean it sickens me.

• Long Arms and Aztechnology are very tight, sharing databases on "subversives" and "terrorists" and backing each other up left and right. The Azzies also provide Long Arms goons with armor and weapons.
• Cree Dog

• When it comes to SINless types and shadowrunners, Long Arms gets away with criminal behavior. They shut down a hot chrome fixer I knew in T-Bay named Piggyback. Poor Piggyback never made it to trial. Dead in his cell. Makes ya wonder where all his warehouse items went.
• Turtle

• Long Arms has a training facility near Saskatoon on Longmiles' personal land. The Long Ranch churns out aggressive recruits through an absolutely brutal paramilitary boot camp, followed by a consistently rigorous training regime. No lie, the instructors are tough sons-a-bitches, and many are real world Desert Wars vets.
• Loose Noose

MILITARY AUTHORITY

War Chief Doxtator hails from the Oneida tribe (one of the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois, tribes). He's a pit bull, selected for the position by the AMC military's joint chiefs of staff as the one most likely to get revenge for Hillborn's death. He's been straining at the leash to go after the Manitou, but he's been held to heel so far.

• Part of the hold up has been interference by Ceremonial Chief Hawksford, who consistently vetoes any outright aggression proposed by the other Chiefs. Suprisingly, Aztechnology is also urging restraint, thanks to Azzie Board Member Oliver McClure. In order to bypass these restraints, Doxtator has been working closely with Longmiles. If anyone pulls the trigger first, it's just as likely to be Long Arms as it is the army.
• Welt

• Bulldrek. The real reason the Azzies don't have Doxtator's back is because they're preoccupied with their other problems (Denver and the Yucatán). They can't commit the backing he needs, so he's forced to wait until they're ready.
• Feather Duster

• The War Pig has pulled most of his troops out of Thunder Bay in order to close off the MC border—that's right, Thunder Bay is wide open. Long Arms doesn't have the capacity to stem off smuggling runs like the military does. I do believe it's time for respectable folk to make themselves scarce.
• Hickory

JUDICIAL AUTHORITY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

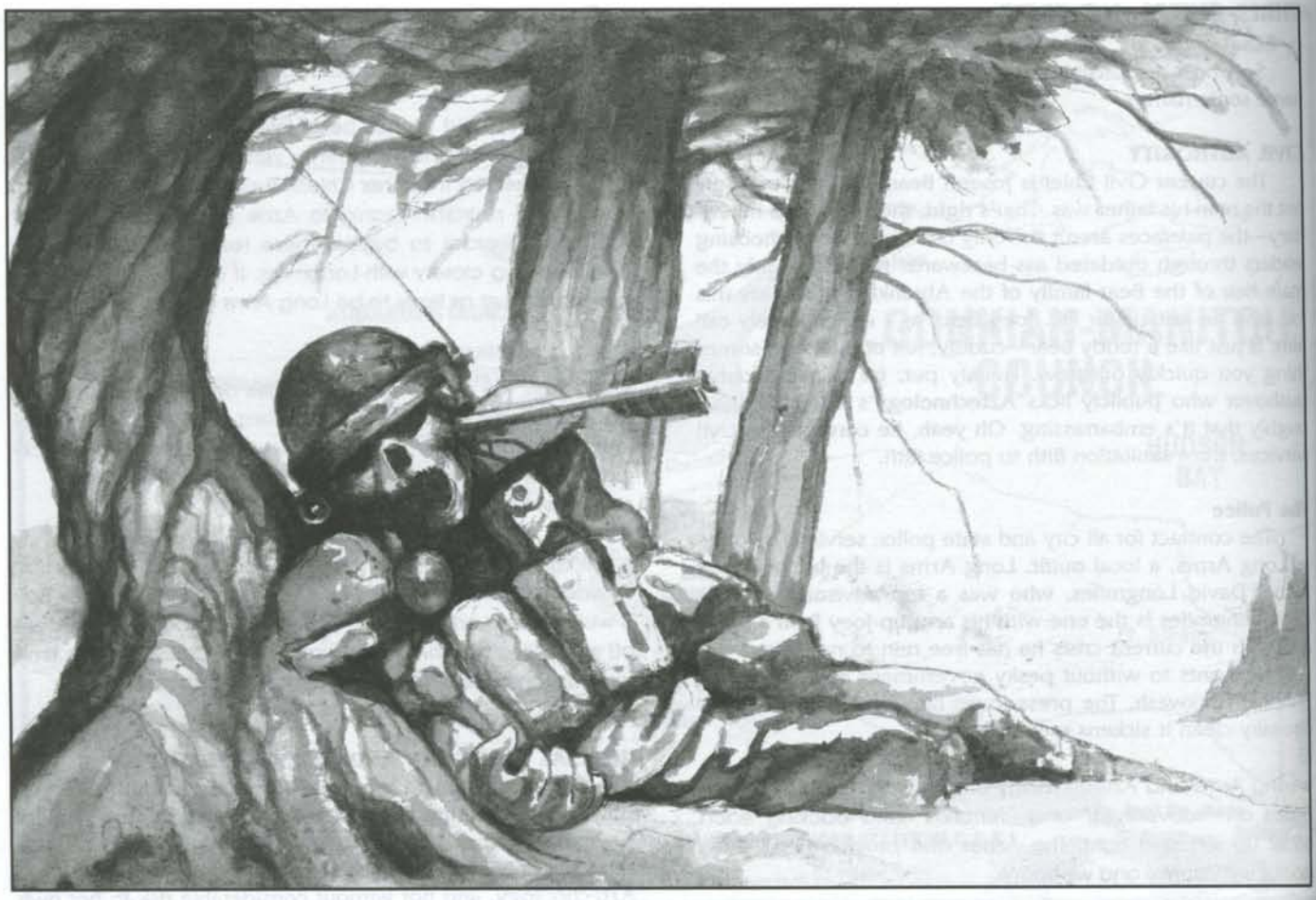
Ceremonial Chief Laura Hawksford is in her fifth and possibly final term. Though she's Algonkian, she's very popular among the other tribes, including the Manitou. That's cuz she's the only one with enough backbone to stand up against Aztechnology, and not without considerable risk to her own career. Since the Calgary and Hudson Bay incidents, she's been one of the few voices of reason and moderation. It may be that she's the only one holding Doxtator back from invading Manitou lands, thus staving off a civil war.

Hawksford's popularity is waning under increasing pressure from the other Chiefs who now openly blame her for "stalling" and "deadlocking" decisions. She is not expected by any media polls to win the next election, especially facing her challenger, Chandra Culpepper (an Algonkian). Culpepper is campaigning on a platform blaming Hawksford for "mistakes of the past."

• Even if Hawksford pulls through and wins the election, her days are numbered. You don't slot off a wannabe dictator like Doxtator like she has and get away with it.
• Cree Dog

THE PEOPLE

You don't get much more rural than the AMC. Most settlements are small and few and far between. Though Matrix use is common, it's used more for internal local affairs than it is to connect to the outside world.



Up here, townsfolk take the word "community" much more seriously. Even when a town's population isn't all of the same tribe or isn't all related by blood, they stick together in the face of hardship and especially against meddling outsiders. It used to be that travelers were welcomed and shown hospitality, but times have changed.

Given the scarcity of police, most towns take the law into their own hands, collectively making judgements and inflicting punishment. Outsiders or those who don't accept the punishment are stripped of their belongings and banished.

Ecological awareness is also at a higher level in these parts than elsewhere in the world. The big crop failures of the early 2050s, that put us on the brink of disaster and then in Azzie hands, aren't forgotten. Though the country survives on modified cereals and grains, there's a lot of distrust towards genetic engineering and other high-tech business. There's also a lot of grassroots support for eco-activists and Manitou policies, not to mention a general dislike of the Azzies.

• Not everyone in the AMC is a Luddite. There are a few factory towns, but they're known to get a lot of flak from eco-conscious neighbors. And the Azzies have learned to keep their sites locked up tight and not to leave any vehicles unattended.
• Parker

Anglos weren't pushed to leave the area like they were elsewhere in the NAN, so most stuck around. Amerinds hold all of the positions of importance, though, from government offices to the private sector. The police and military are almost exclusively tribal, and only native shamans are allowed to be judges.

• Anti-Anglo and anti-elf bias are common in the cops and courts, so don't get caught!
• Mumia

Though they're not the biggest tribe, the Algonkians have made a concerted effort since the Ghost Dance War to get their way. The Ojibwa (or Chippewa) and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) have started to take a stronger hand in government affairs, but it will take some doing to unhorse the Algonkians. The real strength of both tribes, however, lies in their secret societies. The Ojibwa have the Midewiwin, a shamanic heal-

ing society historically founded to fight the diseases brought by Europeans. The Haudenosaunee have a similar medicine society, the False Face, but are also troubled by a resurgence of secret Warrior Societies. Both the Midewiwin and the False Face tend to operate like social clubs, with the members secretly supporting each other and pushing their own agendas. The Warrior Societies are a different matter—they range from vigilante crews to cults to gangs.

• You can read about the False Face, the Crying Masks and the Warrior Societies in the *Threats 2* file that Captain Chaos recently posted.
• Pointer

THE MANITOU COUNCIL

by White Owl

The Manitou movement originally began as a group of elven dissidents, most of tribal background, looking for self-recognition and tribal identity. Adrienne Silvermoon came out of nowhere and whipped them into a political force. Under her leadership, the tribe adopted a strong ecological agenda, arguing for low-impact sustainable technology that didn't dominate people's lives. This appealed to many other AMCers, especially in the early 2050s when a genegineering "mistake" nearly destroyed the country's economy and left the door open for Aztechnology to step in, bail the AMC out and achieve a stranglehold over the nation.

Silvermoon's politics turned more extreme, opposing all technology and arguing for the return of a primitive lifestyle. Increasing Aztechnology dominance fueled the fire, resulting in several eco-terror attacks that claimed lives. Wiser heads in the Manitou movement saw where things were headed and tried to oust her. The first attempt failed, and several of Silvermoon's opponents died from various magic-related causes. The second succeeded when Silvermoon was allegedly eaten by one of her own spirits.

• The next Manitou leader, Derek Highsun, only lasted about a year before he disappeared. They found his body behind his barn after the spring thaw.
• Cree Dog

Since then, the Manitou have gone through many changes. The tribe adopted a strong focus on "permaculture"—the harmonious integration of metahuman communities and ecological systems. In other words, they try to utilize resources in a sustainable way, preserve wildlife habitats and genetic diversity, and build systems that promote stability both in society and in local eco-systems. Some of the more radical elements have "gone primitive," and/or continue to engage in eco-sabotage, but they keep it quiet so as not to bring a backlash on the whole tribe.

• Some of the Manitou eco-villages are quite impressive. They're so well-integrated into the environment that it can be difficult to spot the dwellings. They've also used their agroforestry, aquaculture and animal management skills for good defensive applications. Dual-natured plants and biofiber provide astral security and guardian animals warn of intruders.
• Turtle

• The Manitou are also excellent outdoorsmen. Many are skilled hunters (using every last bit of the animal) and trackers, and they know their territory well.
• Oneida Warrior

While the tribe continues to draw in dissatisfied elves, it unofficially opened its doors to other metatypes, as long as they agreed to abide by permaculture principles. This has swelled the Manitou ranks, though elves are still the dominant metatype.

MANITOU TERRITORY

When the Manitou severed their political and tribal relationships from the AMC, they claimed the northern triangle—everything north of Churchill River—as their own. The Manitou were the dominant tribal element in this area already, so it wasn't too difficult to snap a lid on it. They were quick to seize military posts, Long Arms stations and Aztechnology sites right away, though not without a few casualties. Soldiers, cops and suits were herded over the river, along with a few area residents who disagreed with the Manitou outlook.

• The refugees have been crammed into the worst neighborhood in Saskatoon, miles from their true homes. Their "government housing" is a few blocks of abandoned warehouses, cold as a morgue drawer during the winter. The locals are calling the area "Pigsty." Watch your back if you visit that area; the residents have nothing left to lose.
• Boolean Dream

The radicals among the Manitou took the opportunity to "decommission" every high-tech facility, plant, factory and workshop they could find in the area. Strict permaculture principles are now enforced throughout Manitou land. That means if you're sporting lots of chrome or high-tech gadgets, you'll be viewed with suspicion. Only electric fuel-celled vehicles are allowed—gas-guzzlers are "retired" on sight by Manitou patrols.

• Daiatsu-Caterpillar recently refurbished a construction-vehicle factory near Reindeer Lake, and they were quite displeased to hear that it fell into Manitou hands. I hear they're looking for a team to scope out the site and recover anything that the Manitou didn't loot or wreck.
• Fuzz

• The Luddites also took out a few key Matrix gateways and hardlines, as well as every cell/repeater tower they could find. Coverage in the area is spotty at best. I wouldn't risk trying to deck in that area of grid—dropouts and derezzing are regular occurrences.
• Glitch

The Manitou keep a close eye on the line they've drawn in the sand; no non-Manitou gets across without a good reason. Many of the bridges across the river have been destroyed or mined, and the rest are watched carefully. It would be gracious to call the Manitou border patrols "militias," they're more akin to posses rounded up from the nearest settlement. While they do have a few nice munitions floating around (thanks to those eco-cell connections), most are armed with hunting weapons like shotguns or even hand-made bows and arrows. They do have a slew of shamans on their side, though, so bring magic support if you expect to tangle.

• The Manitou have been known to use solar-powered drones on occasion. I guess they're allowed since they don't pollute or eat up natural resources.
• Razorsled

THE MANITOU INNER COUNCIL

The town of Lynn Lake has become the de facto capital of Manitou-land, and this is where most of the Manitou Inner Council can be found. The Council weighs matters of tribal policy, and generally directs the uprising. All decisions are made by consensus, so there's a lot of debate involved. As a tribe, however, the Manitou are decentralized, with individual groups and communities acting with a lot of autonomy.

• You know the saying about too many chiefs? This rule-by-committee thing is going to bite them in the hoop if they need to make any sudden emergency decisions. Their set-up is also something that smart shadowrunners can take advantage of if they know what they're doing.
• Boolean Dream

• Nonsense. The Manitou are smart enough to make wartime crisis decisions in a pinch. They just don't let any of their people gather too much personal power within the tribe. This also makes it harder for Doxtator to take out their leadership—it's hard to identify whom to target.
• Malatesta

• Don't think that old Doxtator isn't sending his best black ops boys up there. It's killing him that he can't get a handle on the situation within the MC. Word from inside is that he's lost four operatives already; they're officially "missing in action," but I scanned an internal data entry that hints at a defection.
• Glitch

• You're dreaming. Doxtator's crack teams aren't that weak. That squad was on their way back from their third recon trip inside MC lands when they ran across a Manitou patrol. Secondary sources verified that a wicked monster of a Boar shaman who calls himself Mean Tusk led the patrol that caught 'em. Those Manitou are barbarians, and they're just clawing for any excuse to grab a seat on the Sovereign Tribal Council so they can cause more trouble for the rest of us.
• Anchorhead

• Anyone got the scan on the "Silvermoon Coven?" I don't know much about these freaks, but I can tell you what I saw in court. Two Manitou elves got busted while they were stealing a hovertruck full of chemical tanks, and were brought in for trial on my watch. Mind-scans revealed that they worked for an initiatory group—they claimed a half-dozen shamans—who swear fealty to the deceased Adrienne Silvermoon. Here's the kicker—they say she's not really dead. The deposition scans like some hardcore religious drek, spewing about how Silvermoon is powerful enough to crush her enemies without having to be anywhere near them, or how she teaches them unknown spells of great power in return for their worship of her. One guy claimed that Silvermoon could shape-shift into some kind of monster, and they were worshipping her as a shamanic totem. That one ended up dead in his own cell that night. Anyone else got goosebumps?
• Judge Fred

• Cute story. Too bad I don't believe a word of it.
• Bung

• Y'know, I was thinking about the Calgary and Hudson Bay Incidents. Isn't it odd that they haven't caught anyone for the bombing? And didn't the other scene just smell of a set-up? It almost looks to me like someone's planned this whole thing out, siccing the army boys and Manitou on each other. Is it me, or am I being paranoid?
• Peephole

• You can never be too paranoid, chummer.
• Dirk

OUTSIDE THE MANITOU LANDS

by Billy Deuce

A few towns in other parts of the AMC have also cut ties with the government in solidarity with the Manitou. These towns no longer recognize the authority of Long Arms or the military. Some have banned them, creating a few tense situations. In some cases, nationalistic neighbors from the next town over have stirred up trouble with the "elf-luvvers," leading to street brawls, midnight raids and occasionally gun battles. You better be careful about what colors you're flying when you enter a new town, and watch what you say—especially if you're an elf.

Sympathizers all over the AMC have also begun using the term "Algonkian Council," at substantial risk of sparking a fight with bystanders. These are tense times for the nation, but things are finally getting interesting around here.

THE CITIES

Most of the cities in the AMC are nothing more than glorified towns. Saskatoon is the capital, and most of the country's industry will be found there or in Calgary or Grand Rapids. You'll only find a few shadowrunners and fixers in each, enough to count on one hand, and they all know each other. Smugglers, on the other hand, are thicker than flies. Luckily they're in and out enough that you don't get too used to their ugly mugs.

Most of the shadow ops center around the offices of the three chiefs and Long Arms in Saskatoon, or around Aztechnology's holdings in Calgary. The Azzies haven't replaced their tower, but their subsidiary Genetique has a monstrous office park smack downtown that a lot of smaller corps lease space from.

• Calgary used to be heavily patrolled by ACS security, but lately the Azzies have kept a low profile. I think they're trying to minimize themselves as a target and consolidate the few forces they have left on guarding Genetique. Since they pulled a lot of goons down south for the war effort, some of their branch holdings and subsidiaries are wide open.
• Pyramid Watcher

BORDER AREAS

Except for the Manitou lands, the AMC is an open sieve right now. The military only staffs customs and border posts at the major crossings; the rest of the troops are digging in up north. A few special outfits have been assigned to track down smugglers, specifically any jammers bringing aid to the Manitou. The rest of the border is simply watched with spirits and lots of drones that are built to endure the harsh weather and rugged terrain.

THUNDER BAY: THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

by Wanda Spokes

The last time I left Thunder Bay I thought I would suffocate. Everywhere else seemed dirty and backwards compared to my lovely hometown. That was a very, very long time ago. As I slouch towards retirement as the city's least-known supplier of high-grade vehicle parts, I find myself giddy with anticipation at the thought of escaping this drek-filled slum port. Ah, how times change.

THE SUPERIOR SIDE

Thunder Bay is at the geographic center of what was once Canada. Last century, it was a shining symbol of harmony and peaceful coexistence between two worlds (those of European descent and Native American descent). Now it's a symbol for smuggler runs and dark alley dealings.

When the AMC was formed, the Algonkians lobbied hard to have Thunder Bay on their side of the border. Why? Because they wanted to control the Lake Superior Direct Port Harbor Facility, christened "Superior Harbor" by city officials a week before the Treaty of Denver was signed. A product of the most ingenious application of modern engineering and contemporary advances in alloy construction, Superior Harbor is the most sophisticated port facility on the Great Lakes.

Naturally, the harbor cost a fortune to keep in operation, and the AMC didn't keep up with the bill payments. Nary a decade went by before a good chunk of the harbor's control systems fell into major disrepair. They've kept some of the automatic docking systems going, but they've given up trying to monitor all of the traffic that comes and goes. There's simply too much to cover. And what smuggler can refuse the temptation?

• Smugglers have dirtside operatives who continually work to prevent the overtaxed Port Authority from setting up any organized policing of the harbor, including some risky sabotage of military equipment. The whole harbor is in the hands of smugglers, thieves, crooked Port Authority officers, personnel on the take, the Mafia, the Yakuza, and a few ambitious independents. If I'm making the place sound like Hell's outhouse, that's because it is.
• Turtle

• Ya can't swing a dead cat in T-Bay without hitting a shadowrunner willing to do a harbor job. Any job. There's more nuyen flowing through T-Bay's secret channels than anyone knows, and doin' dirty work for the big T-Bay smugglers is a fast way to make cred-zilla. I should know; I'm walking away after just two years in the shadows, set for life.
• High Rolla

• Wouldn't that be because of a lucrative Aztechnology run this summer, Roll-a? Try to run. Leopard loves to hunt.
• Spotted Sam

• The only shipments that make it out with anything resembling regularity are the (very heavily guarded) Azzie grain barges. They're the bread and butter of that exclusive contract they got with the AMC.
• Scale Tipper

• Thunder Bay is a major crossing point on the Igloo smuggler route, between Minneapolis and Québec. There's also a slew of smaller routes, from T-Bay to Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Fargo, Seattle, Vancouver and Edmonton. The prime goods to move are electronics, weaponry (there's a civil war coming) and basic necessities (food, clothing, survival gear).
• PPE

THE TRADERS

Despite all the black market traffic pulsing through the port, T-Bay hasn't been a prime magnet for syndicates. Most of the action is still handled by gangs, small crews and independents. The Warrior Societies tend to have the largest

operations, when they aren't busy slitting each other's throats. Turnover is high, and allegiances rarely last longer than a season.

• I've heard some pros say to avoid places like T-Bay. "The risks are too high," I hear, and "You never know who the drek you're working for." In the end, though, the nuyen is just too good to ignore. I hear a lot of jammers talking about how this will definitely be their last T-Bay run—then they get the follow-up call offering double what the last job paid.
• Turtle

• Whatever you do, don't take Thunder Bay solo. You think you're tough? Fine. Head over to The Flowerpot on Hamilton Street. They'll be happy to take you down a notch. Touring T-Bay is great for a few blokes to do together. Go out alone and you'll have more troubles than a skeleton in a dogpound.
• Roto Radar

The only syndicate presence of note is a new Yakuza venture with ties to some UCAS east coast rengos. A young man named Kobi Tanaka is the brutal protégé sent east by the gray-whiskers to assess Thunder Bay's profit potential.

• La Familia doesn't much care for the brutal winters up here in the tundra. Last I heard, the Allegretti family pulled everything out of town a few years ago except a downtown penthouse apartment and controlling interest in Cousin Jimmy's Trattoria.
• Mickey

• Don't be so quick to announce the Mafia's retreat. You obviously haven't heard of Big Pauly. He's little more than a gang leader, but he's got a lot of soldiers and they're not newbies to the racket. If you need a fence or a "specialty item," put the word out on the street for Big Pauly. He'll send someone to deal you in, but careful on the negotiations—market price depends on Pauly's ulcer.
• Blue Heaven

• If you're looking for quality hardware, chummers, skip the bottom feeders and go see the military. The regular army will sell you their own uniforms, if the nuyen is right.
• Scale Tipper

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
by Doc Tonic

Lakehead would be famous for its magical studies programs if it weren't for the hermetic bias that dominates the academic community. As it is, the school is well-known within the NAN. That's because Lakehead's program avoids hermetic theory like the dogma it is and focuses on shamanic, somatic and metamagic studies. Class courses deal with subjects such as "Dreamquests 101," "Communing with Ancestors," "Principal Focus Techniques 301" and "Sortilege Signatures."

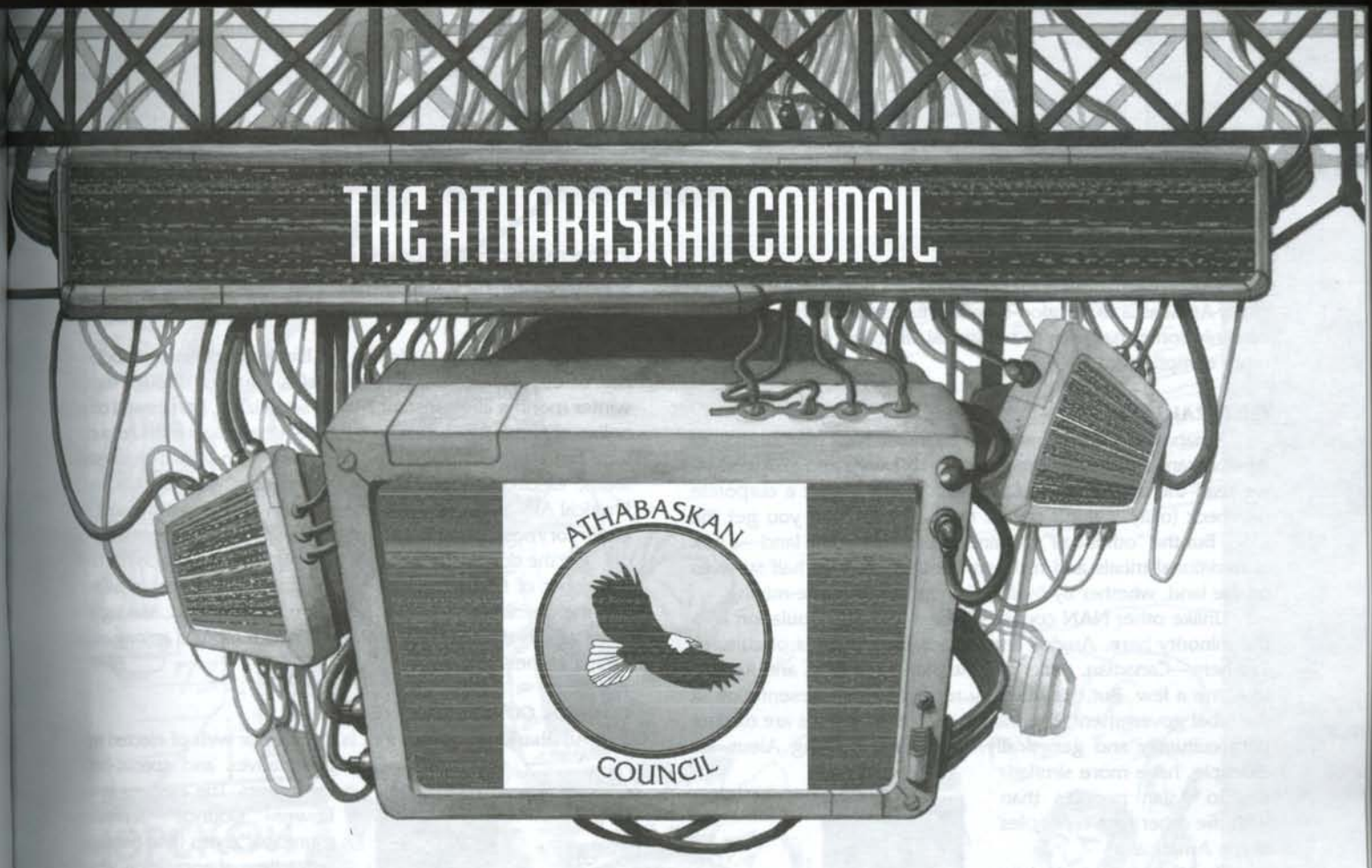
Lakehead courses are unique because they take a non-dogmatic and definitive hands-on approach. You won't find any formulas, complex incantations, or step-by-step ritual instructions here. In most cases, the professors merely act as guides who help their students find their own way through the course. Visionquests, dream voyages and artwork are standard homework assignments. Field trips and outings are common, even in the depths of winter, so students can undertake wilderness ordeals, find their totem or explore the spirit world without distraction. The adept courses are similarly intensive, ranging from advanced gymnastics to blind fighting and "spiritual endurance" courses.

• The Doc's not kidding about "hands-on." Students are required to sign non-liability contracts, and not a semester goes by without a casualty or major injuries, whether from exposure, prolonged astral projection or conjuring accidents. The student union even maintains a bail fund for assignments that really go awry.
• Alumnus

• Lakehead originally attracted a lot of attention from hermetics who scoffed at the course offerings and syllabuses. Then a group of MIT undergrads decided to switch over for a semester so they could directly refute and debunk the theories being taught. One died, another went crazy, and the rest were hospitalized for various lengths of time. Since then, a whole avalanche of hermetics have decided to take their shot and "prove themselves." Typical hermetic superiority complex. Most of them get wheeled out on gurneys, but a few are actually open-minded enough to learn something.
• Witch Doctor

• The Lakehead teaching staff goes through a lot of turnover as well, as courses are often as hard on the instructor as they are on the student. Nevertheless, the university draws in a wide range of medicine men, witches, warlocks and clever men—some of them world-renowned. There's also a free spirit on the staff that calls itself "Axeki." Weird thing is, no one knows what type of spirit it is.
• Accidental Occultist

THE ATHABASKAN COUNCIL



Athabaska—it's cold, it's beautiful, it has oil and fuzzy sasquatches. What more can you ask for? Quite a bit, of course, if you plan on running there and don't want to walk around with "outsider" tattooed on your forehead. I went to the best source I could find, a sister sysop named Aurora who runs the Shadowland node up there. She's drawn up the shadow tourist guide on Athabaska's ins and outs, so grab some cider and come sit by the fire.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 15:38:01 (PST)

by Aurora

Living in what I like to call the Land of Solitude is much different from life down south. Over half of our country's population is jammed into three major cities (Anchorage, Edmonton and Fairbanks). The rest are spread out among isolated settlements, sometimes separated by tracts of forest, mountain or tundra thousands of kilometers across, where the basics of modern life are neither available nor expected. Roads are few and far between, air travel is risky and even satellite communication does not reach many areas during storm seasons.

The climate is also a challenge. Though Athabaska isn't as cold as many think, especially during summer months, we do see snow six months of the year along with serious weather conditions in the fall and winter. The weather is simply something you always need to account for—it cares nothing about your tight schedule or how urgently your friend needs to see a doctor.

• Weather in the frigid north has always been unpredictable, but ever since the Ghost Dance, it's been down right chaotic. Electrical storms are not uncommon, and a stretch of calm can be followed by a blizzard and two meters of snow a day for a week. Global warming has upset the balance even further. End result: travel prepared. You don't want to be caught in the open tundra without food and supplies to last you several weeks.

• Woppler the Weatherman

LIFE IN THE LAST FRONTIER

Most sprawl runners that come up this way expect the people of Athabaska to be igloo-dwelling fisherman. While there are certainly some that stick to traditional lifestyles, the reality is far more complicated.

CULTURAL EXTREMES

Athabaska is a patchwork of cultures. The "new breed" of Athabaskans dominates the cities. Tech savvy and plugged in, we read the datafaxes, surf the Matrix and collect a corporate paycheck (okay, I don't collect the paycheck, but you get the idea). But the "other half" dominates the bulk of the land—a mix of traditional tribals and modern frontier-folk. This half survives off the land, whether by fishing, hunting or resource-mining.

Unlike other NAN countries, the Amerind population is in the minority here. Anglos and Asians from dozens of cultures live here—Canadian, American, Russian, Japanese, and Korean to name a few. But this majority receives no representation in the tribal government. The tribal people themselves are distinct both culturally and genetically; the island-dwelling Aleut, for example, have more similarities to Asian peoples than with the other native peoples of the Americas.

Throw metahumans into the mix, and you have a unique blend of traditions and outlooks that you can only find in Athabaska. Surprisingly, the rugged individualism equated with being "Athabaskan" holds us together more tightly than our differences tear us apart.

• It pays to carry a bundle of linguasofts when you come to Athabaska. Though English and Inuit are the common languages, you'll find plenty of folks who speak only in Athabaskan, Chipewyan, Russia, Japanese, etc.
• Lingo Slinger

THE ATHABASKAN MATRIX

To counter the isolation, Athabaskans turn to the online world. Several years back the Grand Council made a push to ensure that every community, if not every single citizen, had Matrix access. It was harder than they expected it to be. Violent storms often knock out satellite links, avalanches sever ground lines and high mountains make radio communication problematic. Despite the difficulties, Iris Firmware (a Renraku subsidiary) has built a redundant system of communication to connect Athabaskans together that works more often than not.

• Only the Edmonton municipal zone can count on reliable ground line connections to the outside world. Other zones must make do with satellite uplinks that are notoriously unreliable during heavy weather. It's usually easy enough to get around inside a grid, but getting out of the grid may be a problem.
• SOTA Jerk

The Athabaskan grids are the lifeblood to the technophile-half of our population. Nothing helps you get through dreary winter months like constant Matrix socializing, games and other online entertainment. Due to this, the Athabaskan grids are a cultural hot zone on the Matrix, brimming with virtual clubs, simfeeds, electronic gameworlds, sex parlors and weirder stuff. Physical Athabaskan nightlife remains on the decline because it's easier for most folks to jack into the e-space of their choice.

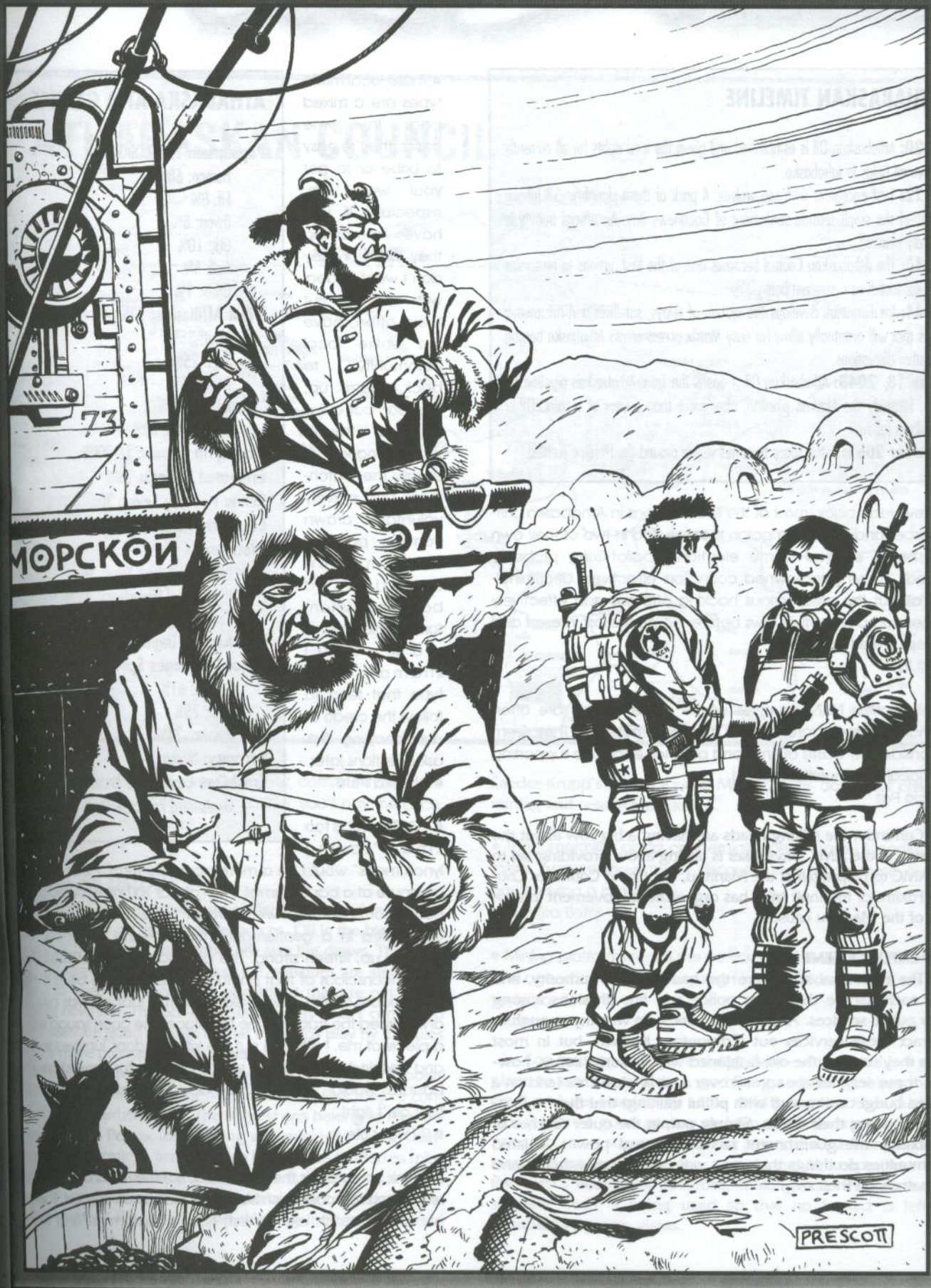
On the down side, the lack of anything better to do has bred a number of Matrix gangs. Young and impressionable hackers like the VerbatUMS and IC Skaters roam the grid, staking out hosts as private turf and altering system sculpture among other hacker games.

COUNCIL GOVERNMENT

Athabaska's government is a complex web of elected representatives and special-interest agents. The electees in the Lower Council represent municipal zones (two per zone, regardless of population, which slots off the urbanites). The reps in the Upper Council are elected by most votes in a general ballot, meaning that any special interest group that can rally enough votes can get a rep on board. Through some god-awful formula and processes that only about three people in the country understand, these two councils choose ten delegates to the Grand Council. An elected Governor runs the Grand Council for a five-year term, and hand picks ten more delegates (the "cabinet") to also sit upon it. The current Governor is Chief Delas Skyseeker of the Ahtena tribe.

Political parties are illegal (they encourage corruption, natch), so the entire system of elections is a free for all. Naturally, factions form, but they rarely last long. Every big corp, tribe and activist group in the country has a pet councilor or councilors, so there's a lot of back-and-forth as they each try to get their own way. When words and compromises fail, some of these groupings will call on shadowrunners to acquire the blackmail or political leverage they need.

• Only citizens who are officially tribally affiliated get to run for office or vote. Some of the reps have gone out of their way to meet the demands of segments of the majority population, but the tribals frown upon this and they don't usually last long.
• Netizen


73
МОРСКОЙ
PRESCOTT

ATHABASKAN TIMELINE

2020: Athabaskan Oil is established and given the land rights for all currently active oil fields in Athabaska.
2022: First encounter with sea wolves. A pack of them slaughter 53 inhabitants of the small seaside settlement of Goodnews Bay. An official bounty is rapidly enacted.
2040: The Athabaskan Council becomes one of the first nations to recognize the sasquatch as a sentient being.
2044: Iris Firmware develops the system of relays, satellites and microwave links that will eventually allow for easy Matrix access across Athabaska barring weather disruptions.
June 18, 2048: Athabaskan Oil re-opens the Trans-Athabaskan pipeline (T-AP), formerly the Alaskan pipeline, after more than a year of repairs. Other pipelines follow.
October 2061: Astral space becomes visible around the Harding Icefield.

• A few years back, most of the Matrix gangs in Athabaska united forces and ran a campaign that resulted in two of their own reps being elected (some electronic ballot-fixing probably helped). These gang-owned councilors effectively decriminalized all but the most serious hacking offenses and effectively eviscerated a few other laws before the gangs lost interest and the reps were forced out.
• FastJack

• Unlike other NAN countries where office holders are often shamans, shamans rarely run for office in Athabaska. They seem to consider it a waste of time and put their effort into supporting their local communities instead.
• Socio Pat

Currently, the talking heads are having a big row about the situation in the AMC. Skyseeker is talking about providing aid to the AMC to help against the Manitou, but Grand Councilor Chulach Foxfire of the Inuit tribe has organized a movement in support of the Manitou cause.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The municipal zones are the basis of civil authority, and they each handle their own police and fire divisions among other public services. A few of the zones are wealthy enough to contract these services out (Edmonton, Kodiak), but in most cases they're done the old-fashioned way. In some zones, however, these services are spread over such a wide area (and on a limited budget using staff with pitiful training) that they're incapable of doing their duties. Simply put, in the outer reaches of Athabaska, the government has little actual power. Isolated communities do things their own way, setting up watches and fire patrols on their own.

• These local militia types are a mixed bag. In some cases, they're easy to bribe or to get your way with, especially if you have something they want or they don't want to deal with a hassle. But they often have the entire local community to back them up, and can call out a vigilante squad with a vengeance. Usually the watchmen are entirely voluntary, drawn from a pool of civic-minded experienced backwoodsmen, former soldiers and powerful shamans—the type that tend to follow the credo of ass-whooping first, ask questions later.
• Alyeska Pete

• "Vigilantes" is too kind—"raving lynch mobs" would be a more accurate term. I was involved in a dispute at a bar in a small town about 100 klicks outside of Fairbanks. Some punches were thrown, but everything was eventually settled in a gentlemanly manner—until the local watch showed up, fifteen strong. The ork I had tussled with (and who was unconscious at that point) just happened to be a member of the local militia—and it didn't matter that he was piss drunk and started the fracas in the first place. The goon squad wanted a piece of me. I ditched out the kitchen door, jumped in my rig and headed for the wild. I was on the run for three days. Those bastards wouldn't let up! Three days for a scuffle in a bar! Now that ain't right.
• 9-Finger Steve

• I think your story is the exception, not the rule. I am a community watch member in an isolated Athabaskan outpost. The people of my watch are honest, hard working men and women

ATHABASKA AT A GLANCE

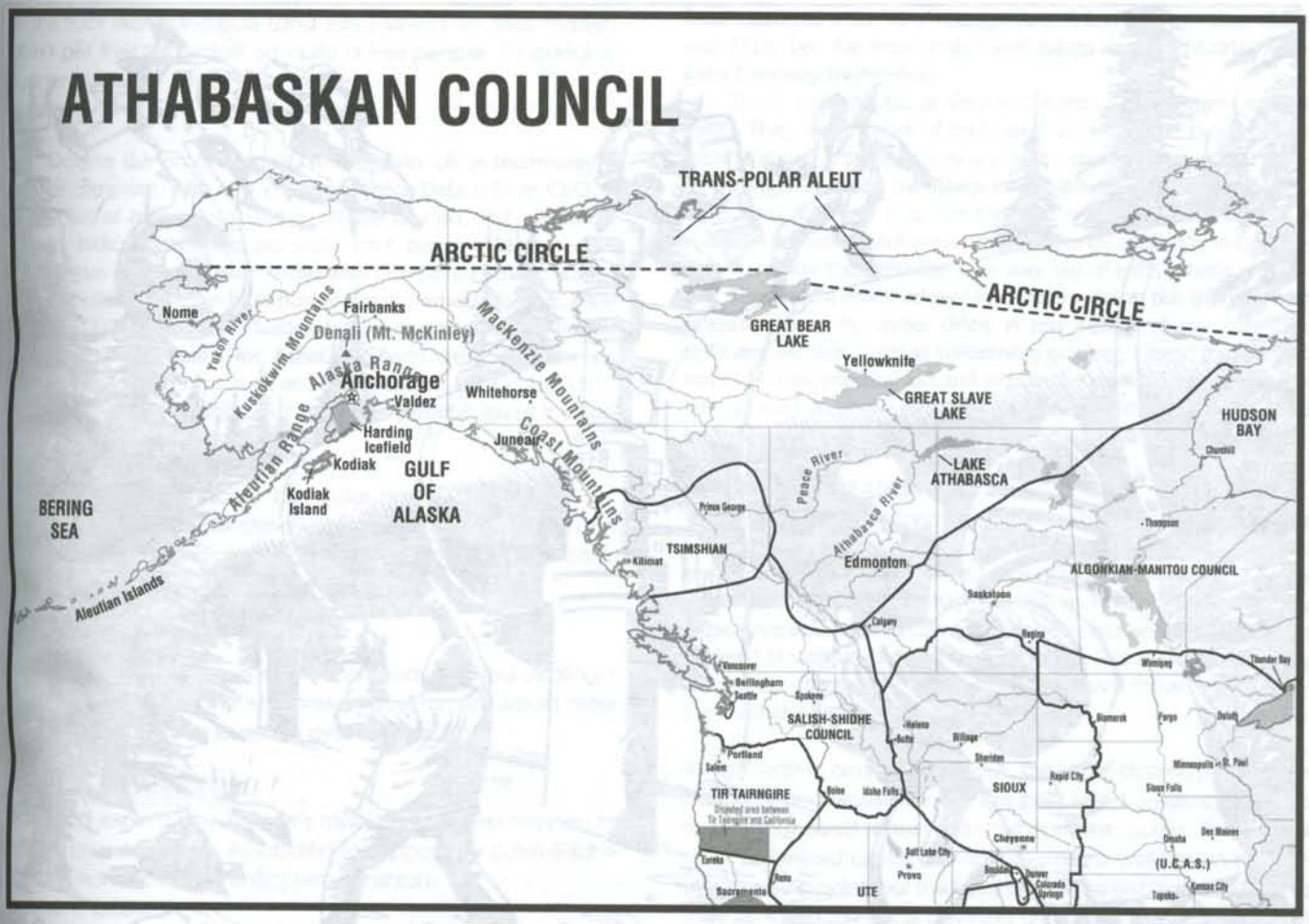
Population: 2,552,000
- Human: 68%
- Elf: 8%
- Dwarf: 8%
- Ork: 10%
- Troll: 5%
- Other: 1%

Tribal Affiliation: 22% of the total population
- Aleut: 35%
- Inuit: 25%
- Dene: 15%
- Koyukon: 5%
- Other Tribes: 20%

Per Capita Income: 16,000¥
Estimated SINless: 25%
Below Poverty Level: 30%
Corporate Affiliation: 10%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 34%
- High School Equivalency: 42%
- College Degrees: 18%
- Advanced Degrees: 6%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 61%
- Inuit: 25%
- Russian: 24%

Currency: Nuyen
CrashCart Coverage: Anchorage only
Guaranteed Response Time: 15 Minutes



dedicated to keeping the peace in their community. But we take our duty seriously. If you cause trouble, you'll pay the price. We like it quiet in Athabaska.

• Emille Darkdancer

BUSINESS AS USUAL

As much as the eco-crowd doesn't like it, Athabaska's economy is based on its natural resources. Oil is the biggie, but uranium, platinum, iron and timber are also big draws. The environmental regs are quite strict and the penalties are steep, but it's hard to keep watch on corp operations that are out in the middle of nowhere. The eco-activists certainly aren't convinced that the laws are good enough or that the corps play by the rules when it's more profitable to do otherwise.

All of the Big Ten megacorps have subsidiaries and/or operations in Athabaska except for Mitsuhama (I guess they're concentrating a bit farther south). The biggest ops belong to Aztechnology, through Pemex (oil leaching and mining), Marine Technologies (aquafarming), and Maritech Enterprises (undersea mining). Iris Firmware (Renraku) is the runner up, monopolizing the country's communications and entertainment infrastructure. Wuxing makes a killing off of the shipping industry here, and Saeder-Krupp's Trans-Oceanic Mining owns dozens of offshore mining and research platforms.

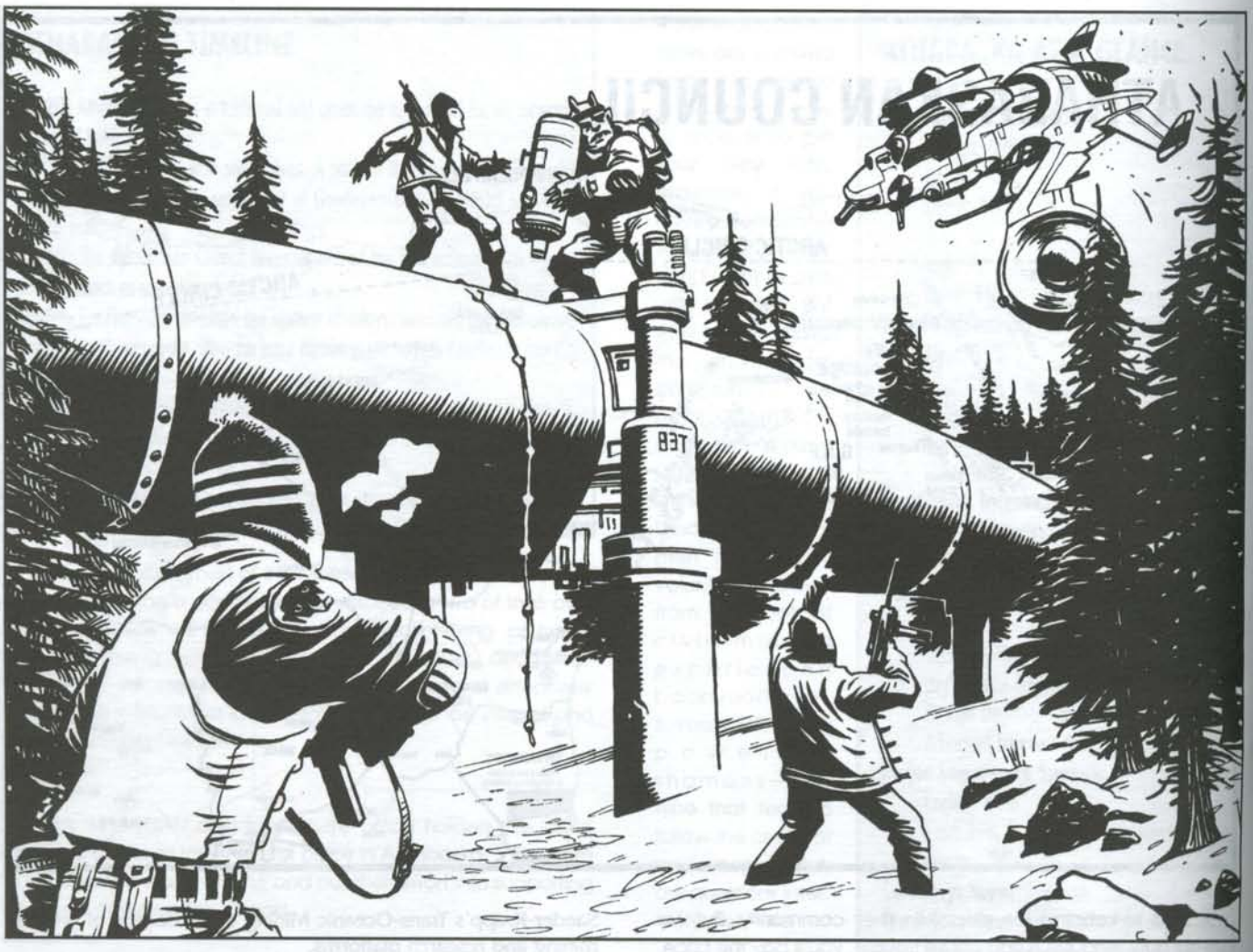
• The rumormill is abuzz concerning one of Trans-Oceanic platforms. Apparently, a major discovery was made there, but no one's saying a thing.

• Bravura Betty

• Mining platforms make me nervous. Ya never know in this day and age what someone is going to dig up. Some things are better left buried.

• Intacto

Eco-tourism is also a thriving trade—Athabaska is a great place to see the outdoors, go hiking and skiing, blow lots of cred, and get mauled by some wild paracritter. For shadowy types, there's good money and fun to be had running security escort or rescue missions for spendthrift adventurers. At least this tourism forces the government to keep a watch on the corp's ecological activities, making sure the latest eco-sensitive tech is being used so that no impact is left on Athabaska's pretty vistas.



• Whose strict standards allow the land to be raped by outsiders that have never lived upon it? This was once called the Great Land, but I call it that no longer. We have become the land of compromise in the name of progress. Some one must speak for the land and the creatures that cannot. This voice will ring in the ears of Gaia's enemies.
• Inupiaq

ATHABASKAN OIL: BLACK GOLD

The most important resource in Athabaska, without question, is oil. Though world demand has declined, so have the available reserves, and oil is still a necessity for plastics. The Athabaskan government realized it needed to take advantage of this resource early on and keep a firm grip on it. So they worked a deal with the Trans-Polar Aleut nation, who owned the Prudhoe Bay oil field but lacked the money and infrastructure to properly utilize it. Then they nationalized a small Anglo-owned corp, turned it around as a new outfit called Athabaskan Oil, and refitted the Trans-Athabaskan pipeline (TAP) that stretches from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez. Other oil fields and pipelines followed. Critics of the government's actions were placated, as Athabaskan Oil used an oil-leeching bacteria process (leased from Yakashima) to extract oil in an eco-friendly manner.

• As the nation's pet corp, AthaOil has been granted access to oilfields after other corps have been denied, which hasn't made them many friends. Even when ecological damage is a serious concern, AthaOil has a way of pushing roadblocks aside and getting what they want.
• Maverick

The kicker, however, is that a major percentage of Athabaskan Oil's profits go directly into a "TAP Fund." Similar to the permanent fund of US and Alaskan historic fame, these profits are divided in a generous split with the tribal people of Athabaska. Every tribal citizen receives an even share in an annual check that goes far toward relieving what could be abject and near-universal poverty.

• The fact that non-tribals (and tribal SINless for that matter) don't get their share slots off quite a few people. It's certainly fuel for the fire for some hatemongers.
• Drifter

Despite the profit sharing, Athabaskan Oil is technically a private company, with ex-Governor Patrick Delacroix as CEO. It gets a lot of mileage for being tribally owned, but persistent rumors indicate that the full-story isn't being told. For one, AthaOil has a strange relationship with Northern Plastics, another Athabaskan corp. An Inuit businessman named Norman Fisher is the CEO of Northern Plastics, but he also happens to be the chairman of the board for AthaOil. Shady dealings between AthaOil and other corps such as Saeder-Krupp, CATCo and United Oil have come to light, but AthaOil's position gives it a surface that no dirt can stick to.

• AthaOil may technically be under native control, but not native Athabaskan. Look closely at the corporate hierarchy and you see some familiar names from another native corp: Gaeatronics. I doubt that this is a coincidence.
• Monkeywrench

• Oh please. What corp doesn't have shady business dealings? Do you honestly think the Athabaskan government would allow the Salish to gain such leverage over their country?
• Skeptic

• It would explain why AthaOil's main backers also happen to be the ones calling for Athabaska to support the Salish-Shidhe Council in their border conflict with Tsimshian.
• Green Piece

• Say what you will, the Athabaskan fund pays out a decent sum of money every year, often enough to survive for several months, and puts a bunch away for the future in sound investments. Just another way the government is looking out for us little folk.
• Digger

• Blood money paid to the hapless for their tacit support. Think of this as whoring your sister for a pittance. I hope it makes you angry, it does me.
• Monkeywrench

SHADOWPLAY

Athabaska has its own unique criminal element, from gang bangers to mob bosses. The lack of much to do up here means that we have a lot of idle youth, and that means we have a bunch of BTL addicts, junkies, prostitutes and thrill-gangers. Gang conflict isn't too common, simply because there's plenty of space for everyone. Instead, gangers get themselves injured and killed by racing snowmobiles, ATVs and dirtbikes, or they find other daredevil pursuits like holding climbing contests during icestorms. Some gangs have adopted the traditional Inuit facial tattoo as a brand of recognition. A few of them deal drugs and BTLs, but the most organized gangs are the Matrix hooligans I already mentioned.

The Russian Mafia, or Vory v Zakone, is the biggest mob in town. They make most of their cred through vice rackets, data brokering and cutting a share out of the smuggler trade that passes through. Most of the fixers in Athabaska have Vory connections, and the Vory also run the best smuggler dens and fix-it shops. The Triads also have a minor presence, primarily in Edmonton, but so far they and the Vory stay out of each other's way.

There are a few shadowrunner teams doing biz, though most operate out of the major cities. A few independents offer their skills and services such as wilderness guiding, rigged transport to remote areas, medical aid and implants. Gear isn't exactly plentiful and easy-to-come by up here unless a shipment happens to be passing through, so bring any specialty items you'll need.

CLANDESTINE TRADE

Athabaska is a stopover point on the Seattle Sea Run, the smuggler route between Vladivostok and Seattle. For a poor and isolated country like ours, the black market is essential for keeping even regular citizens happy. High tech goods are especially expensive and hard to come by up here, but an armada of "free traders" is willing to meet that demand. This is where the Vory are solidly entrenched, fleecing Athabaskans for access to shipments that pass through.

• High tech in and low tech out. There are dozens of smuggler hangouts and waystations in less populated areas, catering to traders that need to rest, hide out or make repairs. The seaside town of Seward (south of Anchorage) is a well-known major t-bird stopping point, but the local authorities get their fair share so they've failed to notice anything unusual. Some of the dives in this town are great for private meetings or finding local talent.
• Slipstream

Athabaska is ideal for smugglers who prefer to operate on their own, without syndicate backing. A large cargo plane or boat filled with goodies bought at market prices in the southerly cities and piloted up here to be sold with net a solid two-three times return on the investment. A few greased palms to avoid trouble and you have yourself a sweet little business.

• Over a hundred well run, technologically sound, private airports across Athabaska also make it easy for independents. Nearly one in twenty people in the Athabaskan wilds is a pilot and many of them have their own airfields tucked away for their own use, whether above board or clandestine.
• Josie Cruise

• A word of warning: while civil authorities and small town militias are easy to put on your payroll, corporate authorities are not. The corps do not take kindly to free enterprise, especially if you're moving product that's in competition to their business (and to a megacorp, that's everything) or that's going to rile up their

docile corp citizens (mindbenders, weapons). Renraku has a fearsome rep up here—smugglers dealing goods to Iris Firmware citizens have been tracked down by Red Samurai in the past and left as examples to the rest of us.
• Traveler Jones

• Uh-huh. Trying to corner your private little market of Iris employees, Jones?
• October Red

Athabaska's wilds also contribute generously to the telesma trade that trickles back down south. There are few places in the world with as much unspoiled old growth forest as Athabaska. Virgin natural materials for magical use are the number one item smuggled out of Athabaska, a fact that has been a thorn in the Council's side for over a decade.

• If you deal in telesma, take care not to make a mess. The eco freaks have been known to treat telesma poachers as seriously as they do corp polluters.
• Alyeska Pete

GAIA'S COMMANDOS

The people of Athabaska have always been sympathetic to radical environmental politics, especially in the frontier areas. In fact, our population has been a recruiting ground of sorts for eco activist groups, from Save Our Seas to Terra First! Almost every eco-group you've heard of is active here, not to mention a few that you haven't. These groups keep an eye on the resource-exploiting corps when the Athabaskan government doesn't, and they're more than willing to expose polluting practices or simply sabotage corp operations they don't like. The eco-freaks up here are a little more down to Earth—we don't seem to draw out the terrorists and toxic nut-jobs that have sprouted up in more eco-devastated areas. Most Athabaskan eco-activists only target property, and won't do a job that threatens anyone's lives (except for some corp slimebags that really ask for it).

• A few eco-groups run training camps out here in the Athabaskan wilds. Ecoteurs who have been vouched for can spend a few months learning how to research polluters and sabotage equipment, in addition to security and wilderness survival skills. Some of them specialize in doing runs using non-lethal gear to neutralize guards and guard critters.
• Gremlin

• If the ecoteurs think that a job is too tough for them, they'll hire runners to do it for them. Sometimes they'll pick runners with a conscience, other times they'll look the other way of any collateral damage. The corps will also hire runners to infiltrate and break these eco cells up.
• Green Piece

• Some of the Amerind eco-cells are talking about getting together and forming a pan-NAN eco-cell network. They figure they'd have more impact if they coordinated actions, focused on specific targets, harassed polluters at home and abroad, that sort of thing. Could be a potent force if they pull it pogether.
• Bettina

Inupiaq

The personality known as Inupiaq (literally "voice of the Inuit") is prolific on the public datanets. Though no one knows who this person truly is, he (at least, I assume it's a "he"—I could be wrong) has become an outspoken political and ecological commentator. Thanks to some media grandstanding and cleverly orchestrated publicity stunts, Inupiaq has become a household name whose arguments are listened to and debated on a daily basis. Though his opponents label him an extremist and a terrorist, even they are forced to respect him.

Inupiaq's primary argument is that the Inuit people should be living in harmony with the environment and free of outside influences. He has consistently exposed institutionalized biases against the Inuit as well as corporate crimes. He and his followers believe that by allowing corporations (even those owned by the people of Athabaska) to plunder the land on a mass scale, the promise made with the founding of the nation was broken.

• A promise was made. A promise of freedom, equality and a new way of life in harmony with the Earth. That promise was not kept, nor do I believe it was ever intended to be kept. We have traded one master for another. This one has skin to match our own, but its heart is just as black.
• Inupiaq

Inupiaq's articulate and pragmatic arguments have swelled the ranks of Inuit eco-activist groups. His followers have consistently hampered Athabaskan Oil operations, destroying millions of nuyen of equipment each year—but none of the other Athabaskan corps escape their wrath either.

• Despite being a terrorist and a racist, Inupiaq still has some supporters in the bureaucracy. His mindless lackeys always know just where to strike and what kind of opposition they'll face. He may be a fanatic, but he is a well informed fanatic who has managed to stay one step ahead of the military and corporate forces for years—and that smells to me of inside support.
• Cold Warrior

• That's the way to toe the party line, CW. I can't count how many times I've heard political factions try to slander their opponents by charging that they support (or even that they are) Inupiaq.
• Anchor Man



• No one knows who this guy is? Wrong! It's obvious that Inupiaq is none other than former Councilman Henry Kiktlup. The words are the same; they've just gotten more seditious and dangerous. Stop pandering to the dirty Inuit and get your heads out of the sand.
• Stranger

• Snore. Inupiaq was just an idea some eco-activists came up with to both rally support and divert attention. They take turns playing the part, and while the authorities waste time trying to track a non-existent person down, they're busy throwing a monkeywrench in the gears.
• Nightwalker

PLACES OF INTEREST

The cities of Athabaska are not the urban sprawls most of you are so used to—no towering skyscrapers and urban canyons here, chummer. Land has never been a premium, so there was never a need to build taller. Just put another block on the edge of the city if you need more room. All the cities here are planned, with streets laid out on a grid and highly accessible highways. The Anchorage and Edmonton municipal zones cover an area many times the size of Seattle but with less than half the population density.

• Something you won't hear much about is the encroachment of wilderness. The wild animals tend to roam where they may, often into the cities themselves. These encroachments are not always peaceful or cute—ever see a grizzly smack a dumpster your way like a hockey puck? At times, it's as if nature were waging war on us.
• Alyeska Pete

• There's been more than one incident where outlying towns just dropped off the map. Suddenly someone realizes the residents haven't been heard from in a month, but by the time someone checks it out there's little left. Sometimes there are signs of a struggle, sometimes the town is lost under snow and ice.
• Drifter

ANCHORAGE

Anchorage ain't the political capitol of Athabaska, but it is the shadow capitol. Every major player in the Athabaskan corporate game is in Anchorage. There is a Shadowland site (run by

yours truly) and there are restless natives. Multiple major air and ship ports make Anchorage an easy trip from anywhere along the western Americas and Eastern Asia. Just don't take the roads without some serious hardware—once you get outside of the municipal zone they are hardly kept up, and the asphalt is sometimes forty or fifty years old, if there at all.

EDMONTON

When Athabaska was formed, Edmonton beat out Anchorage in the competition to be the nation's capital, primarily because its telecommunications network was more modern and reliable (at the time). The rivalry between the cities still exists to this day, and bureaucrats and players in each city take whatever potshots they can to undermine the other.

• I've seen sister-city rivalries in other parts of the world, but they don't hold a match to this grudge. It's escalated from attempts to bury each other in red tape to large-scale pranks and outright sabotage in some cases. Anchorage officials once "mistakenly" directed a shipment of cleaning chemicals intended for Edmonton's Sanitation Department to the wrong address (Council Hall), then told the driver to "dump it" when he called in for orders—downtown Edmonton reeked of industrial soap for weeks. On the other side, Edmonton keystrokers "accidentally" published the home addresses and person telecom codes of just about every person in Anchorage's municipal government on the Matrix. Spammers, cranks and every slob with a grudge had a field day.
• Anchor Man

Council Hall, the seat of Athabaskan government, resides in an unassuming two-story brick building in the center of Edmonton. A lot of tourists walk right by without realizing it, but the carefully concealed security sniffs, assenses, scans, probes and lays crosshairs on anybody even remotely suspicious who comes close.

Edmonton is sparkling clean as far as sprawls go. Hell, clean is an understatement—I'd eat off the sidewalks in some areas. Just outside the city proper, however, the story is quite different. For multiple miles in almost any direction, clusters of massive oil refineries loom over the wilderness like black iron gods. The squeal and thump of the pumps and machinery carries for miles, and the air is a thick, chemical soup.

• This area is a playground for eco-cells. Most of the newbies cut their teeth here.
• Monkeywrench

FAIRBANKS

Bordering on the Trans-Polar Aleut nation and home to the greatest length of the Trans-Athabaska Pipeline, Fairbanks is probably the coldest place in Athabaska—in temperature and attitude. Most residents work on the Slope, a local term for the oil fields, or for one of the scientific research companies. They do not take kindly to outsiders or eco-freaks, especially ones that threaten their delicate way of life.

• Substitute cold with downright xenophobic. And remember, foreign is anyone you don't recognize.
• Blade

• I have my own theory on the attitude problems in Fairbanks. Ever hear of sage? Not the kind you're used to, but the hallucinogenic fungus growing in the moose crap in the wild lands surrounding Fairbanks? Pretty rare and fragging expensive—and highly in demand by those in the know. Fairbanks locals have a lucrative export on their hands and everyone from the outside is, in their minds, out to cut into their profits or put them in prison.
• Screeching Monkey

• I've experimented with sage and nothing compares. Reality splits in two and truth is revealed. You see everything—the whole world—exactly the way it is. I can't explain it any other way, my friends.
• Red Teeth

• If you want a more concrete explanation of the effects of sage, listen up. If you take it, welcome to the astral plane. The visit is brief and your ability to function within it is limited to almost nothing. But hey, look at all the pretty colors, dude!
• WayStead

• What if you are already astrally aware and you take this sage?
• Bravura Betty

• I know of a gathering of shamans who every year undergo a ritual where they take sage for a week straight. They're called the Sky Circular. Ask one of them, if you can ever find one.
• WayStead

KODIAK ISLAND

Though Athabaskans will never admit it, this island is practically owned by Ares. The local government is effectively in its pocket, and Knight Errant has a lock on anything moving on, off, or near the island. Ares bought out all of the US military installations here a few decades back and now their Alaskan Spaceport is one of the prime launchpads for a ride into orbit. A lot of traffic goes up and down between the spaceport and *Icarus*, *Daedalus*, *Artemis* and whatever other secret stations they've got up there. Some of those payloads are worth more than I care to know—if you ask me, throwing yourself against Ares security isn't taking a risk, it's suicide.

NOME

Nome is an easy jump over the Chukchi Sea and Bering Straight from the Siberian peninsula, and is therefore a major



smuggler haven. Nome has a high population of people of Russian descent and is the headquarters of Vory activity in Athabaska. In fact, the Vory have so thoroughly saturated this area that it's a lot like Chicago in the 1920's. It's a big open secret that the town is in the Vory's hands, and everyone's in on the party.

• The leader of the Vory here is a jovial guy named Nikoli Trapolov. The people love him. He's the closest thing to a celebrity around these parts. Lately, he's started to stretch his influence into Anchorage and Edmonton through the airports and dock workers.
• Svidrigaylov

WHISPERINGS BY THE FIRE

Unlike other countries, the sprawls are not the heart of this land, though they are just as vital to its survival. No, the true heart of Athabaska is in its wilderness, the long empty stretches where no one governs, few live and the ancient codes are rediscovered. As a shaman once told me, "These are places of the Mother, ancient places where the wind whispers her words, and the words are not kind. The mother is awakening and she brings with her Nature's Law."

• If you do a run in the Athabaskan wilds, keep this phrase in mind: "no one around for thousands of kilometers." You don't get second chances. You know what you are doing or you don't come out.
• Blade

• Outside of civilization, you'll be lucky to find a road to travel on, and you aren't likely to see a single other vehicle. Travel to the islands is all done by small planes and sea craft specially designed for the stormy waters that have become the standard up there.
• Josie Cruise

WILDLIFE

In Athabaska's wilds, you'll find many animals living like they have for centuries: bears, wolves, moose and caribou. The arrival of piasma, stormcrows, white buffalo and the latest SURGE critters has done little to alter nature's cycles. Two creatures, however, deserve special note.

First are the sasquatches. You'll find these big mute teddy bears all over the place, living in small tribal groups out of caves. They've also been known to take over abandoned outposts. There's no question of sentience here, and Athabaska gives 'em citizenship if they want it. Most prefer to be left alone, though some are willing to work as guides or trackers for the right goods. You'll also find 'em in various Athabaskan nightspots, making a living as musicians, bartenders and sound techs.

• This isn't Québec. If you come back from the forest with a sasquatch hide, you'll find a lynch mob coming after you in no time.
• Rabid

Second are the vicious fraggers known as sea wolves. The scientists are still trying to peg what sort of stock this critter evolved or Goblinized from. What they have determined is that it shows signs of heavy mutation from toxic exposure—primarily oil spills. It's a predator, the kind that likes to eat things that kick as they go down, and it seems to like the taste of (meta)humans. Sea wolves have been known to attack small craft directly and even to sneak aboard larger craft to find food. Even most eco-freaks won't defend them, so it's no surprise that the Council has issued a bounty for them.

• Current rate: 1,000¥ per sea wolf. Proof of death required (pelt with head). Fair warning: they're clever bastards, and SURGE seems to have affected them as a population and not just as individuals. Some sea wolves aren't identifiable as sea wolves any more.
• Rabid

POWER SITES

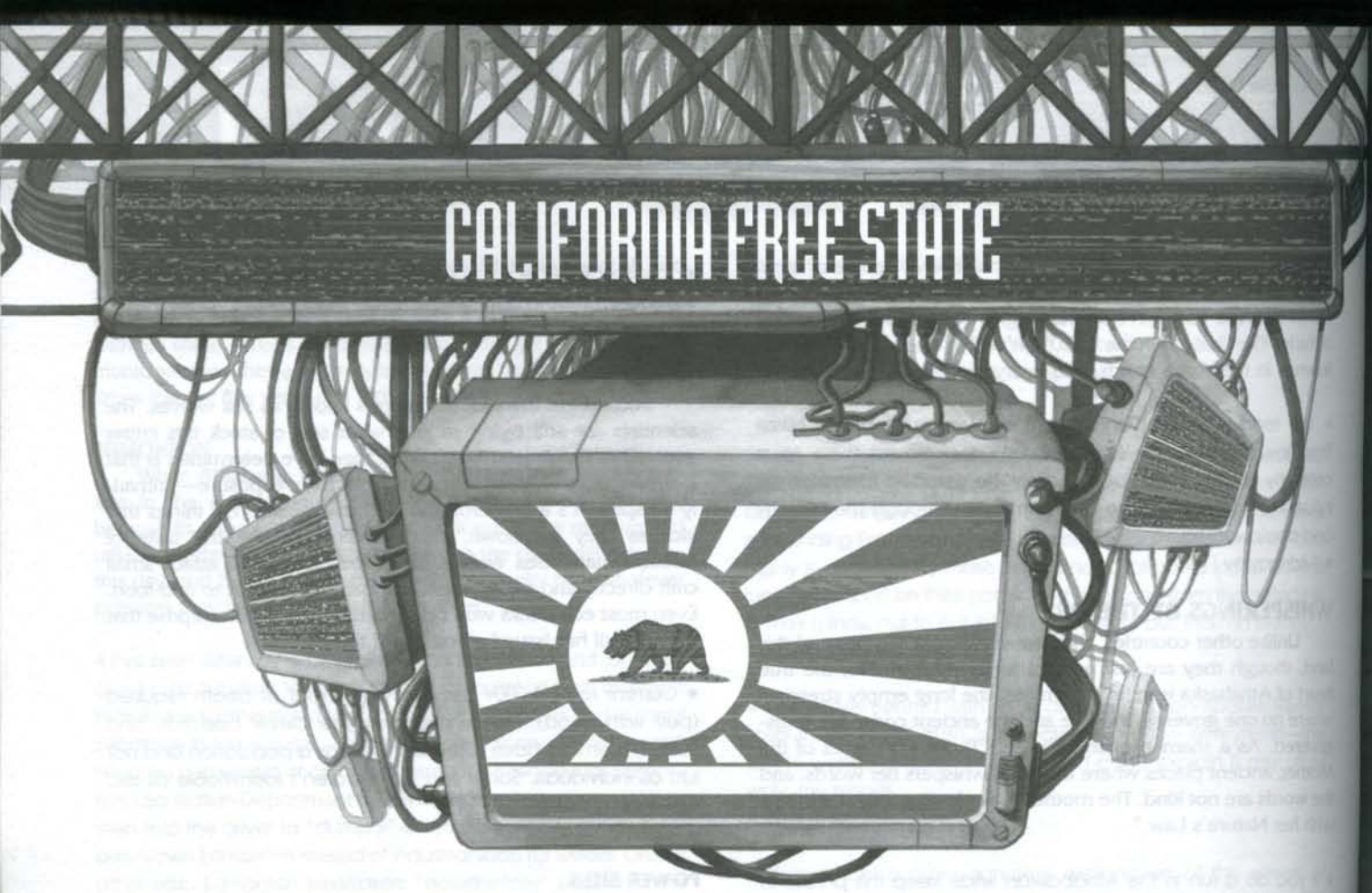
I'm not a spellslinger, but a mage I knew once told me that the sheer abundance of powerful magical convergences in Athabaska made him want to take up camping. The tribals consider many wild places to be filled with the power of the Earth Mother and the Sky Father. Each tribe has its share of sacred hidden places where the totems thrive, and few know where the places can be found.

Denali ("the Great One"), known as Mt. McKinley in the old days, is the most famous of these sites. It is the highest mountain in North America, with a vertical relief that surpasses Mt. Everest. To the shamans, it is a place where the Mother reaches for the Father and almost touches him. The veil between the worlds is at its thinnest, allowing for powerful journeys into the upper and lower worlds.

• Such is the power of the place that spirits can also cross from the other side, spirits that do not belong in our world, and as such the place must be defended.
• Silent Raven

The Tears of the Mother, also called the Harding Icefield, is another place that impacts even jaded mundanes like me. From what the spook-summoners say, mana lines converge here, coursing through waves of ice—a vast, untapped magical resource. Since the comet came, the astral plane is now visible here, and the sight is something to behold.

CALIFORNIA FREE STATE



With "Protector-General" Keiji Saito carving out a new empire from San Francisco to Sacramento, the Pueblo Corporate Council gulping down LA and choking on the Mojave Desert (for now), and the Northern Crescent's resident great dragon joining the government of Tir Tairngire, things have gotten a bit crazed in Cal-not-so-Free lately. All this upheaval means more biz for shadowfolk—provided you know who the players are and what you're getting into. So here's the real buzz on the state of the Free State, provided by some friends of mine who have been in the midst of it.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 15:40:46 (PST)

NORTHERN CRESCENT: SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY?

by Redd Dog

Powder keg.

That sums up the Northern Crescent these days. We've always had a rep for infighting between this dwarf town and that mixed-race fort and the ork gang enclave down the road, but our Wild West patchwork of settlements pretty much used to live and let live. There's so much wild land here to hide in, and the bickering over whose town was top or which mayor really spoke for the Crescent was mostly a sideshow. Now it's even more so. Petty squabbles over who's infringing on whose freedom don't matter when it looks like everyone might lose theirs.

Some background, for those that need it. The Northern Crescent borders Tir Tairngire, as does the biggest motherfragging redwood forest you ever saw. The Tir elves own some of those trees. They want all of them, including the ever-expanding portion on California soil. The redwoods, plus a generally un-drekked-up environment (think "clean telesma"), have made the Crescent an inviting target ever since CalFree seceded from the UCAS. In 2037, the Tir invaded and made it all the way to Redding before we kicked them back north. They ended up in Yreka, leaving the area between those two towns a no-man's-land.

For sixteen years, things were status quo. The elves sat in Yreka, we sat in Redding, and neither side made more than harassment raids. Then in 2053, the Tir tried to take over a major prize in the no-man's-land: Shasta Dam, which (with its accompanying large lake) provides the


CALIFORNIA
FREE
STATE
SAN FRANCISC

Crescent with a whopping chunk of our hydroelectric power. That time, they got their hoops kicked by a big wyrm, name of Hestaby, who'd taken a shine to the Shasta region and didn't want anyone messing with it. Hooray, we thought, we've got a great dragon on our side. She'll keep the Tir from sticking its toes in our water; everyone knows how much dragons hate elves. We've got a champion, and she'll never desert us.

• Fragging wyrm. Sold us out to the daisy-eaters. I dug my shelter deep, got lots of supplies. Still need a backup generator for when the lights go out. Anybody got one?
• Tiggerman

• Son, those of us as has 'em ain't sellin' for any price.
• Grandpa Joe

Last month, Hestaby did just that. Or so a lot of scared folks around here think, and I'm not sure they're wrong. Our dragon defender, who'd kept the Tir bottled up for nine years, joined their Council of Princes. She's one of them now. We don't know what that means, and we're afraid. That fear is making us do the impossible: unify. Granted, a quarter-century of mutual distrust between fiercely independent locales doesn't vanish overnight. But with Redding leading the way, a lot of smaller towns and enclaves are putting aside their differences, determined to show the Tir a united front when the elf army we half-expect finally comes waltzing across the border.



• There isn't going to be any elf army. Hestaby's gaming the Tir, for us. You think they don't know that? Check out the decibel level of public screaming over Hestaby's appointment. The Tir folk are terrified that she's on their Council.
• Shasta Sam

• We don't know that Hestaby sold us out; we don't know why dragons do anything. Maybe it was a political move, to nullify one front and make Saito think twice about moving north. If she did betray the Crescent, why hasn't the Tir invasion happened yet?
• Gypsy Lass

• Wait for it. And stock up on bottled water.
• Tiggerman

Biz-wise, the jitters in the Crescent are good and bad. Good if you're a combat type, mundane or magical—plenty of people figure war'll break out any day now, and anyone who'll help fight it is welcome. Bad if you're an outsider, which many of you reading this likely are. Everything you thought you knew about the Crescent—which towns are safe havens, which to avoid, who has clout and who doesn't, who hates who and how far you can trust them—isn't necessarily true anymore.

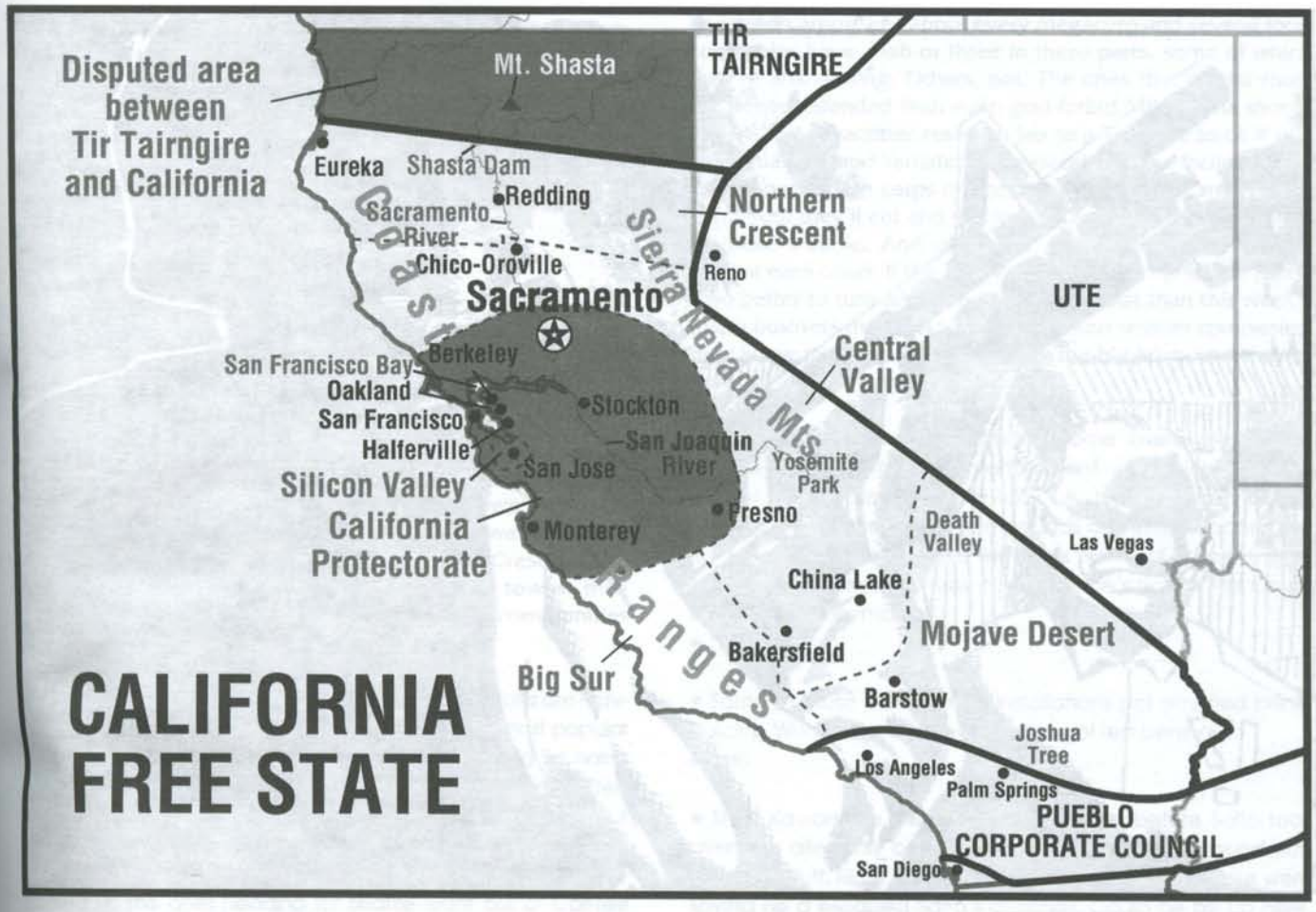
REDDING

My hometown has a bad case of war fever, and the temperature keeps rising. The City Council and most residents are convinced they'll soon see Hestaby leading a Tir vanguard out from Yreka. Wannabe recruits for the Redding Militia are flooding in, plus we're getting a fair share of refugees from the Bay Area and Sacramento who are sick and tired of running. They all need pay and equipment, which takes cred. The City Council's raised an impressive sum so far, especially considering the relative lack of ready cash around here. As the Crescent's major population and trading center, however, Redding does all right.

• Ares is sliding weapons and cash to Redding in a big way. They want it as a threat to hold over General Saito's head, should the little dictator decide to jander northward from San Fran.
• Dancer

• Right on the facts, wrong on the reason. And it's not just Ares. Saeder-Krupp's running milspec equipment to the Redding Militia, and to any other spot in the Crescent that'll take it. So's Cross and Wuxing. What they want is a lot more than a buffer against Saito; he's sewn up tight in central Cal at the moment. Their real objective is to get a firm grasp on the Crescent—that's why they're "helping" us. All the corps think they can buy us off. The more corp aid we take, the more they can pull our strings once the dust settles. The only thing still keeping us free is the sheer number of corps involved, from megas to local outfits, all looking to one-up each other instead of working together.
• Northern Star

• Remember Lester Brown, the Humanis goon who's spent years funding Native Californian night riders in these parts—along with every race-hating gang from the ork Redeye Tribe to the elf Ravens? He's been stepping up those donations and sending money to Redding, all to destabilize the place so that his best friend General Psycho-Saito will be "forced" to come up and take over.
• Mister Mike



• Brown's a Human Nation ringer. You just proved my point.
• Tomtom

Other than war jitters, though, Redding hasn't changed much since the last time I wrote about it. People looking to do biz can still find plenty of contacts. Some locals are more nervous about outsiders, especially elves and Asians (I'm sorry to say); fears of a "fifth column" never completely quieted down, and recent events have sent them spiking. On the other side, lots of my fellow citizens are welcoming visitors with open arms. If we're nice to you, maybe you'll stay and help out against the Tir.

• Crimes in Redding are still punished with hefty fines—even heftier with wartime expenses—or extradition to the Shasta border in the case of violent crimes and telesma-raiding.
• Militia Judge

SHASTA ENCLAVE

The Shasta enclave is harder than ever to get into these days. Anger over Hestaby's Tir Tairngire gambit is running high enough to make the forty-mile-or-so Shasta region a potential target for hotheads. In response, Hestaby and the shamans of Shasta Lodge have tightened control over who crosses their lands.

• Hestaby betrayed us. It's only a matter of time before the Tir makes a move. I know because I trusted her, until I learned better.
• Eyebright

• And who the frag are you?
• Skeptic

• I was one of the dragon's inner circle. Now I'm no one.
• Eyebright

• Drek. Hestaby doesn't have an "inner circle," and I don't know anybody at the Lodge named Eyebright.
• Shasta Sam

• Care to deny me twice more, Sam? I think that's the standard number.
• Eyebright



The bulk of the Shasta shamans—along with most people who live around Mount Shasta or its lake—remain solidly in Hestaby's corner. They're convinced she joined the Tir as part of some dragon-style chess game, with an end in mind that will ultimately benefit the Crescent. Common wisdom says dragons love intrigue like cats love tuna, so maybe they're right. But with no evidence either way, most people are bracing for the worst. Consequently, the Shasta shamans don't come out of their enclave nearly so much as they used to. The traveling homeopaths have largely shut up shop; they got tired of being sworn at, chased off or pelted with whatever was handy at eight towns out of ten. The few that still venture out are escorted by gypsy bands who tend to be well armed.

• Runners take note; if you're looking to hook up with the shamans for any reason, those contacts could damn you in the eyes of other locals.
• Blue Eyes

Rumors abound that the Shasta enclave has swelled with mystical power since the comet's passing. The mountain glows like a beacon on the astral, and there have been dozens of unconfirmed sightings of strange flying creatures. The Shasta Deer population also seems to have exploded, with more of them ranging further from the mountain than ever before.

GYPSY BANDS

The Northern Crescent's wandering tribes, descendants of citizens displaced by the 2037 California War, have splintered over Hestaby's joining the Tir. Until that happened, most gypsies counted themselves among the dragon's friends, and the feeling seemed mutual. The gypsies moved freely across the Shasta region, and none of them seemed intimidated by its scaly resident mistress. Now, some aren't so sure. Most bands either support Hestaby or give her the benefit of the doubt. Others are refusing to set foot on Shasta land in silent protest. A persistent rumor claims that the anti-Hestaby bands *can't* set foot on Shasta land—some mysterious wyrm magic or other prevents them. The gypsies themselves aren't telling.

• Of course the wyrm won't let them on her turf. The gypsy bands are so mobile that they make the perfect spies.
• Grifter

• Actually, they're the Crescent's first line of invasion-watch defense. I'm talking all the gypsy bands, not just the ones who don't trust Hestaby anymore. Even the ones who do trust her are nervous, and they're keeping their eyes peeled for Tir strike forces. No coincidence that many gypsy clans chose this time of year for a major gathering, heading up along highways 299 and 101. For you non-locals, 299 follows the disputed Tir border, while 101 snakes around within a whisker of Yreka.
• Native Son

Other than watching for Tir soldiers and shoring up Hestaby's vanishing reputation, the gypsy bands are heavily involved in CalFree's modern-day Underground Railroad. The Railroad got started in the 2040s, taking in metahuman escapees from the Japanese-controlled San Francisco Bay Area and the Humanis bigots running the Central Valley. Now the Imperials have taken over Sacramento, which puts all the bigots in one pot. The accompanying crackdown on metas and humans who don't hate them touched off waves of new refugees, plenty of whom are heading up to the Crescent. The gypsies hook up with them at regional border towns, then see to it that the new arrivals reach Crescent communities where they'll be welcome.

• The Underground Railroad runs both ways. Some folks are leaving the Crescent before war breaks out. The three most popular destinations are Big Sur, Chico-Oroville and Seattle. Big Sur has a rep for being the last bastion of freedom in the no-longer-Free State, while Chico-Oroville attracts those who want to fight, but have given up the Crescent as a lost cause. These folks see General Saito's Imperial forces as an easier target than a dragon-backed Tir. The ones heading for Seattle want out of CalFree altogether. Seattle is like Casablanca in World War II: a port of entry to farther-away places where they hope they'll feel safer.
• Greenboy

• The Railroad mostly trades in refugees, and the gypsies aren't too hot about shadowrunners mooching off their travel network. A few of them have sympathies to the Metahuman People's Army, though, and will provide aid and even smuggle weapons and supplies to support the cause.
• Partisan

CORPORATE PLAYERS

War jitters have hit the corps in the Crescent as well. Hundreds of corp facilities are scattered around this region, mostly R&D compounds. The two biggest corp poachers on Crescent land are Saeder-Krupp and Aztechnology. Officially banned in the rest of the Free State, they've taken full advantage of our lack of centralized authority to hide all kinds of installations. Dug into hillsides, buried in woodlands, you name it—everything from secret bio-gen laboratories to magical research.

Nowadays, with all the turmoil in the Free State, those hidden corp facilities are becoming either potential liabilities or armed camps. Just about every megacorp and several local companies have a lab or three in these parts, some of which they're abandoning. Others, not. The ones that matter most are better defended than ever; god forbid Mitsuhama should lose its top paracritter research lab to a Tir strike force if war hits. Shiawase and Yamatetsu are stacking some facilities with extra troops; both corps are heavily into biotech, and they're damned if they'll cut and run just because the Tir might want to make trouble. And of course, the corps are all arming against each other. If the Tir elves don't show up for the party, who better to turn all those troopers against than this week's major business rival? As for double-A and smaller companies, they know they're prime targets for the big boys, and they're determined not to go down easy.

• Pueblo's LA invasion produced some interesting fallout. Saeder-Krupp's Angelic Entertainment operations are on shakier ground since Pueblo took LA, so S-K's been quietly moving prime assets to its compounds at the old Hoopla Valley Indian Reservation and Six Rivers National Forest. Lofwyr wants another eye up here, too, since he's not on the Council of Princes anymore.
• Dragondrum

• Some of those abandoned installations got emptied pretty quickly. Wonder how many goodies got left behind ...
• Loki

• Shiro Kawanaga, the Imperial Governor before Saito took over, has allegedly been spotted in an Ares compound outside Red Bluff. Right after the Bay Area takeover, people were saying he'd escaped Saito's clutches. Could he be up here, plotting a comeback with Damien Knight's help?
• Raindancer

WATERJACKING AND SMUGGLING

Not even war fever stops the Northern Crescent's most lucrative—and cutthroat—source of income: waterjacking. CalFree's available water is anything but evenly distributed; we have lots of it, while Southern Cal has hardly any (to say nothing of the Mojave Desert or Ute). The Crescent has always been a prime target for waterjackers, the nice folks who steal H_2O and then sell it at a profit. Recent events have made waterjacking even more of a draw.

The newest players joined after the Imperial conquest of Sacramento. Protector-General Saito made himself few friends outside the Japanacorps with his moves on the Bay Area and the capitol, and lots of his enemies have been racking their brains for ways to frag him. Water is one of them—not as a weapon, but as a survival strategy. Most folks in the Central Valley think Saito's next target will be Chico-Oroville and its dam, the Valley's biggest water source. Opponents of that outcome are stockpiling water from the Crescent's lakes and rivers as fallback supplies. They want as much as they can pour into their tanks plus a few reservoirs, and they're willing to pay top nuyen.

CALIFORNIA TIMELINE

2030–2036: Secession fever builds in California.
2036: In response to secession threats, UCAS President McAlister withdraws federal forces and kicks California out of the Union. Almost immediately, Tir Tairngire invades from the north down to Redding and Aztlan captures San Diego. Hoping to shame the UCAS or CAS into support, California asks Japan for aid. Imperial Marines land in San Francisco "to protect Japanese lives and corporate assets."
2037: Guerrila warfare forces Tir troops back to Yreka. The land between Yreka and Redding remains contested.
2053: Tir Tairngire attempts to capture Shasta Dam, but is forced to withdraw by the great dragon Hestaby. Hestaby takes possession of the dam and surrounding area.
October 27, 2061: An earthquake rattles the Bay Area, along with the rest of the Ring of Fire.
October 29, 2061: Japanese troops are ordered to withdraw from San Francisco.
November 2061: Colonel Keiji Saito refuses to withdraw, staging a coup and seizing San Francisco, backed by loyal troops and corporate assets. Declaring himself Protector-General, Saito's troops move into the Central Valley, seize Sacramento and key sites and establish the Californian Protectorate. Ares troops defend Silicon Valley.
July 2062: Hestaby joins the Tir High Council of Princes.

• Customers on this list include the Small Farmers' Union, the California Agriculture and Water Society and the city government of Chico-Oroville. Plus, of course, any anti-Imperial farmer in the region prosperous enough to shell out.
• Jack B

• Ares is filling tanks in Silicon Valley, just in case.
• Zingo

Local mobs are in on the action as well, more so than before General Saito came to town. The Yaks have always done a certain amount of waterjacking, but the Mafia and Seoulpa Rings are trying like crazy to expand their existing market share. Saito's crackdown on non-Yakuza syndicates in the Bay Area drove a fair number of mobsters out of other lines of work; some of them hope to recoup their lost revenues by muscling in on the waterjacking biz. The mobs aren't strong enough to make serious inroads yet, but it's just a matter of time. Before long, the body count from the water wars is likely to blow the roof off.

Hardest hit by this turn of events are the independent waterjackers, the ones not working for some corp or mob outfit already. They have the fewest resources to fall back on, and they've been dropping like flies.

• Some of the so-called independents aren't. They're getting help from the Big Sur pirates, especially Grania O'Malley. I hear a few of them even work for her outright. Whether or not that's true, it's sure worth the pirates' while to protect the folks who get them the fresh water they smuggle to Southern Cal.
• Golden Vanity

• So much for the demise of the Worczek mob family. Saito and the Yaks supposedly crushed them when the general took over San Fran, but the buzz I hear says they've got a viable waterjacking operation up here. Based out of Rio Dell, with a branch in Redding. I wonder if Redding charges them taxes?
• Corleone

• Pueblo's getting into the waterjacking act now, hiring teams to keep LA supplied. Some of that likely goes to their troops in the Mojave as well. Scuttlebutt says the pay is excellent.
• Jack B

And then there's other kinds of smuggling, mostly telesma. It pains me to say it, but along with the generally green-minded residents are some who look on the Crescent as their backyard—and if they want to pull up the daisies and sell bouquets for CEO dinner parties, who's going to stop them? Oh, some towns keep a sharp eye out for poachers, especially around the redwood groves—but there are so many poachers and so few to get in their way. That was true even before the current craziness, and the past half-year has brought us bigger worries than who's peeling bark off the redwood trees. So if you're coming here to scrounge telesma, the pickings are pretty decent, assuming you get in and out before this place erupts. Just leave a little something for the rest of us, OK? Because we still live here. And we hope to stay awhile.

• I won't go near those redwoods again no matter how much you pay me. Fragging trees attacked us.
• Tusker

CFS AT A GLANCE

Population: 18,137,000
Human: 62%
Elf: 6%
Dwarf: 9%
Ork: 18%
Troll: 4%
Other: 1%
Per Capita Income: 28,000¥
Estimated SINless: 32%
Below Poverty Level: 27%
Corporate Affiliation: 48%
Education:
Less Than Twelve Years: 34%
High School Equivalency: 39%
College Degrees: 23%
Advanced Degrees: 4%
Major Languages Spoken:
English: 85%
Japanese: 17%
Currency: Nuyen
DocWagon Coverage: San Francisco and Sacramento only
Guaranteed Response Time: 10 Minutes
CrashCart Coverage: Bay Area only
Guaranteed Response Time: 5 Minutes

• What—they threw apples at you, Dorothy?
• Bung

• I've heard stories about the trees fighting back against poachers. In some places, the trees don't even care why you're there; if you're sentient meat, you're a target. A shaman friend of mine says the redwoods are coming alive. The comet did it. And some of those trees are damned pissed about the way metahumanity has been treating them.
• Kore

• The rumors are serious enough to get some action from the United Talismongers Association. They're hiring magical talent to map out the areas where the trees are the most hostile, as well as to guard against poachers. If you're interested, check out ravenwing@UTA.org.
• Dryad

• Fat lot of help a map'll be. The evil trees move.
• Turtle

CENTRAL VALLEY: INTERESTING TIMES

by King Rat

Less than five years ago, the Central Valley was sitting pretty. We had rich agricorps bankrolling us, most of the Free State's water keeping us afloat, and the gummint making sure things stayed that way. Well, the water's still here and the agricorps are still rich, but recent events have made the denizens of God's Little Acre wonder if Paradise's days might be numbered. 'Cause there's a new boss in town, backed by Imperial Marines. So far, Protector-General Keiji Saito is staying put while he consolidates control over Sacramento, but everyone hereabouts is wondering what happens next.

So what are we doing while we watch and wait? Plenty. The good guys and the bad guys are working like gangbusters to keep Saito out or usher him further in—with the complication that a fair number of the anti-Saito "good guys" aren't all that good. In fact, they're the kind of people decent folks wouldn't want to share air with. You'd think that, given the general loathing of metahumans in these parts, all the locals would be cheering for Saito to come in and clean up. But he's a durned furriner, which in a lot of minds makes him just as much the enemy. Which means some of the very folks trying to keep out a metahuman-hating dictator are the most virulent anti-meta bigots you could ever hope not to meet.

SACRAMENTO: GROUND ZERO

First off, don't believe all those trid scenes of human Valley residents happily waving flowers and flags as Imperial troop carriers rolled down Sacramento's streets. Or Governor Whitman's imitation of a lapdog at his subsequent press conference. Oh, sure, there were flag-waving crowds. A few hardy souls held placards—edited out of the "live" footage—suggesting that General Psycho take himself and his bully-boys back across the Valley border pronto. (Several of these intrepid folk were rounded up by an Imperial Marine detachment, and haven't been heard from since.) Most were wage slaves given the afternoon off to go hail the conquering hero. Their superiors made sure they understood the price of not acting happy. A lot of the Japanese transplants working for Shiawase and other megacorp agri divisions may genuinely have been happy to see Saito's forces. Life under armed Imperial occupation certainly won't get worse for them. Some of the rest—American-born Asians and non-Japanese—may also have been glad to see the strongman who could finally solve the "metahuman problem." A surprising number, though, were less enthusiastic. They cheered at half volume and stopped waving the minute the cameras turned away. Mostly they watched, as if unsure what to make of this foreign invasion.

Opposition to the new order doesn't amount to much yet, of course. Saito only walked in here eight months ago, and people are still deciding how they feel about it. Plus, a lot of the folks muttering "Japs go home" in corners hate each other more than they hate the Imperials. So even if serious opposition gets off the ground, it's likely to stay fragmented for awhile. But it does exist, and it could get bigger. All the seething beneath the surface adds up to lots of players with different agendas, which is always good for biz.

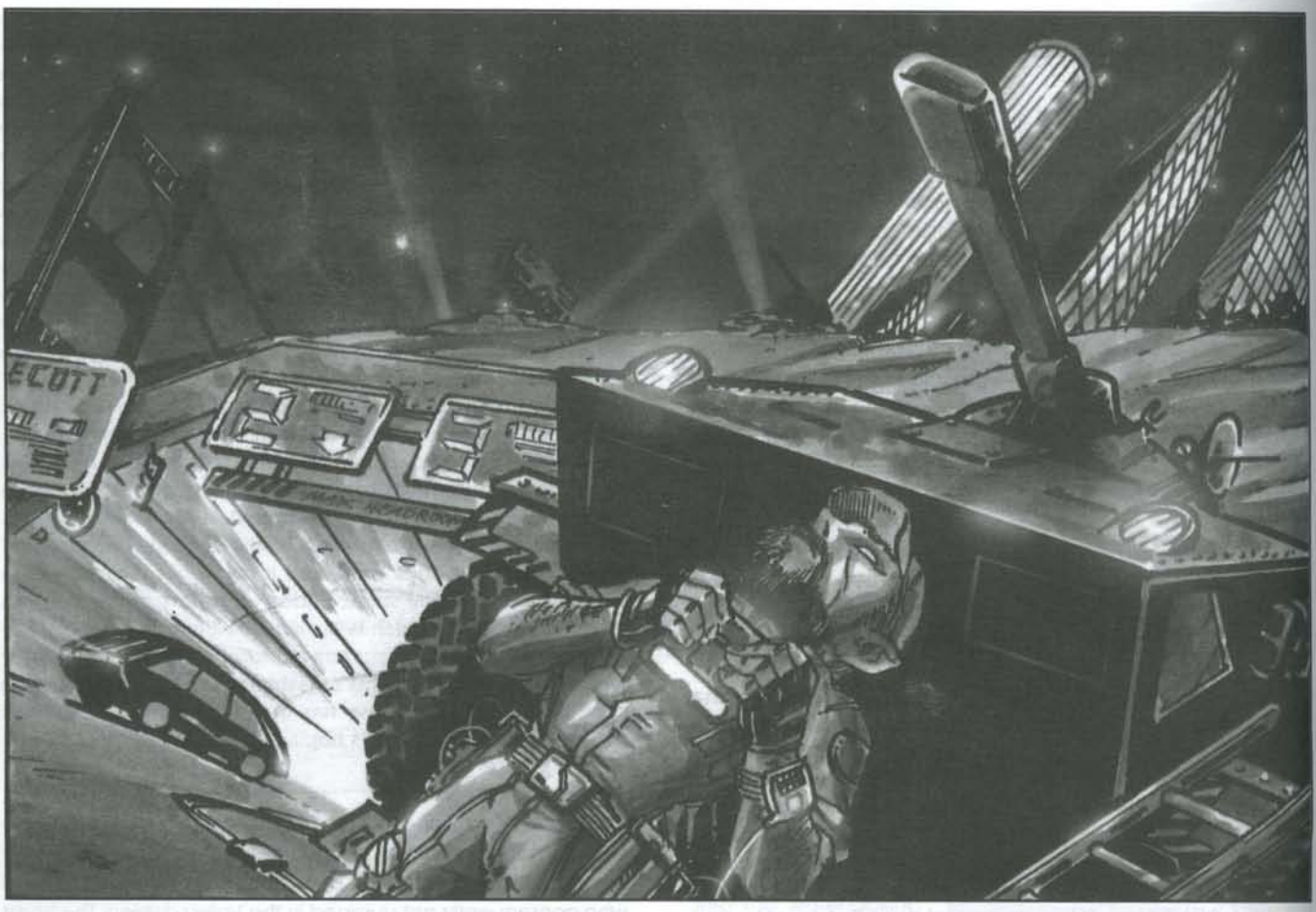
Among Saito's supporters are local affiliates of the major Japanacorps. Shiawase and Yakashima make up the strongest cheering section. Shiawase has the largest share of the agri market, while Yakashima is hoping to ride the general's coattails to greater power.

• Yakashima's exponential growth over the past few years had help from the Yamatetsu old guard—all the reactionaries who *opposed their corporation's new pro-metahuman regime, and* who consequently got dumped in the Valley division. The head office keeps the place on a tight leash through budget constraints and legal hurdles. So the old guard passed the torch to Yakashima, whose ties to the Human Nation made it the perfect vanguard in the fight for a meta-free world.
• Corpwatcher

• Yakashima takes no marching orders from the Human Nation. Its board and officers merely wish to preserve the old Japanese ways.
• Mishima

• Don't forget Humanis California. The biggest and richest chapter of the Humanis Policlub in the Free State, it has no problem with a "furriner" saving California for humans. Club president Gunnar Wilson and his well-heeled friends have put their considerable nuyen and PR expertise at Saito's disposal, and they're doing what they do best—sanitizing "humans-only" racism by making it look like harmless cultural pride instead of the first stepping-stone to another Holocaust.
• Histobuff

• Holocaust, drek. OK, Saito doesn't like metahumans. And OK, neither do most of the humans supporting him. But there aren't



going to be camps and killing grounds, because the whole world is watching. Even if he wanted to, Saito couldn't get away with that.

• Skeptic

• Sorry, Skep. You're underestimating the worldwide influence of the Human Nation. Many of the folks you're counting on to step in are being skillfully manipulated. Who do you think was behind the shipping boycott of Tir Tairngire in 2056, and the steep tariffs on Tir goods in the UCAS and Salish a year later? Those two moves were the beginning of the end for the Tir economy. Now the Tir is too deep in drek to effectively oppose the Human Nation alliance being forged between elements in the Free State who would love to see the Tir go down. If things go on as they are, sooner or later the HN will see its plan pay off—there won't be an elven nation in the Pac Northwest anymore.

• Bright Rain

The opposition to Saito has potential, if it can get its act together. Having a common enemy concentrates the mind wonderfully; we may actually see some cooperation develop between various factions (however rare and grudging).

First on the list are Governor Whitman and the Sacramento puppets. These guys had it bad enough back in the status quo, when the agricorps said, "Jump" and they answered, "How high?" Despite the heavy advantages of corp nuyen, the puppets played that system well enough to snag some control for themselves. Now it's gone. Umpty-thousand well-armed troops convinced of their destiny to rule pretty much trumps every scam ever born, which makes Whitman et. al. *verrrry* unhappy. Now they're taking matters into their own hands.

At the moment, that means foot-dragging while Whitty calls in favors from his local Humanis chums. Complicating matters is a split between local HP leaders, many of whom are happy to let Saito clear out the metahumans for them. Others resent the hell out of a foreigner coming in and telling them their business; those have been giving Whitman a more sympathetic ear.

• There's a new rumor going around that Saito's going to start conscripting locals to beef up his forces—or rather, to make sure he has some cannon fodder to throw at his enemies. That rumor has lit a big fire under Whitman's butt.

• Weatherman

A lot of local corps aren't big fans of Saito, either. Stories are already cropping up about surprise "inspections" and resultant shutdowns of non-Japanese-owned business facilities by Imperial troops. Officially, they're hunting for "metahuman criminals." Unofficially, they're making life as miserable as possible for the big Japanacorps' local rivals. Meanwhile, Ares Macrotech is coldly civil to the General in public while plotting ways to frag with him in private. The Ares troops ringing Silicon Valley are both a warning not to march that way and a reminder that Saito's two divisions aren't the only army in town. Ares' main objective in the Valley, unfortunately, isn't so much to kick Saito out as to keep him pinned down so he can't move against their Silicon Valley holdings—though if the General does leave, Ares personnel will be among those bidding him an enthusastic goodbye.

• Those "inspections" mentioned earlier? Not one has taken place at an Ares installation.
• Sac Watcher

• Ares and Knight Errant are hiring shadow talent, both in the Central Valley and outside it, to mess with Saito any way they can. Pay's excellent.
• Reality Czech

• You want in on Ares biz or anything else against Saito and his Japanacorp allies, go to Chico-Oroville. The shadow community's bigger and they've got a bad case of the Jap jitters. If any real opposition to Saito gets going in the next few months, my money's on Chico-Oroville. Sacramento is a waste of time.
• Chico Man

• What about the California Rangers? I read earlier that Saito shut down their Sacramento HQ. They're just taking that?
• Annie Mal

• Some are. Others aren't. More and more Rangers are heading for Chico-Oroville, looking to hook up with others interested in taking a bite out of the Imperials. Too many are still waiting for Sacramento to tell them what to do, but Saito sends more of us over to the enemy with every shutdown and stricture he enacts.
• Ranger Rick

• Better move fast, Ricky, before General Psycho snatches the dirt from under you. And he will. Me, I'm polishing up every piece of bang-bang I've got.
• Bakersfield Bob

CHICO-OROVILLE: INVASION WATCH

As the home ground of the viciously anti-meta Native Californians policlub, Chico-Oroville should be prime territory for Saito sympathizers. In fact, the opposite is true. Sure, plenty of folks here love the General's thinking about the proper treatment of metahuman scum. But they also hate foreigners, especially foreigners who might threaten them. In these parts, that means Native Americans and Japanese.

General Saito, with his well-armored troops and Japan-uber-alles attitude, is exactly the kind of foreigner they hate most. He's trying to take their turf and he's got bigger guns. Lots of people in Chico-Oroville want Mr. Dictator and his goons out of the Central Valley before he turns his acquisitive mitts toward their home. They're convinced he intends to take Chico-Oroville in order to get control of its dam. Holding the dam would make him king of the Central Valley by giving him power over the water flow that keeps North America's Salad Bowl alive.

• Talk about a power play. "Whoever I like gets water. The rest of you wither and die."
• Biz Girl

Adding fuel to this fire is a peculiarity of Free State agribusiness. Most locally owned agricorps grew up around Chico-Oroville, close to the dam. Japanacorp agri subsidiaries, by contrast, tended to set up near their Empire's base in San Francisco. That means the Japanacorps lie closer to Sacramento. Before Saito, all the corps could rest easy knowing that no one would mess with another corp's water supply because the scale of retaliation might threaten the dam—something nobody wanted. Post-Saito, the Free State corps are getting nervous. Nervous people make bad decisions, and one of them just might be to blow the dam if it looks like the only other option is letting Saito have it. So the corps supporting Saito would love him to take it and forestall that particular nightmare—but the minute he tries, they risk triggering exactly the blowup they hope to avoid.

The only way the Japanacorps can win is if Saito moves on the dam too fast for anyone to react—not an easy proposition, considering that various corp troops are all over the dam like fungus on a swamp log. Lots of troops, from the megas as well as local outfits. To prevent Shiawase or Mitsuhama from getting a bright idea and launching a diversionary attack, the biggest local corps have been rounding up bodies to beef up their forces. Meanwhile, the Japanacorps have been doing the same thing. What exists now in Chico-Oroville is a fragile stalemate, with each side slowly notching up the troop strengths.

• I hear Ares is funneling major ordnance up Chico-Oroville way to help out the local corps. Lots of them can't afford to spend as much as the megas on top-grade equipment.
• Errant Knight

• You ever wanted to make it as a gunrunner, now's the time and the Free State's the place.
• Rick Blaine

• Chico-Oroville just might end up owing its continued freedom to the NAN. Pueblo and Ute, among others, are quietly building up the peacekeeping forces attached to their embassies in COGMA (Chico-Oroville Greater Metro Area, for you non-locals). They don't want General Pyscho to take the whole Central Valley because he'll be even harder to deal with than the California bigots they're used to. Plus, Pueblo could use a northerly troop base if it wants to expand later.
• Chico Man

You'd think all this corporate discomfort would be a golden opportunity for the small farmers' organizations to join hands and stick it to their bigger and better-financed opponents. Wrong. Both the Small Farmers' Union and the more militant California Agriculture and Water Society (CAWS) want to see big corp power—Japanese or otherwise—smashed in the Central Valley. But the two groups have come down on opposite sides of the Saito question. The SFU adamantly opposes the Sacramento occupation, seeing it as a vehicle for even tighter Japanacorp control over resources. CAWS, meanwhile, has split down the middle. Those for whom fighting the Big Boys is paramount tend to side with the SFU; members afflicted with human-supremacist leanings are either sitting the conflict out or aiding the occupiers. For some of this bunch, fragging over Free State businesses in favor of Japanacorp hegemony is a price worth paying to be metahuman-free.

• What about the Golden Acorns—you know, that bunch of ork magicians in COGMA? They've got to be doing something.
• Lilibet

• First off, they're not all orks. The Golden Acorn Society has members from all races. Their leader, Yee Chan, is an ork, and one powerful shaman, from what I hear. The Acorns have some kind of major mojo to have operated openly in the Native Californians' hometown for more than five years, and they'll help just about anybody who's against Saito. That help doesn't stop at the Valley border, either. Yee Chan has fingers in the Bay Area resistance via the Golden Dragon Triad. The Triad has been funneling arms and other useful items to rebels in the Bay Area for years; they've stepped it up since the occupation.
• Mobwatcher

• The Acorns' temple in Chico-Oroville is a major stop on the Underground Railroad from San Fran and Oakland/Berkeley to the Northern Crescent. They've been taking in refugees—some humans, mostly metas. Since the General took over, the usual small stream of departing people has become a flood.
• Arlo

• The Acorns also use the Railroad to smuggle telesma and weapon foci. They run refugees from San Fran, Oakland/Berkeley and environs up north across the Central Valley to the Crescent, and then run magical doohickeys back south to pick up the next refugee load.
• Sojourner

Of course, General Saito also has his share of supporters here. Pro-Saito sentiment is building in the suburbs of Richvale and Paradise, where Mitsuhama is a big employer. These people know what side their soytoast is buttered on, and they see no downside to absorption by the Protectorate. Quite a few Humanis-oriented folks count themselves in this bunch, especially native Free Staters drawn to work for the Japanacorps precisely because they're the least "tainted" by metahumans. It's the rare dwarf or ork or troll who works for a Japanacorp as anything higher than janitor, which means Mr. Humanis can go for weeks without seeing one. The human supremacists are slavering at the thought of extending this state of affairs to the entire Central Valley. If General Saito can help them do that, he's their man.

• The Human Nation has its ugly talons deep in every corp compound in the Central Valley and they're backing Saito solidly. They're middle management, tea ladies, security riggers and corp troopers. And they're ready to mobilize anytime. Today the Valley, tomorrow the whole Free State.
• Anonymous

• Don't forget the world.
• Anonymous2

CITY BY THE BAY

by Bay Jewel

Anybody who's noticed anything other than shaking ground or SURGE lately has some idea of what's happened recently in these parts. The short version: the Japanese got their pullout orders and mostly ignored them. Two full Imperial divisions and their leader, Keiji Saito, went the ronin route instead. Not content with hanging on to San Francisco, they took over the entire Bay Area: Oakland/Berkeley, all the little bedroom communities, practically every last square foot. Plus a nice slice of the Central Valley to the east. The only piece they didn't get was Silicon Valley, because Damien Knight got his Ares corp soldiers in first. So here we sit, still under the Imperial thumb and fighting the bastards harder than ever.

The long version? We're still working that out. But I can say one thing. Anybody thinks Dictator Saito has everything his own way in his shiny new Protectorate, think again. A division and a half of Imperial troops (minus the battalions sitting in Sacramento) aren't enough to keep the lid on San Francisco and the bulging Oakland/Berkeley sprawl, especially with SURGE giving us so many new kindred in arms. We're not strong enough yet to pry the Imperials loose. But a little help from some friends in Big Sur, along with extra pressure from rivals of the Japanacorps, could go some ways toward correcting that little shortcoming. Here's hoping it happens soon, before too many people disappear.

SAN FRANCISCO

For the average law-abiding, low-level suit, the most significant consequence of the New Order is the short supply of metahuman menials to clean their houses and pick up their garbage. Within days of the takeover, our tinpot emperor forbade "metahuman vermin" to set foot in San Fran. This decree inconvenienced a few people by forcing them to hire human janitors, cleaning ladies, gardeners and such at marginally better wages. (Don't let the image of the prosperous Japanacorp enclave fool you; there's still plenty of poor people in San Francisco, and an awful lot of them don't have tusks or pointed ears or unusual stature.) Corporate big noises, however, quietly declined to obey. Not for them the hassle of finding and training a new cleaning woman in the intricacies of laundering a hand-embroidered kimono. Upshot is, there are still metas in San Francisco, but fewer and their movements are more restricted. Plus they're a whole lot more likely to get beaten, arrested or rounded up.

• Some high-up suits are letting their tame metahumans live in the garage or the basement so they don't have to risk traveling back and forth to the Oakland/Berkeley sprawl.
• Marklar

• Metahuman runners, take note. You're gonna have a nasty time trying to get anything done.
• Smart Sammy

• Not much worse than we already do. Metas can do biz in the Bay Area; all it takes is a little ingenuity, a lot of planning and some acting skill. Whine and cringe enough, and the Impies'll let you go.
• Bernhardt

The biggest change is in San Francisco's underworld, where the Yaks pretty much wiped out the leading Worczek Mafia family with a little help from Saito's rogue Marines. With their major rivals gone, local gumis have that much more manpower to throw against the Seoulpas and the Triads.

• They've had better luck against the Seoulpas, who weren't as strong to begin with and who mostly don't pack the magical punch of the biggest Triads. The Seoulpas aren't gone, but they're struggling.
• Mobwatcher

Fortunately for the Bay Area resistance, increased Yak power has yet to translate into huge gains against the remaining mobs. The Triads in particular are making an impressive fight, launching anti-Yak operations from their longtime bases in Oakland, Berkeley and San Francisco's Chinatown. Yakuza depredations have only driven them further into the arms of the resistance, strengthening all of us opposed to the Saito regime.

OAKLAND/BERKELEY

Saito and his soldier boys like to think they own my sprawl, just because they're sitting on it with a lot of big guns. The truth's different. The few roundups of metahumans the Imperials actually pulled off barely made a dent in our numbers, especially with SURGE-afflicted refugees swarming in every day. Since the last attempted roundup—a debacle for the Impies, who got swarmed by resisters and were forced to walk back across the Bay Bridge in their underwear—Saito's Marines have contented themselves with fortifying checkpoints on roads leading into the sprawl and ringing the city like an armed camp. They don't have enough bodies to pick us all up or mow us all down. And they'd like to be able to use the real estate later, so that precludes extreme options like tac nukes, bioweapons or major magical drek. The best Saito can do is treat Oakland/Berkeley like a giant metahuman ghetto and hope to keep resistance from spilling over until events back in Japan play out in his favor—if they do.

Meanwhile, those of us inside the ring of steel are doing everything possible to break it down.

Resistance Groups

Among those giving our Protector-General hemorrhoids are the October 25 Alliance and the Metahuman People's Army. Time was, the Alliance and the MPA tiptoed around each other like a pair of alley dogs—sniffing, sometimes growling, generally most concerned with safeguarding our own turf. The Imperial crackdown changed all that. Since the takeover, the Alliance and the MPA have joined forces to keep our people safe and make the Imperials' lives miserable. Those in the Alliance who formerly felt squeamish about blowing things (and people) up have lost a lot of their qualms, while the sizable jump in poverty caused by the crackdown—to say nothing of the expanding refugee population and the quake aftershocks—drove home to the MPA the need to do more than just attack the enemy. So they're running a few more shelters, and we're throwing a few more Molotov cocktails. Between us, we're managing—just—to keep most people fed and warmed while making the Imperials think twice about venturing into our neighborhoods. We've even extended a finger into San Francisco, via the Triads in Chinatown and those few brave souls who still cross the Bay Bridge to work every day. Both have been a gold mine of information on happenings in San Francisco.

• You'd be surprised what the office cleaning help can pick up. Menials are like furniture to a lot of execs, metahuman menials even more so. We're as invisible as their secret chip stash in the bottom file drawer. Who needs to watch what they say or where they tossed that eyes-only memo when only the furniture can see and hear?
• Mata Hari

• The Triads are a major conduit for smuggled weapons, conventional and magical. Yee Chan and the Golden Dragon Triad are funneling arms and tech down here from corp ware-

houses in Chico-Oroville. Check out the Crimewatch blurbs from Japanacorp internal newsletters; MCT, Renraku and others are suffering an awful lot of petty thefts these days.
• Corpus Delicti

Halferville

This dwarf enclave across the Bay from San Francisco likely would have been among Saito's first targets, but for a timely piece of blackmail. Hours after Saito's troops buttoned down San Francisco, the dwarfs of Halferville let the city's Japanacorp masters know that any military move toward their territory would result in the obliteration of the vital Caldecott Tunnel. The suits knew the dwarfs weren't bluffing and wisely obeyed the implicit order to call off the Imperial dogs. Saito contented himself with moving on Oakland/Berkeley, which was probably the more important conquest in his mind to begin with. In the weeks since, the East Bay dwarfs have continued shoring up their defenses, while the major Japancorps are still racking their collective brains for a way to capture this valuable transportation link.

• For you out-of-towners, the Caldecott Tunnel is the only connection between San Francisco and various corp-controlled bedroom communities on the other side of the Bay. There aren't enough wage slaves within the San Fran city limits to pick up the slack if the corps' armored commuter trains can't run.
• Subway Sue

Sadly, Halferville is not as firmly in the resistance camp as might be expected. Instead, its leaders have opted for shaky neutrality. Don't get me wrong; they're not pro-Japanacorp or pro-Saito. What they are is cautious. So far, they've been willing to take only actions they can plausibly deny. If strikes against Saito from their turf get too blatant, the dwarfs figure the Imperial Marines might ignore the pleas of their corporate bankrollers and hit Halferville hard. What the heck, the rich Japanacorps can afford to rebuild the Tunnel, right?

• Or the Japanacorps might point Saito's Marines at Halferville and figure on rebuilding later. It'd cost them a ton of cred, but maybe it'd be worth getting rid of a pesky enemy.
• Oakstaff

• For the moment, Halferville is safe if you're new in the Bay Area or running from the Imps. If you want to carry out some big splashy action involving a lot of guns or explosives, base your operation somewhere else.
• Son of Thorin

SHAKEUP IN BIG SUR

by Poseidon's Daughter

Events to the north of CalFree's Pirate Coast have had some interesting repercussions, though it's too soon to tell how far they'll extend. The biggest recent change hereabouts has nothing to do with the Imperial coup in San Francisco or the big quake that just hit LA, or even SURGE. Until last year, we had three pirate kings in Big Sur. Now we have two. Dread Pirate Paco, aka Paco Ramirez, finally got greedy and paid the expected price. Captain Monday, who took him out, is nursing his many wounds while slowly regaining his former hold on seaborne smuggling in the region. And Grania O'Malley? Once more the queen of the t-bird routes, she's expanding her reach toward San Francisco Bay with the departure of most of the Imperial Navy. Over the next several months, Grania and Monday could split the entire Free State coast between them. Or one of Paco's surviving lieutenants could get itchy fingers and make a power grab that'll bring down his dead boss's rivals. Or some other small-time operators might take this chance to grab a bigger piece of biz for themselves. Whatever happens, one thing's certain: there's cred to be made in Big Sur's shadows.

• Monday and Paco had their showdown in early 2060, not long after Paco finished rebuilding the Isla Vista airfield. Grania knew he was rehabbing it. She also knew he'd try to grab a piece of the air action. So she let him spiff up Isla Vista for her, then conned him through third parties into attacking one of Monday's flotillas. Other third parties informed Monday in advance of the planned assault, so Monday declared war. When the smoke cleared, Paco and a bunch of his higher-ups were dead, Monday was hurting but still kicking, and Grania had a nice new airfield to play with.
• Earp

Quite a few local employers are based outside Big Sur—not our smuggling princes, but corporations and other organizations with a vested interest in reversing the recent invasions of CalFree. Ares Macrotech is splashing cred around to anyone who'll run guns and materiel into the Protectorate, bankrolling what it surely hopes will become a major anti-Saito rebellion. South of San Fran, the edgy city government of Bakersfield is buying every scrap of ordnance and spy-tech it can afford, mostly to stave off the Pueblo advance that the locals are sure is imminent. More than ever, Big Sur is a smuggler's paradise these days; rumors of war can jazz up the demand for black-market weapons and tech toys like no chip ever slotted.

• O'Malley's getting paid by Ares to pull runs inside San Fran. Ares wants to destabilize the Protectorate, or at least make the Japanacorps pay dearly for every day they stay in power. The Silicon Valley enclave is also using its Big Sur connections to supply corp personnel at the old Edwards Air Force Base, which isn't far from LA as the t-bird flies. Given the cozy relations between the Pueblo Corporate Council and Ares' rival Novatech, Damien Knight can't be feeling too comfy about all those Pueblo soldiers around LA. They're not having much luck taking the Mojave; why not try for an easier target?
• Corpus Delicti

• With O'Malley busy running for Ares and Monday not back to fighting weight, there's a significant power vacuum in the smuggling biz—seaborne and t-bird—that's just waiting for someone to fill it. Competition between second- and third-tier pirate outfits is literally cutthroat, with every other Long John Silver looking to become the next pirate king (or queen). Runners can get hired on with smuggling groups looking for new blood, or pick up biz from Pirate Band A looking to frag over Pirate Band B in various ways. Of course, these low-level "smuggler corp wars" tend to get violent. If you take one, get hazard pay.
• Jambo

As for the other shockers that came in the comet's wake, they touched Big Sur pretty lightly. We barely felt the LA quake, and the main impact of SURGE is the river of refugees heading into local towns. Most of them come from the Central Valley, where more than a few proud human supremacists found themselves hoisted by their own racist petard when their skin turned purple or they suddenly developed cats' eyes. So far, the Valley folk are centered in Salinas, while Santa Cruz takes in Bay Area newcomers fleeing the Saito regime. Both places get their share of Tir-shy folk from the Northern Crescent. Neither town is especially happy about the influx, but they're coping. For now.

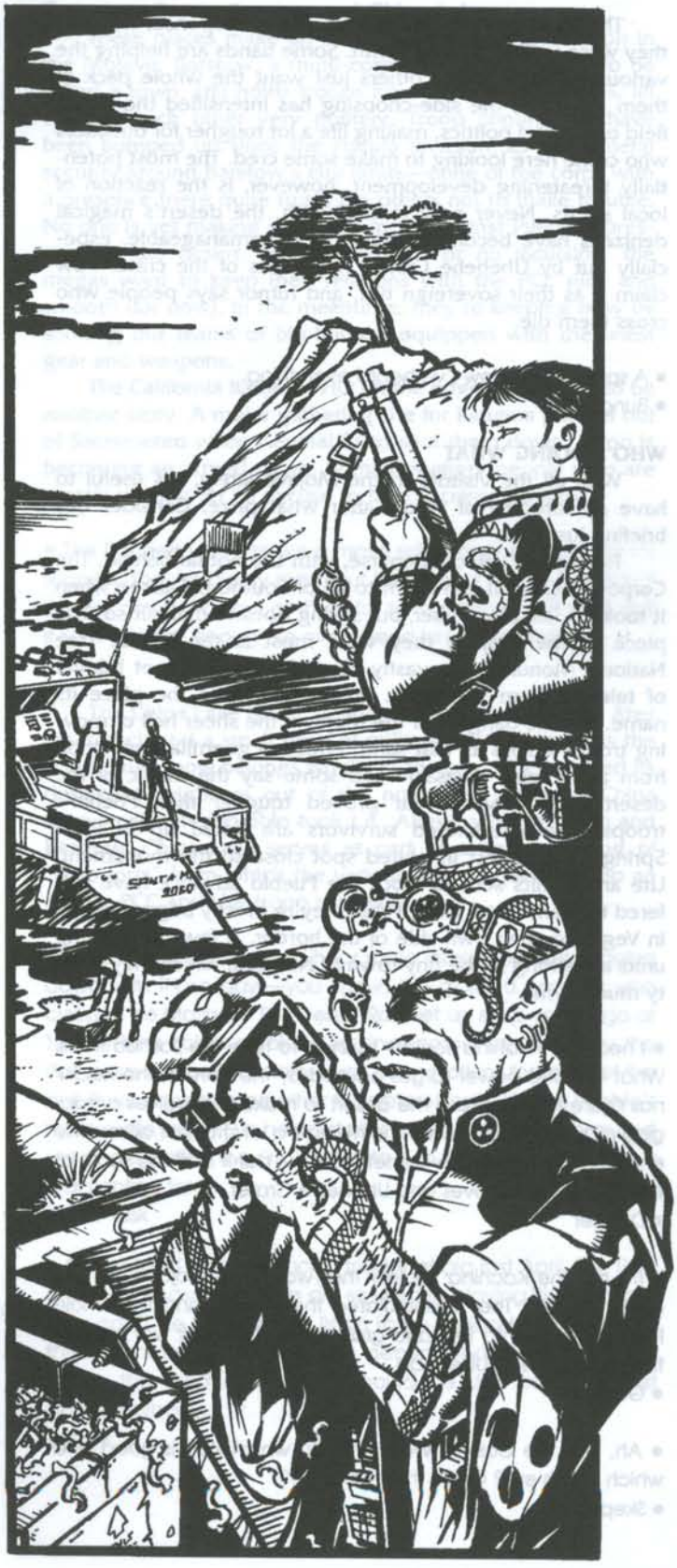
• Meanwhile, the California Legion keeps doing what it does best; nailing waterjackers and go-gangs in the southern Big Sur. That's their job, and thank God they're still on it.
• Micawber

MOJAVE DESERT: MAGIC GONE WILD

by Road Runner

OK, all you sprawl babies. Time for another lesson on the hazards of running in the Mojave. What with armed and touchy Anasazi nomad bands, ticked-off spirits, blood-hot days, bone-cold nights, and outposts of civilization few and far between, the desert has never been an easy nut to crack. The passage of the comet and the ongoing fallout from the Pueblo invasion have made it even tougher, in ways you can't imagine unless you live here.

The first thing to know is, it's not just Pueblo drekking around in the sandbox. Corporate Council troops tried to take the Mojave at the same time as they snapped up LA, but the desert had other ideas, and so the PCC's army is bogged down in the glitzy corporate enclave of Palm Springs. But where Pueblo went, others followed. The Ute Nation, which never could see Pueblo get anything without wanting to swipe it, is making its own grab for Mojave real estate, with about as much success. Lots of corps are here too, especially Aztechnology—they want what the Mojave holds, and they also *don't* want anyone else owning the magical treasure chest right on their doorstep. Even the Imperials up San Fran way are getting into the act; General Saito sends the odd group of soldiers down here occasionally, just to check things out.



The local Anasazis have fractured in response, not that they were unified to begin with. Some bands are helping the various invaders, while others just want the whole pack of them gone. All the side-choosing has intensified the minefield of Anasazi politics, making life a lot tougher for outsiders who come here looking to make some cred. The most potentially threatening development, however, is the reaction of local spirits. Never easy to deal with, the desert's magical denizens have become fragging near unmanageable, especially out by Ubehebe Crater. The spirits of the crater now claim it as their sovereign turf, and rumor says people who cross them die.

• A spirit gang? Now I've heard everything.
• Bung

WHO'S DOING WHAT

With all the visitors to the Mojave lately, it's useful to have a scorecard of who's after what prize. Consider this briefing just that.

First up is Pueblo, of course, with Ute not far behind. The Corporate Council laid claim to all of Southern CalFree when it took LA last November, but saying doesn't make it so. The piece of the Mojave they want most is the Joshua Tree National Monument, a vastly powerful magical spot brimful of telesma from the yucca groves that give the place its name. But the dangers of the Mojave, the sheer hell of moving troops across all that sand, effective guerrilla opposition from anti-Pueblo Anasazi—and some say the magic of the desert itself—have so far proved tougher than Pueblo's troops. The able-bodied survivors are holed up in Palm Springs, the largest inhabited spot close to the monument. Ute army units sent to block the Pueblo advance have suffered the same fate, except that they're mostly bogged down in Vegas on their own side of the border. A few Ute fighting units are sitting in the tiny town of Needles, which they pretty much own.

• I hear the Kachina Society pushed to take the Joshua trees. What with the power surges caused by the comet, the Kachinas figure they can use the desert to make themselves a fragging magical superpower. The mana's a lot stronger across the entire Mojave since the comet went by, but it's off the scale at the Joshua tree groves and Ubehebe Crater.
• Dancer

• It's not the Kachina Society that wants the Mojave. It's the kachina spirits. They manipulated the Society and the whole Pueblo nation into this land grab, as part of their war against the rebel spirits of Ubehebe.
• Gabriel

• Ah, yes, the Cosmic War myth. So which side is good and which side is evil? Or do they trade off?
• Skeptic

• The Pueblo Army brought other uninvited guests with it. The Koshari, Pueblo's own homegrown crime syndicate, is doing its level best to grab a beachhead in the magical smuggling biz. The Koshari are also moving in on Palm Springs in a major way.
• Mobwatcher

Next on the list is Aztlan, through its megacorp alter ego, Aztechnology. The Yucatán rebellion has kept Azzie army units tied up, ditto for Aztech corp troops (not like there's much difference). The Azzies have turned to shadow talent to achieve their objective, which is mostly to frag with Pueblo any way they can. They're still smarting from the loss of their Denver enclave, and the Corporate Council made no friends south of the border when they revoked Aztech's business license. The more trouble Aztechnology can cause Pueblo, the better.

• The Azzies are hiring runners to play desert guerrilla where necessary, and also for harassment raids and sabotage against Pueblo units that venture too far from Palm Springs. So far, they're leaving the Utes in Needles alone. They're also stepping up shadow activity within the Corp Council, hoping to cause enough headaches so that Pueblo'll pull out of the Mojave. Course, losing their Denver enclave to Ghostwalker kinda put a crimp in their style.
• Champ

And then there are all the other corporations with vested interests in exploiting the Mojave. Just about every megacorp, plus a few smaller ones, have teams of hired guns out looking for valuable bio-loot: paracritters, magical plants, anything. With Pueblo and Ute troops bottled up, the field is fairly free, assuming a corp-hired team of would-be poachers can negotiate the maze of conflicting Anasazi loyalties. This hazard is a lot bigger than it sounds—a wrong guess is much more likely than it used to be, and those who make one are more likely to end up dead.

• The Anasazis are practically having blood feuds over who's allied with whom. These people take loyalty very seriously, along with their ties to the desert. Each band is convinced that it's protecting the sacred Mojave, either by picking a "champion" for it or by getting rid of outsiders altogether. And you do NOT want to mess with their Scorpion shamans.
• Buzzard

Finally, the Orichalcum Rush has brought scads of outlanders to the Mojave's few outposts, as well as border towns in Ute and Pueblo territory. Hundreds of greenhorns have congregated here over the past several months, hoping to stake a claim to one of the orichalcum deposits allegedly scattered across the desert sands. The two biggest gathering spots are Needles, near the Ute border, and Barstow; indie prospectors tend to fetch up at the former, while corp-sponsored teams generally head for the latter. Most of these folks—especially the ill-informed or ill-equipped—come

limping back empty-handed. So far, no one's made the Big Strike, but that hasn't stopped people from trying.

• The lucky greenhorns go back empty-handed. The rest never make it that far. When will people learn to do their homework before challenging the desert? The orichalcum disappeared when the comet passed away.
• Salamander

• It's not just greenhorns who die. At least three teams I've heard of, two of them well-equipped ones sent by Mitsuhama and Saeder-Krupp, have vanished over the past month. The Mitsuhama team paid a buddy of mine, a canny sand rat named Old Woolly, to guide them. Woolly knew the Mojave like a dog knows its backyard. No way would he have been caught out by the kind of drek that catches greenies and outlanders—sandstorms, scorpions, Anasazi gangs. Whatever happened must have been bad, because nothing else would've caught Woolly napping.
• Sidewinder

MAJOR INHABITED AREAS

Civilization still hasn't made many inroads in these parts. Recent events prompted a few changes in the major settlements that do exist, however—some more obvious than others.

Palm Springs

Palm Springs is a corporate luxury oasis on the southern edges of the Mojave desert, catering to wealthy corp executives, Mafia gangsters, and Yakuza oyabuns. Still the ultimate corp getaway on the surface, Palm Springs also serves as the major Pueblo army outpost in the Mojave. The Puebs chose it for its location more than its ritz, though individual troopers are likely blessing their luck to have ended up in CEO paradise instead of some outpost in the middle of the wasteland. The corp bigwigs who run the place weren't thrilled to find a Native American armed force on their collective doorstep, but they weren't in a position to tell them to frag off. So the Pueb troops moved in, and everyone's been playing getting-to-know-you ever since. So far, no major dust-ups have occurred; corp security doesn't hassle Pueblo soldiers, and vice versa.

• That surface calm may not last long. More than a few bigshots in Palm Springs are real unhappy about the Koshari moving in, and some think the PCC soldiers are helping them. I've heard a few gumi and Triad bosses muttering in corners about booting Pueb hoop out of the enclave—and when the gumis and Triads agree on anything, watch out. Everyone still tries to keep things quiet around here, but all that means now is that they're fighting a shooting war with silenced weapons.
• Mobwatcher

Corporate Bases: Barstow and China Lake

These places make up most of the rest of civilization in the Mojave. Barstow, a multi-corp base large enough to be called a town, still holds troops from various megacorps, all treating each other very politely. Troop contingents have been bumped up since the Pueblo invasion, as has general security around Barstow's city limits—none of the corps with a presence there quite trusts the others not to make trouble. No one is yet making any open move against Pueblo's presence in the desert, either—incursion or no incursion, the megas want to keep their relations with the PCC nice and smooth (for now). In the meantime, they're keeping busy by sending out teams of bio-hunters equipped with the latest gear and weapons.

The California Rangers' HQ on the edge of town could be another story. A major gathering site for Rangers pushed out of Sacramento when General Saito shut them down, it too is becoming an armed camp, brimful of angry people who are mostly waiting for an excuse to take Sacramento back.

• The Rangers won't make a move without some prospect for success. They're plenty mad, but they're not stupid. I wouldn't expect any action out of them for several months at least. But if Saito's dumb enough to overextend himself, watch out.
• Rover

The China Lake Naval Station, long shared between Ares Macrotech and a small band of military misfits known as the Minutemen, now belongs wholly to the corp. Ares pushed its desert-rat neighbors out of the northwest corner of China Lake weeks after Pueblo took LA. Along with Fort Irwin and Barstow, China Lake serves as part of a jerry-built ring of "corp forts" from which the various megacorps can keep an eye on PCC and Ute troop movements.

• Speaking of desert rats, I hear some interesting drek is going down with those guys—you know, the glorified gangers who claim to be Marines? The Desert Rats set up shop years ago at Twenty-Nine Palms, an old US Marine combat range. Lately, the Palms has become a major base of operations for some of the anti-Pueb Anasazis and other folks interested in kicking Pueblo's hoop outta there. I've heard stories about Ute hiring mercs and sending supplies; they're hoping to turn the Desert Rats into a real fighting force.
• Friar Tusk

• GFL—Good Fraggin' Luck. I tried that gig last April. The Rats and their Anasazi buddies are so used to playing Big Man that they can't be bothered to listen to an outlander trying to tell them something. The pay was decent, though. Don't know where the cred came from—could be Ute, could be just about anybody.
• Rafe

MAGICAL SITES

The Mojave Desert reeks of magic, especially in the comet's wake. Everything you think you know about how magic works may not apply in these parts; sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't. Free spirits abound, and background counts at any given spot in the sand-and-rock landscape can range from near zero to off the scale. That said, there are a few sites so mana-rich and magically potent that they deserve special mention. The two best-known are Ubehebe Crater and the Joshua Tree Monument.

Ubehebe Crater

Part of an extinct volcano, Ubehebe, lies in northwestern Death Valley. Not a drop of water exists in this moonscape of a place, and precious little organic life survives there aside from some species of paracritters. Most of what "lives" in the crater are spirits and elementals, and lately they've gone from cantankerous to hostile. A coterie of powerful spirit-beings apparently controls Ubehebe—possibly in response to Pueblo's military activities, possibly as a consequence of the comet. No one knows. What we do know is that Ubehebe is "off-limits" to metahumanity, except for a select few people who've managed to get on the spirits' good side. No one knows how the spirits decide who's acceptable, but many of those who venture too near Ubehebe end up raving or dead.

• So what's the deal? Do you have to ask the spirits' permission or something?
• Ringgo

• Maybe. Damned few folks have gone to Ubehebe lately and emerged unscathed; the survivors who didn't are rarely in any shape to tell.
• Sidewinder

• You need only approach the spirits of the crater with genuine respect, seeking to take nothing from them. They will know if your heart is lying, and you will pay the price.
• Scorpio

• A spirit militia has taken control of Ubehebe. They're led by a player. I saw him in a vision quest, from an Anasazi lodge a few kilometers east of the crater.
• Magistra

• It's not a player. It's an earth elemental, bumped WAY up in power by the comet.
• Djinni

• Bulldrek. Elementals don't act like that. There's a player involved, but he works through an Anasazi scorpion shaman named Yellow Eyes. I saw the guy walking up the slope of the crater, easy as you please.
• Desert Mage

• You saw a spirit, chum. The Old Man of the desert. I rest my case.
• Magistra

• I've seen some Anasazi shamans wielding a lot more power than they should be able to since the comet passed. Any chance it could be one of these guys?
• Sister Wind

• What, like getting super-powers from a radioactive spider bite?! Give me a break!
• Bung

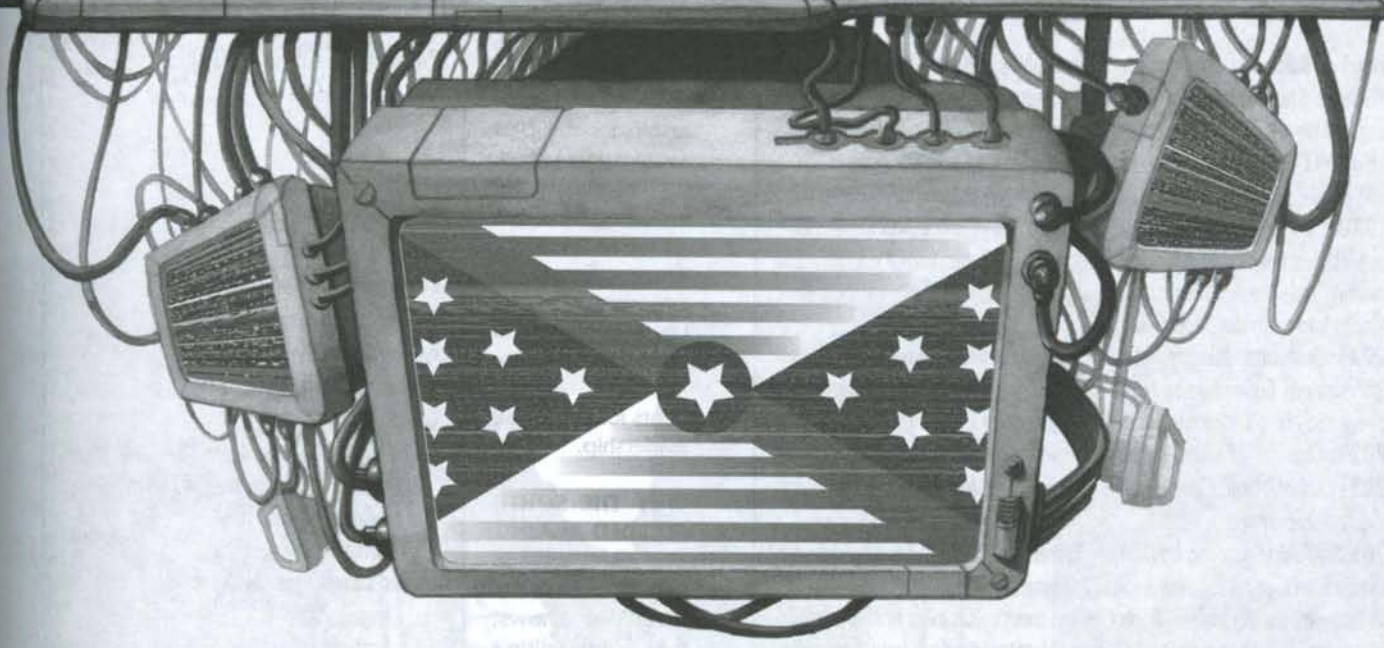
Joshua Tree

The Joshua Tree Monument, currently under threat from Pueblo and Ute, isn't giving in without a fight. The abundant groves of cactus-like yucca plants have nearly doubled in size since the comet flew by, and the trees' reservoir of mana is correspondingly greater. Unlike Ubehebe, the Joshua trees haven't turned generally inimical to metahumankind (yet). Spirits summoned within the groves tend to be remarkably sullen and angry, however, even by the loose standards of the Mojave. Patches within the groves are said to attack trespassers, and the trees are also rumored to move when the whim takes them.

• They do move. You never know when you're going to run across a clump of hostile trees. Even if they don't physically harm you, you can feel the hate. It presses on you like a weight.
• Magic Man

• If you meet a stranger in the groves, be very careful. The tree spirits sometimes manifest as people, and they want to know what you're doing there. If you act respectful, they might help you out. If you don't, they'll lead you astray, at the very least. If you're out to steal telesma, they'll see to it you get hurt.
• Sister Wind

THE CONFEDERATION OF AMERICAN STATES



With all the events that have taken place in the UCAS during the past few years—the 2057 election; Dunkelzahn's election, assassination, and will; the Corp War and the Renraku Arcology shutdown—many people haven't been paying too much attention to current events in the Confederation of American States (CAS). But with the acquisition of the Aztlan sector in Denver with Ghostwalker's help, the CAS is finding its way back into the spotlight.

This update on the CAS doesn't come a moment too soon. While attention was focused on the UCAS, a quiet but significant ideological shift was taking place in the CAS since 2057, culminating in the 2060 election, when the True American Coalition captured the Presidency and the Senate. All of a sudden, it's a brand new ball game, and the True American Coalition has sensed that the time is right to forward their agenda: the rebuilding of the United States of America, with the South as its foundation. I asked our favorite southern belle Io to tell us what's going on, and she gathered up a few folks she knew to help cover the angles.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 15:43:51 (PST)

HISTORY: AMERICA SOUTH

by Dirty Bird

Ask anyone on Shadowland about the CAS, and what's the first impression you get? New Century Rednecks. The South risen again. Stuff like that.

I've got two words for you: Bull. Drek.

What many people tend to forget is that the Confederation is the last real remnant of the United States of America. We haven't compromised our principles by merging with foreigners, but instead remained true to our Founding Fathers' vision. We're not Southerners, we're Americans.

• Oh, and the CAS is a Confederation, not a Confederacy, even if everyone else in North America uses that term. The days of General Lee, chattel slavery and cotton plantations is long past. The easiest way to start a fight down here is to call someone a Confederate, rather than a Confederationist.

• Icepick

CAS TIMELINE

1861–1865: The American Civil War. Twelve Southern states secede from the United States to form the Confederated States of America. The United States wages a bloody five-year war to re-integrate them back into the Union.

1865–1876: Reconstruction. The victorious United States implements forced political and economic reform in the former CSA.

1980-2005: The Southern states pass economic reform legislation to attract technological investment in an effort to fight off stagflation from the 1970s. The resulting technological boom lasts through the Resource Rush, creating what pundits later term the "New South."

2024: Democratic delegates from the Southern states walk out of the Democratic National Convention to protest the party's pandering to special interest groups. Southern Democrats later form the Southern Democratic Party.

2029: Crash of '29. The New South's economy plummets.

2031: Act of Union. Canada and the US merge to form the United Canadian and American States.

2032: Atlanta Secession Convention. Representatives from Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia meet in Atlanta to discuss secession from the UCAS. Kentucky delegates withdraw from the convention several days later.

10 November 2034: Secession Day. The states that met at the Atlanta Secession Convention (minus Kentucky) secede from the UCAS and form the Confederation of American States.

19 December 2034: Treaty of Richmond. The UCAS and CAS sign a treaty formally recognizing the CAS. Missouri is split into two states. Portions of northern Oklahoma wishing to remain in the UCAS merge with the state of Kansas. The UCAS cedes part of its sector in Denver to the CAS.

2035: Aztlan invades Texas, seizing San Antonio, El Paso, and portions of Austin. Texas secedes from the CAS when the CAS balks at retaking captured territory.

2036: Texas applies for re-admission after a failed campaign against Aztlan.

2038: The Southern Conservative Party breaks away from the Republican Party.

2040: The Democratic Reform Party breaks away from the Southern Democratic Party to protest CAS inaction during the Night of Rage. The split in the Democrat voter base gives the Southern Conservatives control of the CAS Senate.

2060: The Republican Party and Democratic Reform Party join forces to form the True American Coalition at a joint convention in Jacksonville, Florida. The Coalition subsequently wins control of the Congress and Presidency during the November general elections.

2062: The CAS acquires the Aztlan sector in Denver during deliberations with the Great Dragon Ghostwalker.

7 November 2062: Election Day 2062.

- Speak for yourself, city-slick Yankee wannabe.
- Stars N Bars
- Sigh. There's always one.
- Icepick

Of course, it hasn't helped that we've been saddled with some small-minded, short-sighted leadership for the past sixteen years. Well, no more. After watching what was going on up north, we Southern-Americans woke up to reality and threw out the do-nothing incumbents for some real leadership.

WHY THE SOUTH SECEDED AGAIN

As anyone who's studied the Civil War knows, the South didn't secede simply because of slavery (though that did antagonize both sides). Rather, the South seceded because its economy, political views and social values (all deriving from the plantation lifestyle) differed sharply from the North, and it saw its core values being threatened by the North.

The South lost, of course, and it was more or less assimilated into America. As America entered the third millennium, most Southern residents had more in common with the rest of the Union than differences. This situation rapidly changed, with two factors diverting the South's interests away from the rest of the US: politics and business.

As the new century dawned, the Internet and e-commerce were crashing head-on into traditional business methods. Old Business was entrenched in the northern US, where most heavy industrial plants resided. In contrast, e-business startups took their roots in the "New" South, which attracted many of the more successful dot-coms by the relatively low cost of living. The geography-less nature of the Internet rendered proximity to Silicon Valley irrelevant.

- Ironically, the New South saw the greatest jump in e-commerce investment after the dot-bomb crash around the beginning of the millennium. When e-commerce's hyped-up revenues failed to materialize, those few e-businesses that survived had to cut costs. Even worse, the California energy crisis, as well as the rise in cost-of-living expenses in the Northeast, weren't helping

CAS AT A GLANCE

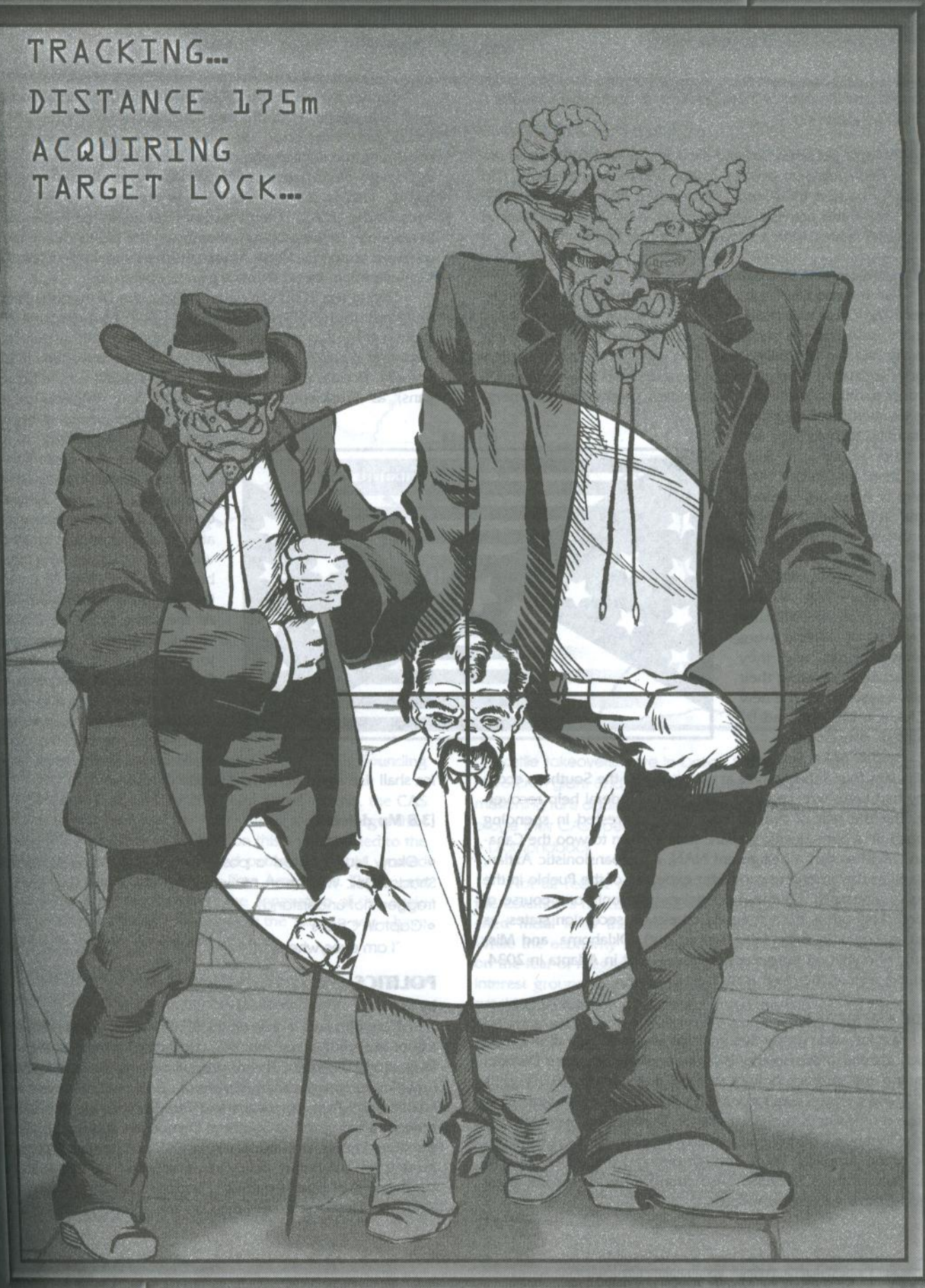
Population: 105,867,000
- Human: 66%
- Elf: 4%
- Dwarf: 8%
- Ork: 19%
- Troll: 3%
- Other: 0%

Per Capita Income: 25,500¥
Estimated SINless: 20%
Below Poverty Level: 31%
Corporate Affiliation: 58%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 30%
- High School Equivalency: 47%
- College Degrees: 18%
- Advanced Degrees: 5%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 88%
- Spanish: 15%

Currency: CAS Dollar (nuyen also accepted)
- Exchange Rate: 1$ = 0.33¥

DocWagon Coverage: 75%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 10 Minutes

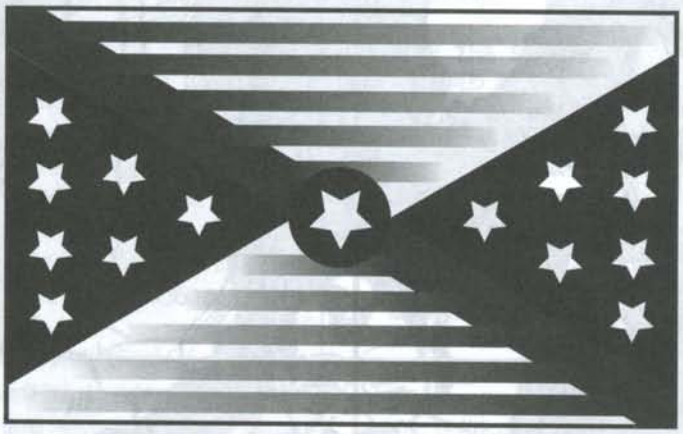

TRACKING...
DISTANCE 175m
ACQUIRING
TARGET LOCK...

matters a bit. So a lot of them packed up and headed south.
• The Keynesian Kid

This split between Old and New Business also polarized the rift between regional politics. Labor unions (representing Old Business) backed the liberals, entrenched in the Northern US, while free-trade activists (representing New Business) backed the conservatives, with a strong base in the South.

Crash, Union, and Secession

Along came the Crash of '29 to make the South feel threatened. The Crash devastated the New South's economy. Based almost exclusively on computers and the Internet, New Business literally had the rug pulled out from under it. To make matters worse, legislative relief passed by Congress was heavily biased in favor of traditionally-minded big business, particularly the emerging extraterritorial megacorporations, such as Ares and JRJ (later to become Fuchi and then Novatech). And many of these big corporations still resided in the Northeast, in Boston, New York and Detroit.



The merger with Canada brought along another threat. The remaining provinces of Canada were strongly liberal, and they insisted on integrating their welfare system into the new UCAS, a move opposed by Southern conservatives.

At this point Southern politicians found themselves at a crossroads: the Southern economy had been wrecked and they needed federal help recovering. But the rest of the US was more interested in spending money on a bureaucratic welfare state system to woo the Canadians. Add to that a belligerent NAN, an expansionistic Aztlan, as well as the emerging computer expertise of the Pueblo in the Crash's aftermath. Southern politicians saw only one course of action. Legislators from the original eleven secession states, as well as Kentucky (who later backed out), Oklahoma, and Missouri (who split on the secession issue), met in Atlanta in 2034, and the rest, as they say, is history.

TRUE AMERICANS

Fast forward twenty-five years or so. You really didn't miss much, thanks to the isolationist agenda of the Southern Democrats and the gridlock politics of the Conservatives. The year is 2057, and a rigged election in the UCAS has forced a runoff. One of the candidates is the great dragon Dunkelzahn, who appeals to the ingenuity, daring and idealism he described as characteristic of the American spirit. Though directed toward UCAS voters, Dunkelzahn's speeches also found a receptive audience amongst many Confederationists.

Further events in the UCAS made the Confederation sit up and take notice. First, the relationship between Ares and the UCAS grew even cozier, as shown by the aid Ares provided in containing the Dunkelzahn riots and exterminating insect spirits in Chicago. Not to mention Veep Nadja Daviar sitting on the Ares board, pushing slogans like "A new era for the UCAS, a new Ares for the UCAS." Then Prez Haeffner deployed Army troops in response to the arcology shutdown. The UCAS clearly took a renewed interest in North American affairs and, in the eyes of the Confederation, threw down a gauntlet before us.

During the 2060 campaign season, the Democratic Reform Party and the CAS Republican Party—both of which until 2058 were regarded as minority parties—surprised political pundits by declaring a political alliance. Holding a joint convention in Jacksonville, Florida, they nominated Cheryl Cundiff (of the Republicans) as Presidential candidate with Brad Williams (of the Reformed Democrats) as her running mate. Appealing to the patriotism of the Confederation people, Cundiff christened the alliance as the True American Coalition. The public buzz generated in the aftermath created a voter surge that defeated incumbent President Ivory McCabe of the Southern Democratic Party. At the same time, the Coalition won enough seats in the Senate to gain a majority, knocking the Conservatives off their perch.

For the first time since secession, true Americans have made themselves heard. The South shall not rise again; rather, America shall rise again from the South.

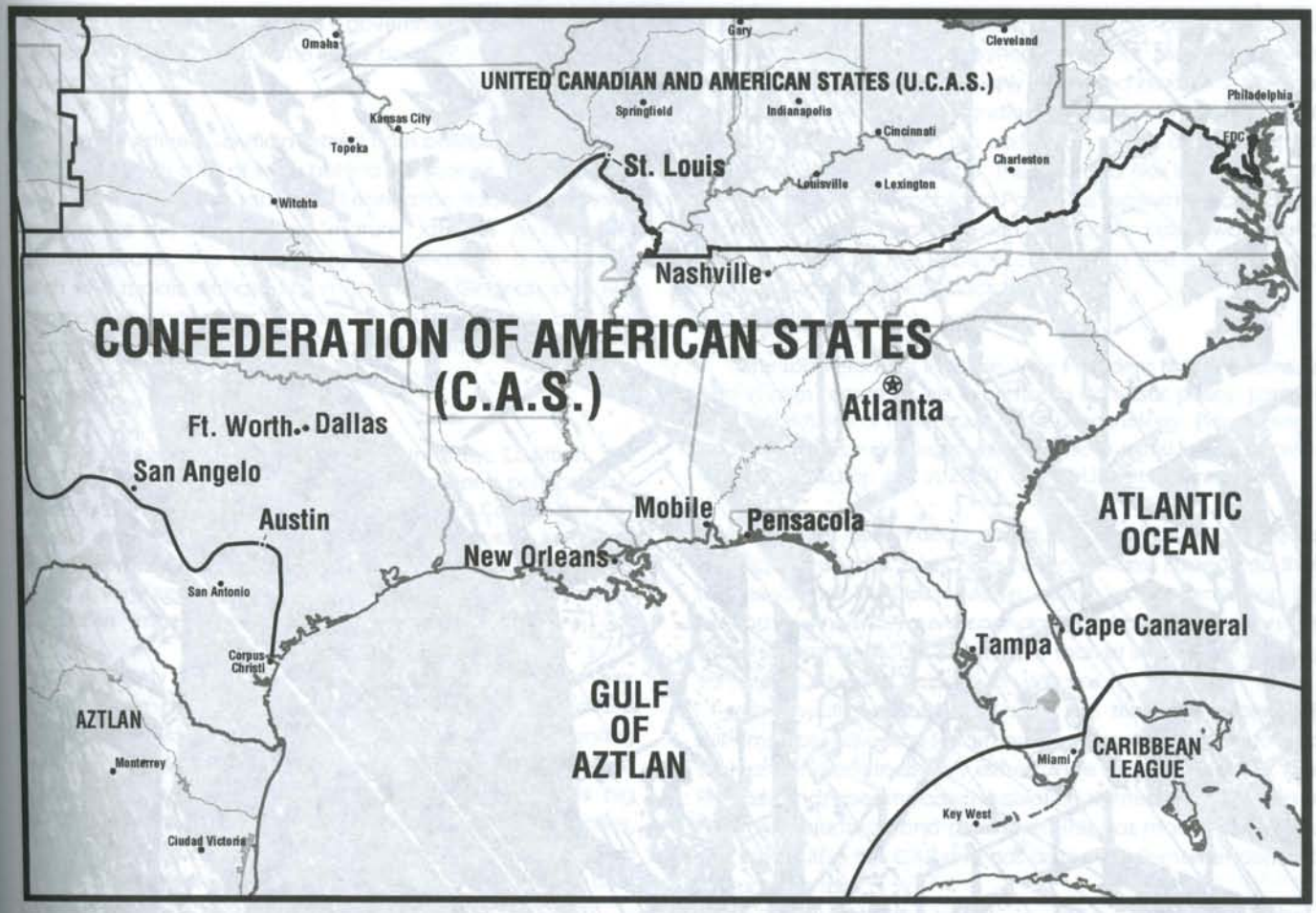
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• Okay. I just booted a posse of anti-CAS flame-posters into ShadowCell. What part of "keep the comments civil" did you fraggers not understand?
• Captain Chaos
"I am everywhere!"

POLITICS

by Io

Dirty Bird lays it on a bit thick, but his attitude is pretty typical of the spirit of rejuvenation circulating throughout the Confederation nowadays. The surprise victory by the True American Coalition exposed a sharp division in CAS politics between two factions, the True Americans and True Southerners. True Southerners, referring to the Southern Democratic and Southern Conservative Parties, predominated in CAS politics until 2060, promoting an isolationist policy reminiscent of the Old South. In contrast, the True American faction, the Republicans and Reformed Democrats, sees the Confederation as the last remain-



ing upholders of the United States envisioned by the Founding Fathers, untainted by foreign influences.

By the time Election Day 2060 had rolled around, the CAS was mired in recession and the Azzie threat loomed larger than ever. The True Americans capitalized on this and appealed to the Confederationists' sense of pride and patriotism. What worked for Dunkelzahn also worked for the True Americans. The events and upheavals since the election—the annexation of the Azzie Denver sector and the costly deadlock in the Yucatán war—have strengthened the True Americans' position.

• One interesting side effect of the Year of the Comet is that the CAS has attracted a lot more foreign investment, both from North America and overseas, than ever before. For a long time many foreign companies were reluctant to build in the CAS, fearing that Aztlan would roll over and nationalize their assets. However, with the Azzies' recent setbacks, the specter of invasion has subsided, making the CAS look more attractive.

• The Keynesian Kid

"Greed IS Good"

• Not everyone likes this new economic boom. Local companies are afraid the new wave of investment will lead to a new wave of hostile takeovers. Here in Dallas, Sikorsky-Bell, helicopter and hovercraft giant and resident CAS heavyweight, has been commissioning runs against Lockheed and Federated Boeing to sabotage their CAS operations.

• Diamondback

Not all recent events, however, have played entirely into the Coalition's hands. SURGE's mysterious effects have reawakened racial fears that the Conservatives played like a violin. While the economy has improved since then, it's also brought on the fear of megacorporate takeover, which has many special interest groups hounding the Southern Democrats. Though the presidential election doesn't take place this fall, several key Congressional and state elections will take place that may suddenly end the True American movement.

• The House elections are of crucial interest to all parties involved. Though the True Americans have more representatives than the other parties, they don't have an absolute majority, holding only 39 percent of all seats. The Southern Dems are the next highest, at 34 percent, a difference of about eleven seats. So there's a lot of heavy campaigning going on between the



two to hold or take the majority.
• Atlanta Spy

• Some of the big city races are particularly heated, with the major parties taking a victory-at-any-cost stance. Over here in Nashville, the shadows are all abuzz over the race between Coalition Congresswoman Vicki Stepanski and Southern Dem challenger Mary Holmes. Both sides are paying well to dig up the dirt (or plant some) on their respective opponents.
• Mirror Man

THE TRUE AMERICAN COALITION

This alliance of two minority parties is the biggest surprise to come out of Jacksonville since the New England Patriots upset the defending-champion Cardinals on the last play of Superbowl LXXXIII in 2057. As the newest players in Confederation politics, the True American Coalition has made a big splash in capturing the Manor House and the Senate. The alliance is fragile, however, and the wrong mess could spur a divorce before the honeymoon ends.

The Republican Party

Along with the Southern Democratic Party, Confederation Republicans were instrumental in the CAS's secession from the UCAS. Then-party chairman Christine Caulfield organized the Secession Convention of 2034, and the Republicans had a major hand in drafting the Articles of Confederation. Unfortunately, the glory of founding the CAS faded and they have remained in the minority ever since. Even two centuries after the Civil War, hailing from of the party of Lincoln still isn't popular down here.

• Being the perpetual underdog can be good for biz—the shadow biz, that is. The Republicans, because they have least to lose and the most to gain, play the shadows the most of all the political parties.
• Strawberry Switchblade

• Don't be so sure of that now. Now that they're in power they've got the DSI, the DDI and lots of other government agencies on their side.
• Eaton

• *Yeah, but since when have "government agencies" and "effective" been uttered in the same breath?*
• Aybabtu

• *"Mean Christine" Caulfield retired from politics six years ago, but she still holds a lot of sway behind the scenes. Though she's well into her seventies, repeated Leonization treatments make her look like she's entering a "mature" late-30s. As her nickname indicates, the former Georgia senator is a vindictive slitch who makes Richard Nixon and Newt Gingrich look like choirboys. She has never forgiven the Southern Dems, and the scuttlebutt in Atlanta is that she pays well to humiliate them, political gain or no.*
• Atlanta Spy

The Republicans function as the brain of the Coalition, the policy wonks who engineer most of the Coalition's political platform. As the top Republican in office, President Cundiff has resonated amongst voters with her firm-but-fair leader image. A decorated veteran of the Aztlan invasion of Texas, Cundiff has taken a very aggressive anti-Aztlan stance and has dropped hints of an "impending" liberation of San Antonio.

• Cundiff's flinty personality has created quite a few sparks over the Potomac and is straining the normally cordial relations between the two nations. The Coalition's stance of representing the "true" American way has rubbed many politicos in DeeCee the wrong way, especially when coming from Cheryl's big mouth. During the peace summit in Denver with Ghostwalker, President Cundiff nearly got into a cat fight with UCAS Veep Nadja Daviar over a few words about Daviar's former boss Dunkelzahn.
• DeeCeeIOT

The Democratic Reform Party

The Reformists broke away from the Southern Democratic Party in 2040 in protest and indignation over the CAS's inaction during the Night of Rage. They've subsequently encountered popularity with Confederation metahumans and metahuman-rights activists, though they too have remained in the minority behind the True Southern parties until recently.

• Metahuman rights reform is a really big issue with the Reformists. When the Southern Conservatives controlled the Senate, as well as some state legislatures, they pushed through legislation biased against metahumans; most of it never passed, though, thanks to legislative gridlock in the House. The Reformed Democrats have been working to undo those few laws that did manage to make it through, but they face some stiff opposition—not only from the Conservatives, but also Southern Dems who just want to antagonize the Reformists. I've heard rumors some Reformed Dems are using "unconventional" measures to *"persuade"* swing politicians.
• Memphis Belle

• *During this year's congressional election campaigns, the* Southern Democrats are playing on racial issues to induce Reformists to defect. In one highly publicized incident in Raleigh, the Southern Democratic candidate, Ralph Eakins, was caught planting disinformation in the campaign offices of the Reformist candidate, Michael Everette. These forged files insinuated that the North Carolina Republican Party was receiving secret backing from the state Humanis Policlub chapter. Eakins was forced to drop out when the Republicans (with a little shadow help) pointed the electron trail back to him.
• Blue Devil

The top Reformist in office, Vice President Brad Williams, is held in high regard for his expertise in domestic policy, particularly in the fields of health care and biotechnology. Prior to seeking political office, Williams gained fame as a trial lawyer for winning a class action suit in 2050 against Universal Omnitech.

• No love was lost on either side during that trial. UO suffered a lot of bad publicity, particularly when Williams ripped into their top researcher, Dr. Kristine Martin, during cross-examination. He caused the normally cryo-cool doctor to break down on the stand several times. UO lost a lot of market share afterwards to Yamatetsu, which UO blames on Williams.

On the flip side of the coin, the trial has colored VP Williams' (as well as the Reformed Democrats') attitude toward biotech, and not favorably either. Since taking office, the Vice President has spearheaded legislation tightening regulation of bioware, nanotech and genetech. This has made it harder to get that stuff in the CAS and has driven black-market demand through the roof.
• The Smiling Bandit
"Striking Again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

TRUE SOUTHERNERS

Political pundits in the Confederation use the label "True Southerners" to refer to the two parties the Coalition kicked out: the Southern Democrats and the Southern Conservatives. Both parties support sectionalist and isolationist policies, and both parties often exploit Southern imagery. The Coalition showed, however, that the Southern Dems and Conservatives grossly overestimated the importance of Johnny Reb to the Confederation people.

Though they share a common foe, don't expect these two archrivals to come together the way the True Americans did. Despite the fact that they stand on the opposite sides of center, the Republicans and Reformists have more in common than differences. The Southern Conservatives are way out in right field, while the Southern Dems are too busy pandering to special interest groups. The only way either of these two can get back into the limelight is by bringing down the True American Coalition.

• Which isn't likely to happen in the near future. The windfalls brought about by the Year of the Comet have helped the Coalition, so the True Southerners are resorting to dirty tricks. If your

Johnson has a *really* deep Southern accent, you might want to check his voter registration card.
• MC23

Southern Democrats

Back in 2024, a large majority of Democrats from the southern states walked out of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia to protest the party's platform. Denouncing the liberal special interest groups that dominated party leadership, these southern delegates formed their own party, the Southern Democratic Party. With help from southern Republicans, they later led the secession of the CAS in 2034.

Funny how what goes around comes around. Some thirty-six years after walking out in protest over special interests, the Southern Democrats are so on-the-take you can see the puppet strings attached. The Southern Dems pander to a lot of regional interests, including Southern-based corps, unions and local activists. You can blame them for the isolationist policies that have given the Confederation a bad name.

• The Southern Dems may no longer be in power, but they're still a dangerous force to be reckoned with politically. They're quite strong at the state level, and the various unions, corps and policlubs they pander to can throw a lot of weight around, often from unexpected directions.
• Jalong

The Dems' isolationist attitude, however, may be slowly changing. Even though she's no longer in the Manor House, former President Ivory McCabe is still visible in the public eye. When she isn't making speeches before various lobbyist groups, she's touring around the UCAS to "promote better understanding between northern and southern Americans."

• Right. And I'm Jet Black. If you take a look at McCabe's itinerary, you'll notice she's made more trips to DeeCee than anywhere else. If you take a *real* close look at those visits, you'll notice she spends very little time down on Pennsylvania Avenue. Instead, she's mostly up in the Georgetown area. Guess who's up in Georgetown? That's right, the Illuminates of the New Dawn. Call me crazy, but I have a feeling that at the next convention, the Southern Dems may be adopting a pro-magical platform.
• Mage-o-matic

• McCabe meeting with the IOND? Interesting. The IOND had been trying to get into Confederation politics, but after the poor showing of the New Century Party in the 2057 UCAS election, they had to shelve those plans. Getting in bed with the Southern Dems may give the IOND the in they want. Thanks for the tip.
• Atlanta Spy

Southern Conservatives

The UCAS has the Archconservatives; we have the Southern Conservatives. Different names, same bigots.

The Southern Conservative Party broke away from the Republicans in 2038. At that time, anti-Awakening fears were running high; the elves of Tir Tairngire had broken away spectacularly from the NAN and the great dragon Lofwyr had just pulled off a stunning hostile takeover of Saeder-Krupp. The Southern Conservatives preached protection against the Awakened, and the people lapped it up. The Conservatives later took control of the Senate when the Reformed Democrats split from the Southern Democrats in 2040, up until 2060's electoral upset.

Their message has grown stale over the years though, and by 2060 most voters wanted something else. Though the Conservatives got a little boost after Dunkelzahn's election, most voters were more concerned with a stagnant economy and the threat of the Corp War spilling into Confederation territory. Conservatives suffered the worst losses in the 2060 election, not only losing the Senate but also falling into last place in the House.

• I wouldn't count the Conservatives out just yet. SURGE, Ghostwalker, and the shedim threat have reawakened many fears throughout the Confederation. The Conservatives were the ones who drafted and pushed through the bill offering bounties on voodoo houngans after the shedim emerged. And they're not content with that; they recently called for tighter thaumaturgical control and licensing, something that torques off the Southern Dems and, surprisingly, the Republicans.
• Cougar

• Here's another surprise for you: the Conservatives don't get along very well with the Humanis Policlub, which denounces the Conservatives as being "too soft." I think part of this has to do with philosophy; Humanis members usually favor direct action toward one end: metas out. In the Confederation, though, the Conservatives really don't care about getting rid of the metas; they just want to make sure metas are put in their place as second-class citizens.
• T-Bone

• I've heard a lot of rumors that quite a few of the Southern Conservative bigshots have ties to the Human Nation, but they really don't like Alamos 20K. The Conservatives have also been fostering ties with General Saito in California; some Conservative leaders were seen meeting with one of Saito's liaison officers in San Francisco a few months ago.
• Poly Chromatique

GOVERNMENT

The CAS government organization follows the old US federal government structure. Since most of you skags like to compare everything to Seattle and the UCAS, the structure is pretty similar, other than a few name changes (Cabinet Departments are called Bureaus in the CAS, for example).

There are really only three major differences between the CAS and UCAS. First, the CAS reinstated the Electoral College for presidential elections. Second, each state has three senators in the Senate, not two. Lastly, the CAS returned to the principle of term limits, limiting presidents to two terms and senators to

four. (Representatives don't have any, but the House is more like a circus than a legislature anyway, so it doesn't matter.)

Those are the basics of the CAS government. If you want more, I'm sure Cap can point you in the direction of a few civics links. I'm just touching on the stuff important to you runners out there.

THE ERLA

The Extraterritoriality Registry and Liaison Agency, or ERLA, is an unusual organization not found in many other countries. Part of the Bureau of Commerce, the ERLA keeps a register of all extraterritorial corporations and their domains within the CAS. In addition to basic information, the ERLA also tracks real estate issues and has approval authority over any real estate transaction involving extraterritorial corporations. Finally, the ERLA maintains liaison with extraterritorial corporations (as well as the Corporate Court) and acts as an avenue of contact between the corps and the government.

• The authority to approve real estate transactions gives the CAS something to hold over the corps' heads. While extraterritoriality gives the corps carte blanche on corp property, it says drek-all about the land itself. If the corp owns the land, no problemo. If the corp *leases* the land, however, the landlord can revoke the lease (especially if the CAS tells her to) and evict the corp, which effectively ends extraterritoriality. (How much do you want to bet that all Aztechnology facilities in the CAS are on *leased* land?)
• Legal Beagle

• If the CAS pulled that trick too often, they could be in for some serious retaliation in the form of economic embargoes, not to mention a sudden rash of "accidents" and "incidents."
• The Chromed Accountant
"It's all about dollars and sense."

At least that's what it does on paper. In practice, the ERLA spies on extraterritorial corps on the Confederation's behalf and conducts the occasional covert op. In effect the ERLA is a spy agency dedicated to spying on corps.

• And, yes, the ERLA does hire shadowrunners from time to time to do their snooping for them. Not that they'll admit it, of course; not only are the jobs they contract illegal by the target corp's extraterritorial law, in some cases they even violate Confederation law.
• Icepick

• The runs go both ways. I've been hired on occasion to run against the ERLA offices where I live (and no, I won't tell you where) for counterintelligence work, destroying some evidence or spreading a little bit of disinformation. I know a chummer who made a run on the ERLA to find some info on another corp competing with his Johnson's client.
• Bronski Bit

• I've heard that the ERLA also maintains its own team of "auditors" to handle "cases" too sensitive to contract to outside shadowrunners.
• Doog

• Lately the buzz in the Atlanta shadows is that the ERLA is focusing a lot of attention on Saeder-Krupp, both openly and in the shadows. The Eurocorp already has a substantial presence in the CAS; they have more factories and offices in the Confederation than the UCAS, and their North America HQ is located in Charlotte. But S-K's also been in a growth spurt here, building more factories and buying more office space in the past couple of years. Scuttlebutt here suspects that an alliance between Saeder-Krupp and the CAS (unofficial, of course) may be in the works.
• Atlanta Spy

• Wouldn't surprise me. An alliance between the two seems to benefit both parties involved. After all the UCAS now has *two* megacorps in its backyard (Ares and Novatech), one of which competes directly with S-K. And both the CAS and S-K have a mutual enemy in Aztlan/Aztechnology.
• Black Knight

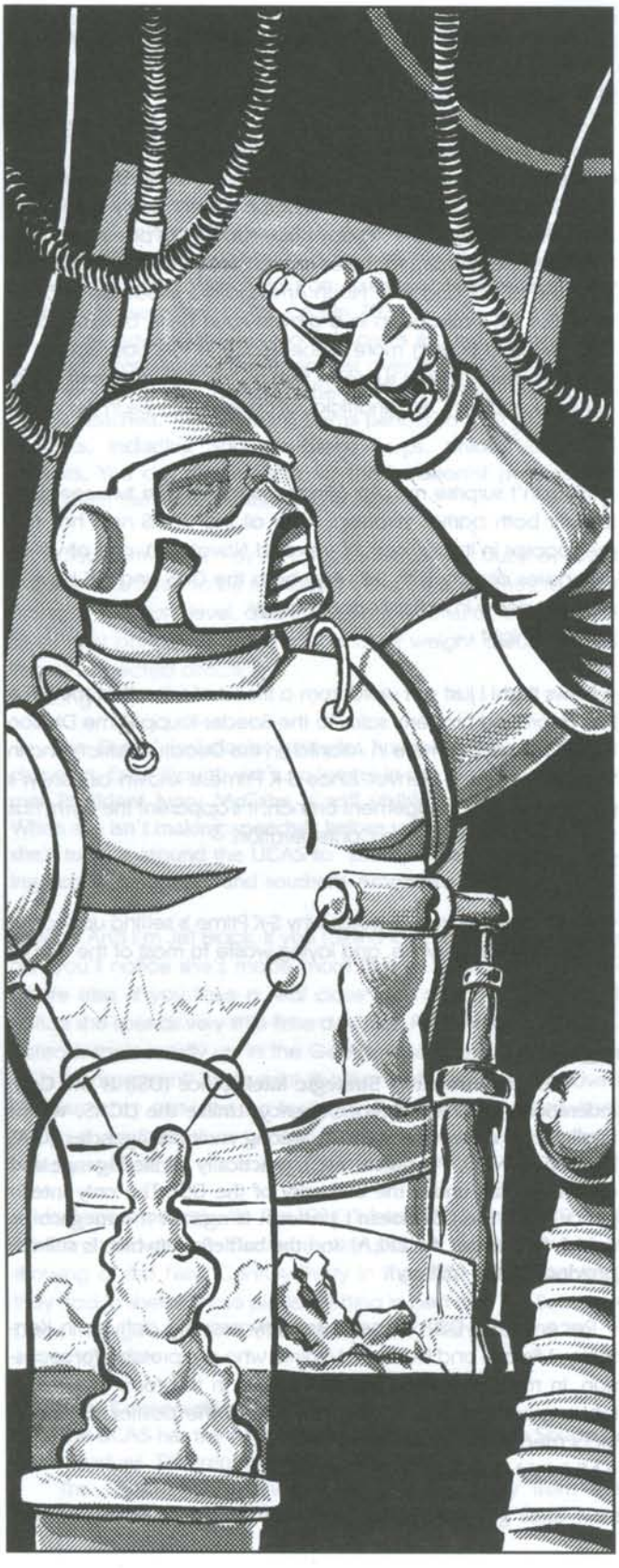
• News flash! I just got word from a friend of mine that the ERLA has approved property sales to the Saeder-Krupp Prime Division for office buildings here in Atlanta (in the Decatur district) and in the CAS sector in Denver. Since S-K Prime is known as Lofwyr's personal micromanagement branch, it's apparent the wyrm has taken new interest in the Confederation.
• Shetani

• Well, I think we can all guess why S-K Prime is setting up shop in Denver. Think big, white, and laying waste to most of the former Azzie sector.
• DragonIX

THE DSI

The Department of Strategic Intelligence (DSI) is the Confederation's chief intelligence agency. Unlike the UCAS, where intelligence duties are split up among multiple agencies (CIA, DIA, NSA, NRO, Pentagon, etc.), practically all intelligence and covert ops fall under the authority of the DSI. The only intelligence work the DSI doesn't perform is against the megacorps (which falls under the ERLA) and the battlefield (which is still the province of the military).

• Recently the DSI has been secretly assisting activists in Kentucky, Missouri and Northern Virginia who are pressing for secession. In most cases this support comes in the form of funding lobby groups and policlubs that hound the politicians or blitz local media.
• Midnight Runner



• The DSI isn't the only CAS agency trying to get them to secede. There was that Compensation Army incident back in '55, where the Marine Ferrets were supplying arms to the Compers to get them to riot in DeeCee and scare North Virginia into seceding. It didn't work, though, because UCAS Army intelligence sniffed out the plot.
• Ashe

• Spirits, not that again! "Ferrets" is the unit nickname for A Company, 1st Marine Reconnaissance Battalion, and doesn't apply to the all the various special ops forces in the Corps! They only got that label because of some ignorant media hound covering a hostage rescue near Mobile in 2053. (And the unit involved *wasn't* A Company, but one of the Marine counter-terrorist teams training in Pensacola at the time. Fragging ignorant media snoops.)
• Derek

• In any case, I doubt the "Ferrets" were involved in the Compensation Army riots. It did come out after the fact that North Virginia Governor Jefferson had been collaborating (probably with the DSI) to arrange for North Virginia's secession and saw the riots as a ripe opportunity. Some of the Compensation insurrectionists had been supplied with CAS weapons, and there were some insurrectionists killed who were wearing CAS Marine uniforms. But it turned out those "Ferrets" supplying the arms were SINless mercs. They never did find out who was actually backing those false Ferrets.
• Bullet

• I didn't know about that part of the riots. You know, the more I think about it, the whole riot situation fits nicely with the MO of that "New Revolution" conspiracy that was discussed in a recent Shadowland download. You think these false Ferrets might have worked for them?
• Calloway

THE DDI

The Department of Domestic Investigation handles investigations within the CAS; essentially, it's the Confederation counterpart of the UCAS FBI. Like the FBI, the DDI gets called in for criminal investigations only if they cross state lines, and they're also the lead agency for counterintelligence operations and investigations. Additionally, the DDI runs the Confederation Secret Service, which is responsible for protecting key political figures (like the President) and investigating Matrix-related crimes.

• The DDI also maintains a branch of special operatives known as the Criminal Deterrence Operations group (CDO) that undertakes "active prevention operations." In other words, wetwork and terror campaigns. Originally the CDO was organized to fight organized crime, but the DDI expanded its scope to target

"any disruptive element that threatens Confederation peace and security."
• Eliot

CONFEDERATION MILITARY

I don't know why you skags care so much about military forces, since running against them is a practical death wish. But you like to talk about it, so I might as well mention it. The CAS military falls under the Bureau of Defense. In terms of numbers, the Confederation has the largest military force on North America, with six active Army divisions, two Marine expeditionary forces and sixteen air combat squadrons. On the other hand, their military technology is middle-of-the-pack, lagging behind the UCAS, Aztlan and Pueblo. Magical combat capabilities are approximately on par with the UCAS.

• Though the Confederation's elite forces don't match up to the elite of other nations—such as the Sioux Wildcats—their line forces are better trained than those of other nations. Confederation military doctrine emphasizes training and tactics over technology; after all, good weapons can be replaced, but good soldiers can't.
• Josie Cruise

WHISTLIN' (THROUGH) DIXIE

by Smokey Joe

The 22 years I've spent as a DDI special agent have taken me across the length and breadth of the Confederation, so Io asked me to give a quick run-down of hot spots in the CAS that might interest shadow folk like you.

ATLANTA

The capital of both the CAS and the state of Georgia is a study in contrasts. On one hand, it's the seat of power for one of the more powerful industrialized nations on the North American continent. On the other hand, it's also a sprawl besieged by rampant street crime. This Jekyll-and-Hyde split personality between order and chaos manifests in the layout as well, with the north and east showing the splendor of a nation's capital, while the south and west teeters on the brink of chaos.

The state capital resides in the heart of downtown Atlanta, just slightly north of the juncture of interstates 75, 85 and 20. The national capital, as well as most Confederation bureau offices, resides in the eastern half of the sprawl near Stone Mountain. The presidential mansion, the Manor House, sits atop the mountain itself, giving it a commanding view of the sprawl.

• As expected from any national capitol, political intrigue and espionage are rife in Atlanta's shadows. There are two other unusual political players (aside from the UCAS, other nations and megacorps): *the Georgia state government and the Atlanta city* council! Lots of petty bickering occurs between all three levels, and politicos from all sides use the shadows, if for nothing else than to stick it to the other guys.
• Icepick

• Scan that. What makes it worse is that while the Coalition holds onto power at the national level, the Southern Democrats control the State Assembly, while the Conservatives hold City Hall and the Governor's Mansion. The gubernatorial election is taking place this year, and state legislature assemblies take place every two years, so the political intrigue has become particularly cutthroat. The incumbent governor, Conservative Roger Barnaby, leads in the polls right now, but he's facing a tough challenge from Southern Democrat Rob Showalter and Reformed Democrat Roosevelt Wirth.
• Atlanta Spy

Georgia Tech

The Georgia Institute of Technology is one of the leading science, engineering and thaumaturgical universities in North America. Though trailing MIT&T, Georgia Tech is still in the same league and conducts its share of cutting-edge research, particularly in the fields of chemical engineering and materials science.

• Geogia Tech is a state-funded school, but most of its funding and enrollment comes from the corps. Corporate competition isn't that fierce over students, as most of the superstars go to MIT&T or CalTech. The real interest is in research projects, and the corps often hire runners to snoop on or sabotage another corp's project.
• Bulldog Hater

The CDC

Sitting in the northern reaches of the eastern Decatur district, the Center for Disease Control is famous the world over for its disease prevention research. Originally part of the US Department of Health and Human Services, the CDC lobbied to become an independent non-profit agency when the CAS seceded, claiming political bickering could jeopardize its research. When the Corporate Court endorsed this request, the UCAS and CAS quietly acceded.

• The Corp Court endorsed CDC independence as a political maneuver to marginalize the World Health Organization, which at that time obstructed many corp biotech projects. The CDC's first director, Jerroldine Blake, proved to be a shrewd fixer, however, who kept the CDC free of corporate influence. Ironically, now it's the WHO that acts as the megacorps' rubber stamp.
• The Smiling Bandit
"Striking Again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

Since then, the CDC's rep has continued to grow. It's attracted a number of world-renowned experts who prefer the working environment (free of corporate ladder-climbing and government bureaucracy). The CDC continues to act as a certifying agency for biotech-related products, in much the same way that Underwriters Laboratories certifies household appliances and products. Denial or loss of CDC certification can doom a brand of pharmaceuticals, cyberware or bioware.



• Which means that biotech corps like Cross and Yamatetsu are constantly currying favor with the CDC in the hopes of getting an edge over their competition.
• Fallen Angel

• The CDC has been known to hire runners if they suspect a corp is not being entirely forthright and they want some "independent verification." Also, the rise of cults and toxic and apocalyptic groups in the world has prompted the CDC to take more direct measures against bioterrorism threats.
• Mongoose

The Dome

The Dome is a really weird place. Known previously as Fulton County Stadium and later Ted Turner Stadium, the Dome sits deep in Southtown, the slums south of I-20. After sports teams stopped using it in 2024, Georgia Tech turned it into a research project on enclosed cities, covering the coliseum roof with a photosynthetic membrane. The project shut down because of corp sabotage, and before long squatters moved into the Dome for shelter. Eventually, a sort of tribal micro-society emerged, with the upper class (known as "innies") residing inside the dome, while swarms of "outies" lived outside in shantytowns in the old parking lots. Every once in a while gladiatorial fights would be conducted around the dome entrances, as an "outie" would try to defeat an "innie" and take his family's place inside the dome.

• When the corps heard about this, they had a field day using the gladiatorial fights to "field test" some of their prototype cyber- and bioware. A few of them even threw in paranimals and genetic constructs into the pits to see how they would perform against squatters, both augmented and unaugmented.
• Icepick

• There have been rumors that the mysterious organlegging group known as Tamanous gets a lot of its "harvest" from the Dome. Not only do they grab some of the more vulnerable outies, but apparently they have a contact with one of the leaders on the inside and snatch quite a few innies as well. The resulting vacancies result in a pit fight amongst the outies, providing even more "fresh meat" for Tamanous.
• Time Flyte

Though it's never been safe for non-domers to venture near the place, one thing has made it even more dangerous: bug spirits. The same year insect spirits overran Chicago, there was also a minor outbreak inside the Dome. Perhaps because of the violent Dome culture, the hive never managed to invade the rest of Atlanta.

• They didn't need to invade—they found their own little ecological niche inside the Dome. The innies didn't beat them down, they just forced the bugs out of the closet and integrated them right into their culture. You'll notice the outies don't challenge the bugs for their space much.
• Swatter

• Unlike the normal Domers, flesh-form Domers don't stay on Dome grounds and tend to go wandering around the neighborhood. They're not allowed to feed on other Domers (part of the deal I guess), so they're usually off dumpstering food or stalking new "recruits." The local residents have learned to tell them apart and steer clear.
• Southside Bob

THE GULF COAST

Bordering on both Aztlan and the Carribean League, the Gulf of Mexico is a hotly contested body of water. As a second potential front should war break out, maintaining control of the Gulf is critical to the CAS Navy. Meanwhile, the lawless nature of the Caribbean League provides a desirable outlet for black market smuggling. Not since the days of the Spanish Main has the Gulf been such a dangerous and exciting place to be.

• I thought it's called the Gulf of Aztlan?
• Code Kid

• It is. But countries hostile to Aztlan (like CAS and the Pueblo) still call it the Gulf of Mexico just to irk the Azzies. It's a subtle insinuation of illegitimacy against the Aztlan government.
• Diamondback

• The CAS has revived the practice of privateering and has issued letters of marque to various pirate groups. The terms tend to vary from group to group, depending on their relation with the CAS, but basically they provide safe haven and limited amnesty to pirates in Confederate ports. The down side, though, is that if the Azzies catch you with a Confederate letter of marque, they will spare no expense to send you to the bottom of the Gulf. (Most of the groups that have received them are already wanted by the Azzies, so it's usually a moot point.)
• Bloody Rackham

New Orleans

The shadows in the Big Easy this past year have gotten hotter than Mama Delafosse's Five-Alarm Gumbo. Ever since the CAS put out its open bounty on magicians who animate the dead, voodoo houngans have been in an uproar night and day. Local government buildings are under tight alert after several bombings and magic-related attacks, which many suspect were instigated by individual houngans. Meanwhile, gang war is breaking out amongst the krewes—local criminal gangs with strong magical ties. All of the recent magical changes across the globe have upset the balance of power in the N'Awlins underworld.



• You don't know half of it, Joe. Though the krewes are the ones doing the fighting, it's really a proxy war between the Mafia (particularly Capa Kozlowski's Family) and the Zobop (a local syndicate with a very strong voodoo background). The Zobop have always been looking to expand their vice markets, and with all the strange magic going on, now's as good a time as any.
• Connor Black

• Are you joking, Connor? Pamela Rodenbush, heir apparent to *La Dame Du Morte* Kozlowski, SURGEd late last year. Dona Kozlowski tried to keep it under wraps for a while, but word got out, and it's tearing the New Orleans mafia apart. Pam's er, *diabolical* changes have really spooked out some of the Mafia's more traditionally minded *soldatos*, particularly the orthodox Mossino family. They've had enough putting up with Dona Kozlowski's unorthodox methods, and Pam's change is the straw that broke the camel's back.
• Grande Flamme

With the krewe wars rumbling through the New Orleans shadows, Crescent City's normally heavy smuggling traffic has been thrown into disarray. Nobody knows who to trust, and on some days you can't keep track of who's still breathing! The more successful smugglers are managing to stay ahead of the game, but most are going to ground in the bayou swamps around the Delta and Lake Ponchartrain. Many smugglers are talking of bypassing New Orleans altogether and relocating their operations to nearby Gulfport, Mississippi.

• Cutthroat gang wars aren't the only things smugglers have to worry. Shedim reports are on the rise in the swamps, and the numbers increase each week. Part of it has to do with Crescent City's cemeteries; you can't bury in the swampy ground, so the dead are interred in above-ground crypts and mausoleums, making it that much easier for a shedim-possessed body to escape. Also, some smugglers with Zobop connections have made a profit smuggling animated corpses. With the recent craziness and the bounty, though, it's become an even riskier enterprise, as some of the "cargo" has turned upon the people smuggling them.
• Decker del Sur

Tampa Bay

The natural inlet created by Tampa Bay has made the Sun Coast area—Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater and Sarasota—an important commercial harbor for the Confederation. As such, Tampa Bay is industrialized and has major megacorporate presence.

• Not a lot of piracy takes place near Tampa Bay waters; as a major shipping port, the megacorps are interested in seeing that shipping passes safely into and out of the bay. Many pirates, however, still come to Tampa to fence goods to the corps obtained elsewhere in the Caribbean.
• Muffin Man

• A lot of old-money UCAS and European executives and VIPs have winter residences down in Tampa, as well as Orlando and Jacksonville. As such they tend to have a lot of political clout with the state and municipal governments.
• Seminole

Pensacola & Mobile

Pensacola and Mobile are the CAS's primary naval bases. Unlike the UCAS, the Confederation Navy is a "brown water" navy, built around defending a local body of water. The navy employs a few heavy warships but consists mostly of frigates, corvettes, and patrol craft. Confederation naval air support is largely land-based, mostly out of Pensacola. They do have two 50,000-ton carriers, however, for limited offshore air operations. One is stationed at Mobile, while the other one is in Charleston, South Carolina.

One area of strength the Confederation Navy does possess is a strong submarine force. The Confederation has the largest submarine force in the world, both in terms of conventional attack subs and missile subs (conventional and nuclear warheads).

• Wait a minute. I thought the Confederacy had no boomers?
• Sgt. Pruit

• Just goes to show how little you know, Sarge. When the CAS seceded from the UCAS, they inherited most of the UCAS's nuclear missile subs, leaving the UCAS only land-based silos and bombers. When Edna Wallace became President in 2048, she ordered the boomers mothballed as part of a foolish détente policy, but after hearing news of a nuke being detonated in Bug City, she rescinded that order in 2056 and returned them to active duty.
• Subron 13

• Recently, the CAS Navy has developed a submarine capable of launching combat aircraft, both manned and unmanned. Termed as an SSVN, it supposedly has a displacement of almost 35,000 tons and can carry a wing of 6 fighter aircraft. No other navy in the world has anything like this, so I suspect there are going to be some upcoming jobs in the Gulf Coast area pretty soon.
• Kid Commando

TEXAS

I can sum up Texas in two words: Mexican standoff. Sitting on a very volatile border with Aztlan, the situation in Texas is very much like that of West Germany in the Cold War—two hostile forces glaring at each other over a line in the sand, daring the other to make the first move.

• The situation is the worst on the far reaches of the Texas-Aztlan border. On the far eastern flank, the stretch between Austin and Corpus Christi is a war zone waiting to happen with both sides dug into entrenched fortifications. The far western flank, between Odessa and El Paso, is constantly swarming with cavalry fighting vehicles, helicopters and t-birds racing to and fro along the border. The middle of the border is strangely quiet, with neither side showing more than a token patrol vehicle. This has made San Angelo a sort of smuggler haven, as smugglers coming from Denver stop here before dispersing over the border.
• Diamondback

• The Confederation Army has a very strong presence in Texas, for obvious reasons. Besides watching the border for signs of Azzie mischief, the Army also sends out special forces teams into Aztlan-occupied Texas to assist, train and advise militia and rebel groups operating behind lines.
• Texas 2-Step

"El Paso: Never surrender. Never forget. Never forgive."

Dallas/Fort Worth

Though Texans still claim Austin as their capital, the politicians and bureaucrats meet at the provisional capital in Dallas. The DFW sprawl has swelled in size over the past thirty years, thanks to refugees fleeing from Aztlan. Most of them settled in Fort Worth, which has not weathered the huge influx well. Light industry, particularly the manufacture of industrial and component electronics, sustains the sprawl's economy.

• With the recent setbacks the Azzies have suffered, the political landscape has shifted considerably in Texas. The Southern Dems and Southern Conservatives have lost a lot of voters, while a new policlub—the Sons of the Alamo—has been rising in popularity. The SoA is calling for an immediate invasion to retake lost land while the Azzies are momentarily vulnerable. So far the CAS have resisted such calls; the Azzies may be down, but they're still dangerous. Republican Governor Theresa Vasquez, however, has activated more National Guard units and introduced legislation to beef up the budget and roster of the Texas Rangers.
• Texas 2-Step

El Paso: Never surrender. Never forget. Never forgive.

• The SoA isn't satisfied only with retaking land lost to the Azzies. They're also calling for secession from the CAS as an indepen-

dent Republic. So far no one's taken their independence claim seriously, and the SoA is smart enough not to press the issue. But the SoA has been recruiting in droves, which alarms politicians both in Texas and the CAS.

• Riggs

Austin

If Texas' situation can be likened to West Germany in the Cold War, then Austin is the divided city of Berlin. Instead of a wall, however, the Colorado River separates both halves of the city, with the CAS occupying the north and the Azzies holding the south. Only the I-35 bridge connects both halves, the Checkpoint Charlie of this divided city.

• Texans make a big deal about half of Austin being captive to the Azzies, but in reality the Azzies got the raw end of the split. Most of the city, including the downtown area and the valuable industrial districts, lies north of the river. The southern half owned by the Azzies is mostly low-income neighborhoods which are a warren of guerilla resistance, supported mostly by the Sons of the Alamo. The only worthwhile thing the Azzies own is Bergstrom Air Force Base, but guerilla resistance and multiple SAM emplacements keep most of the planes grounded there.

• Honcho

• Austin is also the headquarters to that corporation all of us shadowrunners know all too well: Lone Star Security Services, Inc. Lone Star practically *owns* the Confederation half of Austin, in much the same way Ares owns most of Detroit.

• X-Star

• The Sons of the Alamo chapter in Austin doesn't get along very well with Lone Star. The two don't really fight, what with the Azzies looming just over the river, but neither do they cooperate. Star patrolmen regularly hassle known Alamo members, and Ares Johnsons know they can count on the SoA to run interference or assist shadowrunners running against Lone Star.

• Diamondback

THE UCAS BORDER

Not as hot as the Azzie border, the border between the CAS and UCAS is still not a friendly place to be. Old rivalries die hard, especially in the northern Virginia area. Many smugglers take advantage of the split to engage in some small time smuggling.

Missouri

When the secession issue came before Missouri voters during the 2034 elections, the voters split exactly down the middle, almost to a vote. After initial wrangling between the UCAS and the newly withdrawn CAS, the two nations agreed to split Missouri in two. All counties intersecting or to the south of a line drawn from Jasper County to Jefferson County (just south of St. Louis) became the CAS state of South Missouri (with Springfield as state capital).

With the recent change in the Confederation's political climate, however, the separation issue has come back to haunt both halves of Missouri. There's been heated discussion both in Springfield and Jefferson City about reunification, but both sides have met fiery opposition. Both the UCAS and CAS are keeping a low profile, issuing statements to the effect of honoring the local residents' wishes, whatever they may be.

• As if. The CIA has been infiltrating Springfield to provide covert support for reunification policlubs and discourage any would-be separatists from expressing their opinions. Despite what they say, the UCAS really wants to see Missouri re-unified—but as a *UCAS* state only.

• Shomi

• They may be in for a rude surprise, then. There's talk of St. Louis County seceding from Missouri and joining its Confederation neighbors in South Missouri. Oddly enough, this separatist movement isn't driven by the DSI (though they support it, I'm sure), but rather by the St. Louis underworld! St. Louis sits at the juncture of several smuggling routes, and a lot of local smuggling takes place between the UCAS and CAS. A re-unified Missouri (particularly under UCAS rule) would drastically threaten St. Louis' smuggling trade.

• St. Louis Blue

Nashville

Music City is becoming something of a rising star in the Confederation. After the Azzies claimed part of Austin and Hollywood seceded from the UCAS, a lot of entertainment studios began relocating to Nashville. The biggest rising star here is TriVol Technologies, a multimedia producer with investments in all aspects of entertainment. According to local business reporters, TriVol is looking to acquire LivingWord Productions, a division of Amalgamated Studios producing spiritually oriented simsense. If so, TriVol may be poised to compete with the big players in Toronto and LA.

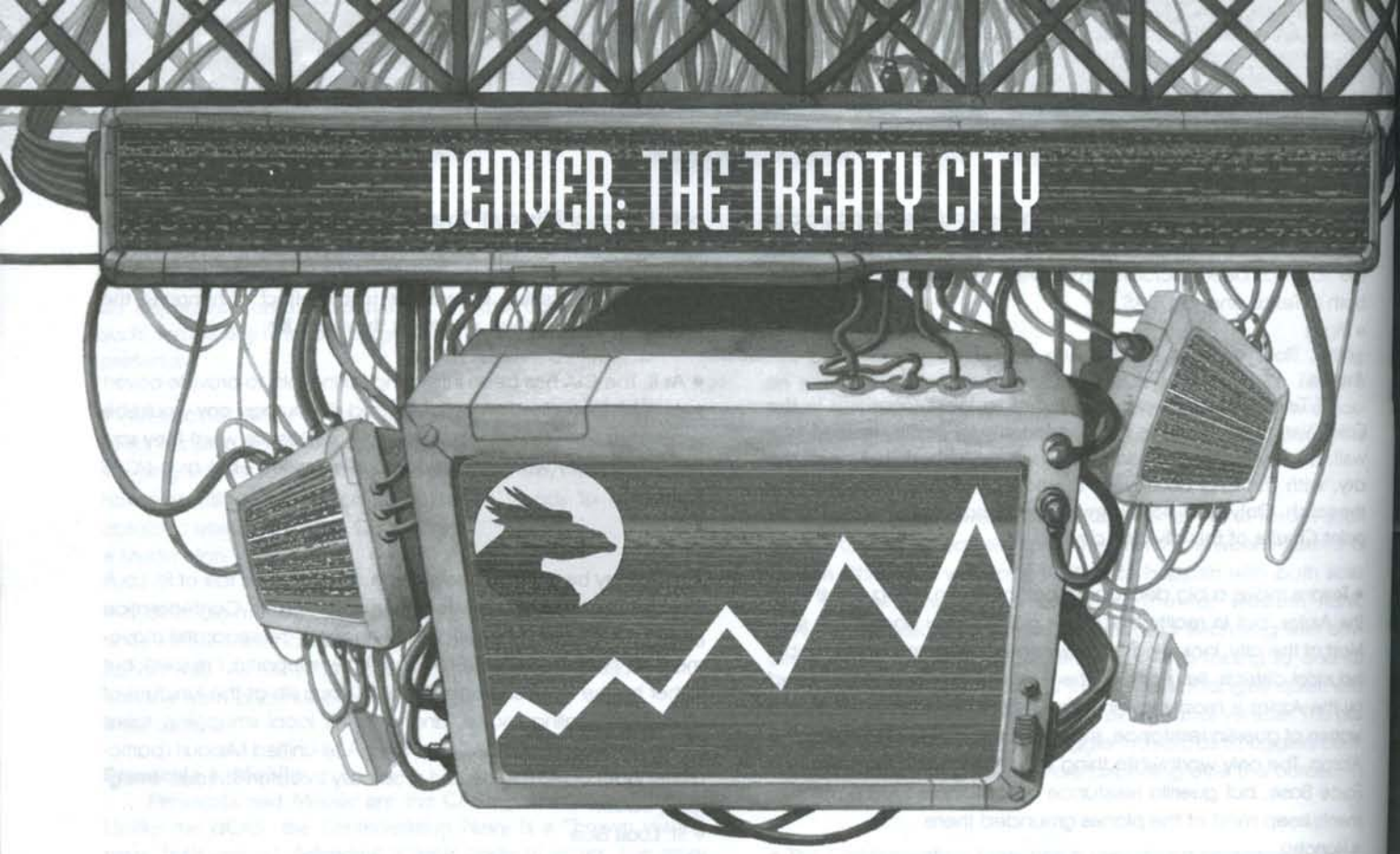
• Nashville's entertainment dominance also extends into its underworld, as Nashville is the largest maker of BTLs east of the Mississippi. Smugglers regularly pick up beetles and take them either to Memphis (where they pick up the St. Louis-New Orleans smuggling route) or Louisville (where they get distributed in the UCAS).

• Rockytop

• Beetles aren't Nashville's only vice. Prostitution is also rampant, particularly near downtown, due to a loophole in Nashville's zoning ordinances. Most of it takes the form of brothel houses; streetwalkers are rare. It's so big that even small time independents have managed to carve out a niche, free from syndicate interference. A lot of underworld violence here revolves around turf battles between competing brothel houses. Apparently even the CIA is getting into the act, setting up a shop so as to pick up the latest "pillow talk."

• Cyprian

DENVER: THE TREATY CITY



Thanks to a scheduled stop by a certain comet and an unscheduled stop by a certain dragon, Denver is no longer the city it used to be. Judging from the reports flooding in, this is not a good time in the Treaty City for punks with attitudes. I've gotten what info I can from the sources I trust, but I can't speak for any of the yahoos tossing in their two nuyen. So before my mailbox fills up with the usual round of complaints, I'm going to grab some NERPS. You're on your own.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 15:46:09 (PST)

by Crystal

I'm not going to bore you. You don't want to hear that drek about history repeating itself, so let's keep this brief, shall we?

Here's the quick update of who's in charge and how it all works, for those of you who just came out of hibernation. The great dragon Ghostwalker is in and Aztlan is out. The big white wyrm showed up last Christmas, beat up the city for a few weeks, then somehow convinced the folks in charge that it was in their best interests to let him run things. Aztlan disagreed, so CAS got their sector as New Year's gift. In less than a month, everything that we had come to take for granted in Denver changed. It's a wild new city out there.

UNDER THE DRAGON'S WING

Before we cover the specific sectors, let's cut right to the chase and talk about what everyone wants to hear—the new power structure. In the old days, Denver was a city ruled by committee, and it showed. With Ghostwalker in charge, city government is shaping up fast. Here's the brief tour of who's what and why, so fasten your seatbelts, keep your arms inside the vehicle at all times and do not feed the animals.

THE COUNCIL OF DENVER

The Council is composed of a single representative from each sector: Elizabeth Kalheim (CAS), Jonathan Popé (Pueblo), Lucinda Gray Arrow (Sioux), Jeremy Falloon (UCAS) and William Huhuseca (Ute). The Council still makes the day-to-day decisions for the Front Range Free Zone


ART FORUM
Djurdjevic
2011

DENVER TIMELINE

2019: The Treaty of Denver declares Denver and its surrounding territory—The Front Range Free Zone—a sovereign state, governed by the Council of Denver and divided between Aztlan, Pueblo, Sioux, Ute and the USA. Military units are prohibited.

2023: Marlene Weiss, United States rep., withdraws from the Council of Denver. The US creates an autonomous defense zone and walls off their sector under the guise of protecting its Denver citizens. The rest of the FRFZ Balkanizes.

2025–2027: As called for under the provisions of the Treaty, large segments of land are bulldozed in order to reduce the city's size and sprawl (called "harmonization of land"). Despite this, the Aurora Warrens remain untouched.

2034: The CAS secedes from the UCAS and is grandfathered into Denver.

2037: The Denver Data Haven makes its entrance into the shadows.

2043: The medical services contract is awarded to DocWagon.

2055: The Universal Brotherhood's Denver chapterhouse is shut down and firebombed with a FAE, destroying over a third of the Aurora Warrens due to collateral damage.

December 24, 2061: Ghostwalker appears and begins his assault on Denver.

January 2062: Ghostwalker and the Council of Denver meet and Ghostwalker assumes control of the city. Aztlan is kicked out; their sector is given to the CAS. The Zone Defense Force is created.

DENVER AT A GLANCE

Population: 3,911,000
- Human: 61%
- Elf: 13%
- Dwarf: 5%
- Ork: 19%
- Troll: 1%
- Other: 1%

Per Capita Income: 22,500 ¥
Estimated SINless: 15%
Below Poverty Level: 30%
Corporate Affiliation: 36%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 20%
- High School Equivalency: 50%
- College Degrees: 23%
- Advanced Degrees: 7%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 83%

Currency: Nuyen (sectors use appropriate currency)
DocWagon Coverage: 100%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 10 Minutes

(FRFZ) and enacts the provisions of the Treaty of Denver. Since Ghostwalker tail-thwacked the old building into rubble, they now meet in a brand-spanking-new Council Hall built at Fifteenth and Arapahoe, across from the Denver Club building in the UCAS sector.

• Security around the Council Hall building site was tight—there was a daily competition between spies who were doing their best to sneak eavesdropping devices into every nook and cranny. Though functional, the hall's not fully complete, and security is still stretched a bit thin to cover all the holes.
• Redford

• Jonathan Popé has made some noises about stepping down, but that may be due in part to pressure from the Kachina Society back home. Some believe he was behind Maria Alonzo's "retirement."
• Reid

Unlike the olden days, the Council is no longer a paper tiger with no way to enforce the policies it enacts. The reps seem to realize this, and take their duties with less of the cavalier sit-com attitude they used to. With the removal of the Aztlan sector, majority vote has reverted to three out of five as originally outlined in the Treaty of Denver. That means deal-brokering and alliances are more important than ever.

Overseeing the whole mess now, however, is Ghostwalker. At times the dragon sits in on Council meetings, though usually he leaves that to his representative, Nicholas Whitebird. Though the stated intent is to keep abreast of the Council's doings, speculation says he's ensuring they don't spend all their time just bickering on one issue or another.

• This doesn't stop them from doing it, though. There's a reason the Council meetings publicized on the Free Zone Voice trid station have such high ratings. Not only are the reps good negotiators, they're skilled actors and actresses.
• Sterling

GHOSTWALKER

Nowadays you can't talk about Denver without mentioning Ghostwalker. Though he's an omnipresent force in the city, he is largely outside of our daily lives, making few public announcements and even fewer appearances. What's he up to, you ask? No one's sure. There's a lot of buzz about his various behind-the-scenes deals—every week I hear he was chatting with this person or throwing his weight around in the next sector over—but nothing adds up. New faces come in to town all the time, then leave again the next day. He's up to something, probably a zillion somethings, but it's a mystery to me.

• As a result, the underworld in Denver is in a constant state of flux. Alliances shift on a daily basis, and everyone's trying to bluff that the dragon has their back. The status quo of the New Denver Order hasn't been defined yet, and everyone's scrambling to make sure they keep their piece of the pie. And that's probably just how Ghostwalker wants it.
• Link

• With all of the outside dealings Ghostwalker has going on, a lot of unknowns have been thrown into the mix. I know some slags who make a living just by loitering at the airport, following any shady characters that arrive around town, then selling the info to the highest bidder.
• Taxi

• Ghostwalker's only made a few official decrees, but they've been whoppers. The first one established the Zone Defense Force's leadership and duties, the second one placed a ban on smuggling, and the third ... well, let's just say the future of the Aurora Warrens has shortened considerably.
• Lara

Ghostwalker established a liaison office to filter his official business with the outside world. Located in the Sioux Sector Hub at Eighteenth and Curtis across from Pikes Place, it's just a short skip from the new Council Hall. This office handles everything from Council business to the matter of petitions, sort of like a dragon embassy.

• These petitions have been coming in a steady stream since GW opened his doors. Most of them are requests for the dragon's aid or intervention, though occasionally some fearless souls try to sell information or strike deals. The dragon's made a few quick examples out of people he thought were wasting his time—as the poor troll now serving as a large, stone doorstop can testify. If you want to ask Ghostwalker a favor, make sure to tip nicely.
• Faun

• Word has it that the Manitou Inner Council sent a delegation to Ghostwalker in a bid for either recognition or backing. My source believes it's the former, but if you want my guess, I'd say both. They must be hedging their bets, though, because I've gotten at least one job offer for some shady work in AMC territory.
• Quinn

Pro-Aztlaner groups, smarting since they were forcibly ousted, regularly level threats at the office. No one's been bold enough to try anything yet. Cozy additions like a five-meter monowire-topped fence, pop-up tire shredders, ZDF guards with armor-piercing rounds, blast-proof windows and scanners up the wazoo may be what are deterring them.

• Those threats won't amount to much. I've taken a peek at the magical protections there. Unless you're another dragon or you have a spare tac-nuke, you'll have your work cut out for you. Most of the protection is in the form of various spirits: elementals, nature spirits, spirits of the elements and so on, all terribly loyal to Ghostwalker.
• Psyche

Nicholas Whitebird

The wyrm's walking mouthpiece is just as tight-lipped as his boss. I guess he doesn't need to talk loud when relaying the dragon's wishes—whenever he opens his mouth, everyone around stops and listens. He must have a direct link straight into Ghostwalker's head, or else the dragon is smart enough to anticipate possible situations and coach the man on what to say for every possibility.

Whitebird isn't seen much outside of Council Hall, but when he is he doesn't bother taking a security detail. I guess he's confident enough in the dragon's powers or his own abilities not to worry, but I've heard more than one person remark what a tempting kidnapping target he makes.

• Whitebird's a cipher, but I've got the passkey. He was born in June of 2030 and raised in Boulder. The Guide—that spooky street shaman in the Ute Sector—got permission from the boy's parents to teach him sometime in 2039 in exchange for a little monetary help since they were SINless. If you want any more data, send a little nuyen my way; I'm not going to post the whole thing up here for free.
• Priest

THE ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCH

While the Council calls the shots, it's the entrenched bureaucrats of the Front Range Administrative Branch that wield immediate authority over the citizens of this city. Since Ghostwalker took over, the Branch has undergone significant downsizing, from approximately ten thousand to just under six.

• Otherwise known as weeding out Aztechnology spies and tossing out the deadwood. I heard Ghostwalker's ugly halfer friend was the hatchetman. Gervaise Brooks, an old administrator who had the entire bureaucracy under his thumb for many years, has been conspicuously absent since Aztlan got kicked out. I guess we all know where his loyalties really lay.
• George

The Branch oversees all of the services that keep the city in operation, from budgets to sanitation. With the exception of income tax, however, all of the services are actually provided by outside resources. For example, DocWagon handles emergency medical and healthcare issues; BIF Inc. is sanitation; power is handled by Pueblo's nuclear fusion plant in Greenland; and Front Range Transit International operates the maglev.

• For all the crazy runners with a legit SIN, you ought to know how the Free Zone Income Tax works. It's very simple: figure out your income, multiply by 15 percent, and then send that immediately to the Revenue and Taxation Service. National taxes not only don't apply here, they're illegal. Watch out when you leave, though, because wherever you call home, any and all income taxes that apply to that nation are due immediately.
• The Chromed Accountant

"It's all about dollars and sense."

• There's an incentive to pay your taxes on time and in full—only those citizens who do are eligible for the free Basic DocWagon services provided by the FRFZ. If you want more than Basic care, you have to pay out of pocket the full amount for the service you want—no discounts.
• Doc

The Pueblo Corporate Council holds the contract for Denver's Matrix grid. They have approximately three dozen networked SOTA mainframes that they use to keep files on all FRFZ residents, but they've been forced to hand over some of that access to Ghostwalker and the Council. They've also upgraded and reorganized the top-heavy system, taking some of their homegrown drek-hot IC and salting it throughout the network.

• Used to be if you wanted into the Branch files, all you had to do was crack through the top layer. Now you have to step more carefully.
• Grid Reaper

THE ZONE DEFENSE FORCE

When the Council redrew the Treaty, Ghostwalker told them to create a Zone Defense Force (ZDF), a standing military presence in case of outside attack. The ZDF is composed of units lent from the five nations on the Council; units are rotated in to serve a one-year stint of ZDF duty. The Force's command structure is also on loan, though on a more permanent basis, and after passing Ghostwalker's approval process.

• Rumor is that an Ute officer who failed to be approved turned out to be a deep cover Aztechnology spy. The Azzie Jaguars have certainly been trying hard to get infiltrators in however they can.
• Argent



The ZDF handles a few special "policing" duties. In addition to guarding the Administrative Branch and Council offices, they oversee any multi-sector investigations or disputes and are also tasked with smuggler interdiction. ZDF troops are stationed at each major airport, on top of the bases established for them at Fort Carson and the old Rocky Mountain Arsenal (good thing it was cleaned out, eh?). They also patrol the outer FRFZ boundary and I-25.

• Take note. The Zonies are the only security force that can chase your hoop from one sector to another.
• Josie Cruise

• So far the ZDF has put on a nice unified show, but an arrangement like this is bound to create problems. There are long-standing rivalries between each group, and it's just a matter of time before some hostilities flare up. I can't wait for the day when some Sioux unit on ZDF duty in the UCAS sector gets drunk and starts a brawl. Or imagine a stickier situation, like a smuggler who runs the border and stirs up a bunch of crossfire. Runners may be able to use a situation like that to their advantage.
• Traveler Jones

• I doubt any disputes will last long with UCAS Colonel David "Juggernaut" Benjamin in charge of the ZDF. He's a big tank of a commander, stone-faced and implacable, who doesn't tolerate foolishness. Disputes have a way of resolving themselves in his presence.
• Windsinger

"HERE BE DRAGONS"

I assume if you're reading this that you may be thinking of coming to Denver, either legally or illegally. All the nice SINners fly in to one of the numerous airports, like Stapleton (UCAS), Denver International (Sioux) or Lowry (CAS). A slew of smaller airports provide air-taxi service around the sprawl. There's also the scenic route, a.k.a. Highway 87, which becomes Intercity 25 inside the FRFZ. I-25 is a sector demarcator until it hits the CAS sector, which means it's "international territory"—only the ZDF has authority there.

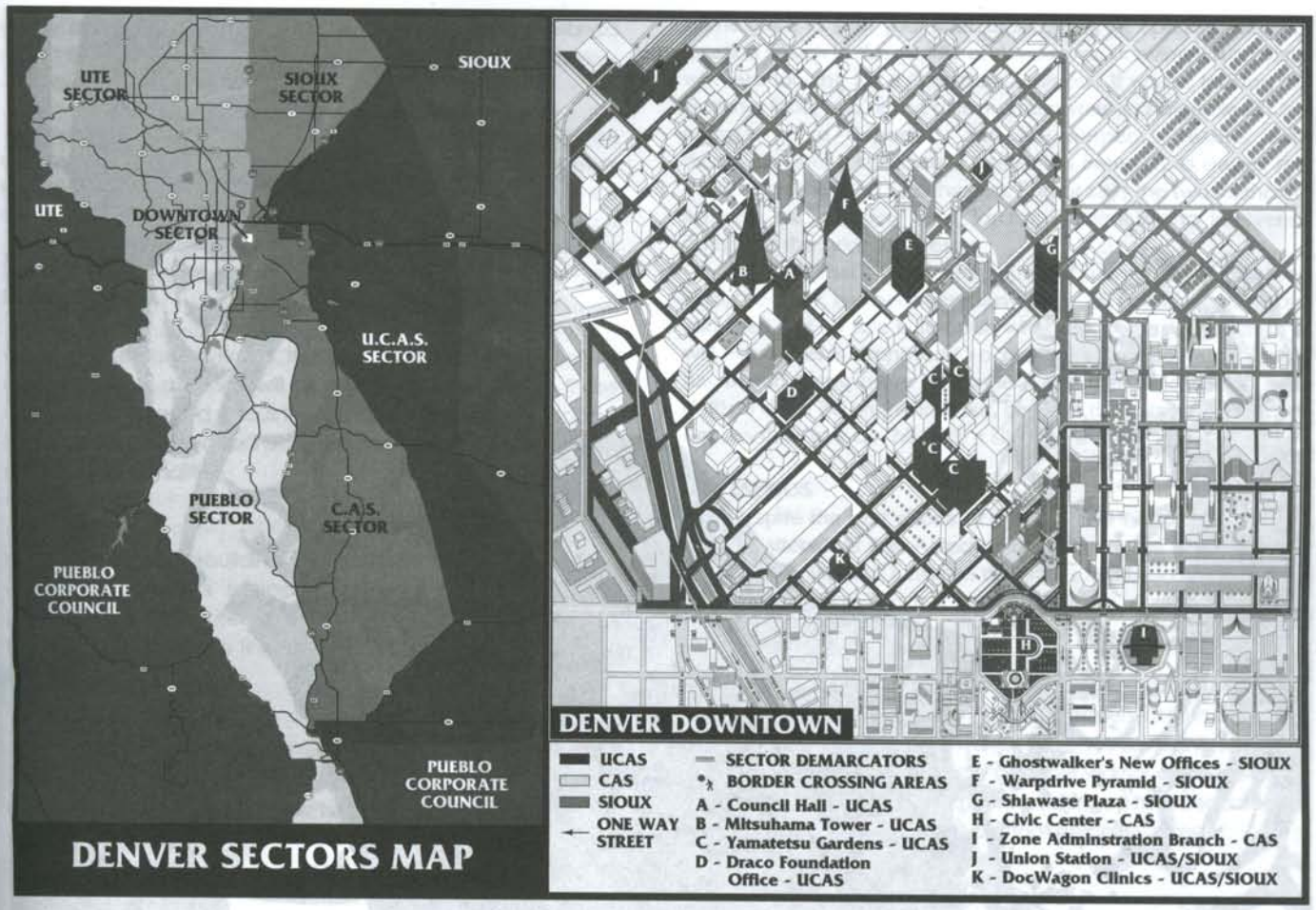
Inside the city, driving around is a pain since sector borders cut off most roads. Most folks get around using the maglev train and the refurbished subway service.

• The Council has ordered a completion of the subway expansion that was abandoned decades ago, adding in two new lines and opening up several stations that were closed over sector border disputes. First they have to clear out the inhabitants of those old tunnels; if you've got experience with paranimals, the Administrative Branch is hiring.
• Darwin

• While you're down here, tell all these crazy Aztlaners that they have to go. I haven't had a moment's peace from their racket since they came down here.
• Moleman

Anyone moving around inside Denver has to deal with the inconvenient mess of customs and border security at each sector. Border crossing is only allowed at a few strategically located checkpoints, and only a few of these allow vehicle traffic to pass. Be prepared to have your ID checked, your body scanned and your cover story grilled. Commuters can apply for Frequent Traveler Passcards that allow you to take a fast track through the checkpoints.

• Passcard bearers still get scanned, and each card transmits the user's ID data to the sensors, so your movements are logged. But if you can scam one, these puppies are your ticket to fewer hassles.
• Rush



For those who mock conventional methods of getting around, here's the scan. The foothills peppered through the Rockies' Front Range are what made the FRFZ the t-bird capital of the continent. Though Ghostwalker has announced a crackdown on smuggling and released the Zone dogs, there's still plenty of business here for coyotes and t-bird jammers.

• Ghostwalker's got nothing against smuggling, so long as you give him his cut and you're not involved with the Azzies. I've cruised right by Zone Defense Force LAVs with a wave of my hand, all because I donated my 10 percent to the wyrm in charge, while a new kid went down in flames because he was carrying a load of munitions for the Azzie rebels.
• Zak

• Smuggling will never die in Denver. The set-up is simply too lucrative. A crate of Cal Hots that are legal in the Ute go for premium prices a few steps over in the UCAS sector, where they're illegal. The simple fact is that Denver thrives and survives because of the underground economy—Ghostwalker knows this, so his "crackdown" is just thinning out the herd and making it more profitable.
• Link

Border security differs from sector to sector, so methods for avoiding it will as well. Each demarcator has a no man's land filled with hidden tripwires, sensors and mines, and lined with ten foot electrified fences or razor-wired walls. Due to the CAS sector's expansion, they now have a few more walls to cover. They've slapped up a few sensor arrays and drones in the meantime, but until they get more bodies their coverage can be spotty. Pueblo is very efficient, but like the CAS they have to rely more on tech than bodies since they snatched up LA. The Sioux's demarcators have foot patrols paired with Sikorsky-Bell ACVs and Microskimmer drones. If it's the UCAS sector you want, avoid it at night unless you want to end up facing down their silent-killer German shepherds. Like the Sioux, they also field Yellowjackets so make sure your ECCM is up to snuff. The Ute's security is more magically oriented than the rest, employing watcher spirits, elementals and nature spirits with Citymasters and LAVs for backup.



• Ute magical security waxes and wanes, as some of the spirits apparently see nothing wrong in running errands for Ghostwalker when they're supposed to be watching the border. The same problem has affected security at some local corps.
• Firelight

• Some smugglers keep a well-hidden pay-per-access room on the Nexus with an up-to-date sector map. It includes all the latest intel on what sensors are down, what patrol units are where, when bribable guards are on duty, etc. Well worth the trouble to find it.
• Rigger X

One last thing for you outsiders: Denver isn't called the Mile High City for nothing. When you come here, expect fatigue to hit you quicker due to the altitude. Expect headaches and sleeping difficulty. Drink lots of liquids (but not alcohol, it kicks in quicker) and don't plan a run that requires a mile-long sprint with an extracted scientist on your back.

THE CAS SECTOR

by Delta Juliet

The CAS has experienced the most changes of all the FRFZ sectors. Not only did we have a lot of former Aztlan citizens and businesses to integrate, but the changing political and social climate back home in the CAS has had some trickledown effects. Bianca Cuthbertson, the current CAS sector manager and a True American Coalition ideologue, claims credit for the CAS absorption of the Azzie sector. The True Southerners, led by traditionalist Reginald Delaney, challenge every step Bianca takes, accusing her of dealing with dragons and playing up the common person's fear and mistrust of Ghostwalker (easy to do, given his rampage). This conflict has created a stark division among the CAS sector populace.

• Delaney's crew keeps throwing allegations and wild claims at Bianca, figuring that eventually something has to stick. The latest slander accuses her of funneling SURGE relief money (already a hot topic) to Koshari gangsters, allowing their influence to spread in from the Pueblo sector.
• Io

• They're right about where that money went, though Bianca wasn't the one who ordered that clever bit of financial trickery.
• Southern Cross

Despite the upheavals, our sector economy is on an upswing—CAS pride means consumer confidence, as the market wags say. Companies looking for growth opportunities are taking full advantage of the situation. Saeder-Krupp has been given the green light to take over the former Aztechnology building with a future option to build either there or elsewhere in the sector.

• That's not just Saeder-Krupp, that's S-K Prime. That means Lofwyr and his personal assistants will be keeping a close eye on these offices. I'm just worried about the ramifications of Lofwyr dipping his talons into Ghostwalker's pool. Neither one of 'em are what I'd call type-B personalities.
• FastJack

• Ares Arms is also rebuilding the facilities that were damaged during Ghostwalker's rampage, upgrading security in the process. This has prompted a score of runs, as everyone seems to think it's a good time to find a flaw in Ares security. Most have been spectacular failures.
• Nightfire

Wuxing has also moved in, buying the site where the Aztec teocalli once stood. Before they can build, however, they will need to clear the rubble that has sat there since the teocalli was demolished. Until now, no one has had the time or money to do so.

• There's a reason for that—the place is cursed. Or to put it in terms my fellow mages would understand, astral space there is nasty and violent, causing accidents that, when they aren't near misses, are horribly bloody. After the first few attempts to get the ruins cleaned up, no one wanted to touch the place.
• Espiritu

• It may be at least a year before the site is cleared. Even then, no construction will commence until Wuxing purifies the feng-shui of the area. The question is whether they will use their own wujen, or hire from the local community in Chinatown. Either way, Triad activity is skyrocketing in anticipation; competition between the White Lotus, Golden Triangle and Red Dragon for new territory is fierce.
• China Doll

• The rivalry between the Red Dragons and the Golden Triangle is staged—both groups serve the same master.
• China White

If you're looking for biz, check out Rock Solid, still the premier runner hangout, despite the ear-melting sound system. If you're looking for a meat market, Goodfriends nightclub is the prime place to strut your stuff. In fact, they've opened a second location smack in the middle of downtown, drawing young suits who are looking for a little risky business. If you're looking for Aztlaner food, you're out of luck. The owner and clientele of Chinampas were deported, and the Serpent's Feather was destroyed after a spectacular altercation between its owner, the owner's brother, and Ghostwalker. Rumor says the two feathered serpents had a sibling spat, forcing Ghostwalker to intervene. Both paid the price as a result.

With all that's happening, Knight Errant, which provides sector security, has been very busy. The CAS military assists now and then, but its role is to finish what was begun, after which it will leave. This is supposed to occur in October, so Knight Errant has begun hiring more personnel, particularly those with specialized skills. Be on the lookout, because there are more opportunities than you can hit with a slivergun.

LOS ESPEJOS

Despite the best efforts of the CAS and Ghostwalker, a few Aztlan nationalists and Aztechnology employees have escaped deportation, slipping between the cracks and building a fifth column of resistance. This low profile operation, dubbed Los Espejos, is still building its strength.

• Translated, they are The Mirrors, named for Tezcatlipoca or Smoking Mirror. They are led by a cuachicqueh, or Quachic, warrior originally from the Eagle warrior society; you might recognize him, since he usually posts here as Eagle Warrior or Guerrero del Águila. I think the invasion may have unhinged him, because he's picked up a nasty blood spirit ally that he calls Carmesí.
• Firelight

• Smoke and mirrors. (Hah!)
• Bung

So far, most of the dissidents recruited into Los Espejos come from Anáhuac University. When Aztlan was booted, the students and faculty of Anáhuac were given a choice: stay and open the university to the public, or close and go home. Most opted to stay, though the university's old guard has become disgruntled with the open door policy and all of the new CAS students and faculty.

• Anáhuac was more or less an Aztechnology training camp, funded almost completely by the corp. The school had a near elite status level, now drowned under waves of new students.
• Regicide

• A lot of Anáhuac's new students are glad to be ex-Aztlan and are supporters of rebel groups like La Venta and the Flame of Freedom. Since the Yucatán conflict escalated, the number of zapatistas in colleges has been growing, and they've occasionally clashed with Los Espejos supporters. These remarkably short and violent encounters get hushed up very quickly.
• Lara

THE PUEBLO SECTOR

by Hawkeye

The Pueblo sector is the most corporate and most efficient sector in the Denver sprawl, because chummer, things get *done* here. Of course, it mostly mirrors what goes on at home in the PCC, so what applies there will also apply here, one way or another. For that, you can thank the Kachina Society. Despite the loosening hold back home, it's well entrenched here. It's a well-known fact that Juanita Iglala, the pro-tem sector president and chairman of the board since Julio Caron resigned, is a member—as are most of the candidates for sector president.

• One candidate, Miguel Carreras, has been a quiet dissenter. Originally a Hopi member of the Kachina Society (his grandfather participated in the Great Ghost Dance), he became disillusioned after the recent fiascos surrounding Maria Alonzo's retirement and Estefan's assassination. Add this to the spread of Koshari activity, and it's easy to see why his voice has been getting louder as election approaches. Since voting is handled the same way in the Pueblo sector as it is back in the PCC, there's no telling if he'll win or not.
• Prairie Dog

• Speaking of the Koshari, their recent push has loosened the last finger the Mafia had in Denver. The Mafia has been taking hit after hit here; it's as if nearly every sphere of their influence had been targeted. All they have left is gambling and pharmaceuticals, and even that's minor. They're even taking bets on the elections, if you can believe that.
• Hammer

• That's only in the Pueblo sector, Hammer. The Mafia is much bigger in the UCAS and CAS sectors, where they mostly compete with the Yakuza in the prostitution biz. They leave all the illegal simsense and 'ware to the Triads and (now) the Koshari. The Casquilho Family's shipping and import company might take a hit from GW's ban on smuggling, though.
• Bronco Fan

Even before the PCC took the contract for the entire Denver Matrix, the sector's grid was a great example of Pueblo efficiency put to work. Designed to look like a marketplace, each "street" holds a different kind of business; you won't find the Tablelands Restaurant next door to Tablelands Software. Within this framework, each host can still be decorated individually. And yes, "back alley businesses" are literally in back alleys.

• As the PCC now owns the Denver Matrix contract, all Denver grids are slowly being replaced to fit this design scheme.
• Grid Reaper

• Not all of the back alleys hold shady systems. Some of them are backdoors into a legitimate system and others are shortcuts to another part of the grid. I understand one of them is the entrance to Ghostwalker's private node, and it teleports periodically.
• FastJack

Along with a well-designed grid come skilled Pueblo deckers. In fact, some of that local talent comes from a Tablelands subsidiary, so expect to be on the receiving end of some new code that your opposition wants to field-test.

• There's been an upswing of Zuñi otaku here, just like in Pueblo. These otaku get on reasonably with the ones at the Nexus, but they're a little gun-shy. They seem more interested in watching and playing than anything else, with the exception of a small group that hangs around the Asylum's system. Don't ask me why, but I get the impression that they're waiting for something.
• Holly

Not surprisingly, most of the businesses around here focus on the Matrix in some form or another. Two of the biggies are Renraku's HyperSense and Novatech's Simplex Software. They like to keep their presence low-key; Renraku because of the Seattle arcology fiasco, and Novatech because the mega as a whole has been sporting a more UCAS-affiliated image, so naturally they wouldn't want to alienate the Pueblo population. As a side benefit, audits seem to go more smoothly.

• Novatech also has a Nightingale's here. It does a brisk business in headware of all sorts, from datajacks to encephalons, with internal enhancements such as bone lacing and jolt-alerts coming in a close second. The key here is to be discreet; even if what you want done is legal, if you don't have a SIN or a preferred share it's best if you have plenty of nuyen with which to grease the right palms. They don't like having to call PuebSec, since it makes an unseemly fuss, but you can bet they will if you make enough noise. In fact, that goes for the rest of the corps in the Pueblo sector as well.
• Sterling

• Here's something worth mentioning: PuebSec doesn't place a lot of restrictions on alcohol and simchips up to the Cal Hots level. But if you commit a crime while under the influence, chummer, you're toast. They treat it as pre-meditated; you planned on getting wasted, therefore you planned on committing a crime. And forget about BTLs, while you're at it. Those are way illegal, and if you get caught dealing, count on the penalty to be five times as stiff than just for possession.
• Bender

PLACES OF NOTE

The Lakewood Correctional Institution, or "The Can" as we call it, is located near Route 285 and Marston Lake. When the original Treaty of Denver was signed, the United States decommissioned it. It was recommissioned when Pueblo took its slice of Denver. Their renovation hasn't made it a desirable place to do

time, however, so keep that in mind should you end up facing the shamanic tribunals.

The Fort Logan Medical Center is something of a misnomer, actually, because it's now a mental institution. Nicknamed "The Asylum," it's a well-groomed area, with security focusing more upon hidden tech than visible guards.

Rumor is that both these places conduct a lot of simsense research on "volunteers," and that they share the results. The Can's research into "simsense penology" hasn't progressed far (just imagine serving 50 years hard time in 50 days), but the Asylum recently turned up some interesting side-effects to their experiments that have the frankendocs all excited.

• Jetwash. The only "interesting side-effects" come from the simchips the Koshari smuggle to the personnel and inmates. Folks forcibly unplugged from their sims end up with varying degrees of schizophrenia, ranging from catatonia to homicidal paranoia. Why else has there been an increase of inmates?
• D. Thomas

Two other sites deserve mention: Fort Carson and the old US Air Force academy. Ft. Carson is now a base for the Zone Defense Force, meaning that PuebSec has its hands full keeping an eye on "off-duty" personnel. The base is primarily a training ground, and I know at least one fixer who's already weaseled out a black market arms connection.

It's an open secret in the shadows that the Academy is the home of the Nexus, the world's premier data haven. Some say that when the US vacated, they didn't take or destroy everything, but I wouldn't advise trying to get a look-see. The Nexus has increased security in the past few years since one of their sysops was extracted.

• I hear that ZDF troops have been spotted training on Academy grounds a few times.
• Observer

• Makes sense. What with SilveryK's involvement with the Draco Foundation, it's not hard now to trace the strings that were probably pulled to allow the Nexus to stay right cozy where it's at. A nice little trade-off: the Nexus sets up Ghostwalker's node, feeds him data, helps the PCC take over the Denver grids and lets the ZDF use part of their hangout, and in return they keep the government off their backs and get some extra protection to boot.
• Firelight

• The otaku tribes that hang around the Nexus have been agi*tated lately*, though I'm not sure whether it's the proximity of military troops or something else. From what I understand, Bash has something to do with it.
• Arclight

THE SIOUX SECTOR

by Moraya

There's something I always tell newcomers to the Sioux sector: Stand your ground. More so than back home, we've got our share of ultra-aggro "warriors," and yes, they act just like gorillas. As soon as you show that you're not taking their drek, all of a sudden they're your best buddies. There are some in just about every tribe in the Sioux sector, from the Lakhota to the Mohawk, so don't expect tribal affiliation to save your hoop.

A lot of these fraggers like to hang out at the Hardpan; it's run by a former shadowrunner by name of Raquel Sands. It's on East 54th Avenue, between the sewage treatment plant and Riverside Cemetery, and tends to attract some hardcore Sioux runners as a result. And if that's not enough for you, there's another reason to be careful: Eagle Security Services Inc. doesn't give a flying frag about Class A cyberware. Smartgun links, hand razors and dermal armor are popular amongst those who can afford it.

• Just don't question their honor while you're standing your ground. And whatever you do, do not light up a cigarette in front of them. You're likely to be shown the error of your ways, forcibly. Smoking tobacco is a big social no-no.
• Windsinger

• Put that in your pipe and smoke it! Guh-harf!
• Bung

• Rigging's also popular around here since VCRs fall under the Class A category. That means competition is fierce, so you either need to be good, or good at something else in addition.
• Josie Cruise

THE SIOUX HUB

The strangest bit about the Sioux sector is the Hub. The Hub is a non-contiguous part of the Sioux and UCAS sectors, covering a big chunk of the downtown area. In other words, it's an island completely surrounded by the CAS sector, and split between the UCAS and Sioux. Suffice it to say that the Council didn't want to leave downtown Denver solely in Azzie hands, so they engaged in some creative boundary-drawing.

In addition to Ghostwalker's liaison office, the Sioux Hub is also home to the Warpdrive Pyramid, previously known as the FTL Pyramid. Before Richard Villiers could secure the FTL property during the White Monday market crash in '59, Steve Ridgemont seized it under the aegis of Warpdrive Systems using the remainder of the money given him from Dunkelzahn's will. That made it the first and only time that I know of that Villiers has ever been outmaneuvered.

• Or he's just let folks think so. This is Villiers, remember? He has to appear less than brilliant sometimes in order to catch his opponents flat-footed.
• Lara

• Maybe so. Villiers still has FTL Matrixware, the subsidiary Fuchi created when they snatched up FTL Technologies. Why would he need the building? This, by the way, is a question I've been asking myself, especially since Villiers began to visibly court Ridgemont.
• The Marketeer

• If biz, especially smuggling, takes you to the Hub, get a room at the Comfort Inn on 17th. The manager's got a bulletin board for smugglers, fixers and t-bird jammers.
• Zak

The Hub is also home to Shiawase Plaza, with offices for both the corp's Envirotech and Biotech divisions. As the focus of the Sioux sector is on agriculture, particularly the application of genetic engineering, Arboritech has a particularly strong presence here. Runs frequently crop up, if you'll excuse the pun, between it and Universal Omnitech. Shiawase also likes to recruit from the local branch of the University of Cheyenne.

• Hey, whatever happened to that serpent that ran Henequen Enterprises? Wasn't that wyrm all about causing trouble for the Azzies? He must be Ghostwalker's best buddy.
• Moke

• Nope. When GW arrived, Henequen himself was busier than a one-legged dwarf in a hoop-kicking contest for about two weeks, then he disappeared. He's since turned up in the Sioux proper, still shuffling his La Venta agents around (though I hear he lost a few when GW cleared the Azzies out). My impression is that he was avoiding stepping on GW's toes.
• Firelight

THE UCAS SECTOR

by TrueBlue

Someone once told me that Denver and the entire Front Range Free Zone was like a frontier town out in the wild west, and in some ways I guess you could say that's true. Certainly there's some good ol' boys that feel hemmed in and oppressed by the Native Americans. I don't, however; let the drek-scared Humanis apologists rant about siege mentalities. The only siege here is in their minds.

• So what happens if President Haeffner decides that joining sides with the Salish-Shidhe against the Tsimshian is a good idea? We should let them kill each other and stay out of it.
• Hugh Mann

• As if we need your help, Anglo. The Salish people have been lenient toward the UCAS in regards to Seattle anyway.
• Pride

Living in the UCAS sector is no dream. The prices are so steep they incite nosebleeds and the government isn't even nominally a democracy. We're treated less as a colony, however, since Ghostwalker grabbed the FRFZ reins. The last thing the UCAS government wants is strained relations, so they've made every effort to be sure our new commissioner, Jacob T. Price, plays nice.

• "Bomber" Waybridge, the old commissioner, was pulled back to DeeCee so he could retire where he could do no harm. Though Price has more spine, he owes La Familia too much to retain total control. The Casquilho family keeps tabs on their boy and occasionally politely asks him over for a visit to the Brown Palace Hotel to get an update.
• Priest

PLACES OF NOTE

The hottest site in the sector is the new Draco Foundation office, in the UCAS half of the Hub. The Draco presence in Denver bloomed after someone put up a memorial to Dunkelzahn at Cherry Creek Lake (in the CAS sector), and it's grown larger in the past few months. Their relationship with Ghostwalker is a little strange if you ask me; you'd think that they'd be chummy, but they don't seem to like to deal with one another.

• Of course not! Now that he's gotten what he wants from them—the secret bequest Dunkelzahn left behind—they're so much dirt under his talons. He isn't going to be beholden to a dead dragon's lackeys.
• Dragonslayer

• Get slotted. Ever consider that Ghostwalker simply doesn't want to create another group like the Children of the Dragon? It's bad enough that Morningstar's yahoos have a full-blown headquarters just a few blocks over, but they regularly have get-togethers near the memorial, proclaiming it "blasphemous" and causing all sorts of trouble for the Draco Foundation office to boot. I can't count how many times Lone Star has been called in to round them up.
• Firelight

Naturally, the Draco Foundation isn't the only corp playing in the UCAS sector. Just down the street from the new Council Hall is the Mitsuhama Tower. This houses their offices and the Denver branch of Mitsuhama Media; the rest of their business here comes in the forms of VOR Robotics, BrainWave Inc. and HermeTech Associates, each located elsewhere in the UCAS sector.

• The Mitsuhama Tower, not to mention MCT, is in a precarious position if the UCAS does take up the Salish cause in their war against Tsimshian. Talk about sitting behind enemy lines.
• Argent

• MCT will sit out that dance if they're smart. Locally, they're already fighting a war on two fronts. HermeTech Associates is competing with Ares' Hard Corps for security contracts, and scuttlebutt says Mitsuhama Media's making advances towards Tru-



man Technologies. Despite Chicago's so-called liberation, there haven't been any media feeds out of there except for pirate broadcasts. We have our own media pirates, thanks.

• Sterling

• Add Cross's Fleche Armaments to the dance card. Between HermeTech, Hard Corps, Fleche and the local Weapons World, biz is booming. Pun intended.

• Hangfire

The sprawling Yamatetsu Gardens complex on Tremont and Fifteenth houses a broad range of leased offices, shops and restaurants, but Yamatetsu's presence is fairly minimal. The upper third of the building belongs to MetaErgonomics. If rumor is correct, they're working in partnership with Novatech's Pioneer Cybernetics on a new variation of the Snake Eyes cyber-eye package.

• The rumor is correct, it's the applications that are still under speculation. One source tells me that it's a government contract to further enhance the cyber-enhanced German shepherds used for the sector borders. Another one says it'll change sim-sense entertainment, and a third swears that since ASIST converters are involved that it's for the Matrix. The last guy spent a little too much time with Renraku, if you catch my meaning.

• Rubik

• That puts a whole new spin on things. Novatech is in the middle of constructing a new Matrix Systems office complex within spitting distance of Cherry Creek State Park. Come to think of it, it's just one neighborhood away from the Warrens as well.
• The Marketeer

No tour of the FRFZ would be complete without the Aurora Warrens, the high-density slums that Denver has tried hard to forget. A third of the Warrens went up in flames when an Ares Firewatch team destroyed the Universal Brotherhood Chapterhouse with an FAE. Phoenix Fire Management lost five firefighters and several hundred people lost their homes—no one knows how many others died. Violence, misery and despair abound here. Some retreat into simsense, while others scrape by using whatever means they have at their disposal. Only the desperate walk in with a prayer of walking back out.

• Which makes Aurora Elementary something of a miracle. Located several streets down from The Digs on the outskirts of the Warrens, it has remained open due to the endowments from the Draco Foundation. Any child from the Warrens that is able to comes here for their education. The school's staff is hoping to get a Matrix connection and some terminals to aid their efforts. With luck, a white knight or two may step forward ... but I wouldn't count on it.
• Mom On The Run

THE UTE SECTOR

by Siat

Of all the nations represented in the FRFZ, the Ute has the biggest chip on its shoulder that I have ever seen. Let me explain.

First consider where the Ute came from originally, namely the Great Basin region. This covers the entire Denver sprawl and a lot more besides. If you look at it from their perspective, the Ute got shafted out of their rightful territory. Strike one.

Second, the Ute don't like Anglos. Looking back on our history, I have to admit that I don't blame them; not too much, anyway. But the fact remains that it was Anglos that settled Boulder, which is where at least half of the Ute sector sits. Strike two.

• They tolerate some Anglos; a sizable number of pinkskins and new agey types were allowed to stay under the idea that "Anglo is a state of mind." By this they meant that these folks were a lot more inclined to see things their way than their consumerism-crazed cousins.
• People Watcher

Lastly, any reminders of Boulder's origins as a mining town tend to get under the skins of the more radical and vocal Ute. They feel that it's a slap; it sits in the shadow of the Flatirons at the mouth of the Boulder Canyon, making it a holy and powerful site to them. Strike three.

• Whether it really is a power site or not, no one can deny that there are a lot more shamans per capita here than in the other sectors. In fact, it's become a point of pride that Nicholas Whitebird, a Ute shaman, was chosen to be Ghostwalker's mouthpiece.
• Moraya

• Anyone know what's up with that spooky Guide guy? He pops up now and then to check out the kiddies, but as soon as he's done, he's gone without a trace. Anyone know the story on this? And while we're at it, is it just me or are there a lot more Coyote, Wolf and Bear shamans around here lately?
• Barclay

• I think it's just you. Then again, I don't doubt some shamans are testy since the spirits have been unruly recently. Even Margaret Stands Firm, the sector's senior administrator, has had trouble I hear.
• Lobo

• Add another sore point to Siat's list: the Ute are not only smarting over Pueblo's annexation of California, but now the Koshari are trying to carve a bit of a market here. It's gotten to the point where Sand Creek Security has been keeping closer tabs on runner hangouts like Denim, so watch yourselves.
• Lara

LAKESIDE AMUSEMENT PARK

After Ghostwalker cleared out whatever spooky thing was lurking in this abandoned park, a bold and enterprising individual by name of Thomas Flying Squirrel took advantage of the vacancy. He gathered some investors and bought Lakeside, and immediately set up casinos and other "support services" on the grounds. Gambling is legal throughout the FRFZ so it can't be shut down, but law enforcement already doesn't like the place. I'd say things in the Ute sector are starting to look up.

• The original investors were Mafia men, but the Yakuza keep attempting to set up shop there and the body count is rising.
• Hammer

• Lakeside has been nicknamed "Little Vegas," and appropriately they've started importing attractions from the Vegas underworld. Gladiatorial battles take on an element of the surreal when staged in the old haunted house or the tunnel of love. Ever seen two guys bashing at each other with spiked clubs on a shifting floor while creepy organ music plays and a huge pendulum swings?
• Vincent

THE PUEBLO CORPORATE COUNCIL



Ask anyone about Pueblo, and what is the first thing they think of? The Pueblo Matrix, a grid more advanced than even some "Anglo" countries. But people forget that the servers for those grids exist in the meat world, and Pueblo still has a physical presence to reckon with. Its recent annexation of Los Angeles proves that with an exclamation point.

Before I started asking for info on Pueblo, I received this file from Kaletaka, a fixer down around Albuquerque. It seems there's more to this LA annexation than what appears on the surface. So read and take note, chummers. We may be hearing more about Pueblo in the near future.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 17:02:24 (PST)

by Kaletaka

I couldn't believe it either. Faster than you can say "City of Fallen Angels," Pueblo moved in and claimed Los Angeles, as well as a good chunk of southern California, as its own. Now everyone's wondering what's going to happen to La-la land.

My advice? Don't look *too* hard at what's happening in Los Angeles. As a fixer in Albuquerque, I hear lots of things going on in Pueblo. And if what I hear from Santa Fe and Cibola is true, the situation in California is just a distraction from a secret war between the Council Boardroom and the spiritual Mecca of Pueblo. So if you're looking for some paydata in the desert, check out the rest of Pueblo, because the jobs are coming. Don't forget your sunscreen, because down here the shadows can burn.

HISTORY OF THE DIGITAL OASIS

by Pautiwa

Kaletaka asked me to relay our people's history to you, so that you may understand the shadow war brewing here. Since this will also fulfill a favor I owe him, I suggest you pay attention.

Even before the development of the Corporate Council, the people who lived in the Southwest had already developed an affinity for tools and technology. The Pueblo tribes—Acoma, Hopi, Laguna, San Ildefonso, Taos, Zia, and Zuñi—were irrigating farmland long

PUEBLO TIMELINE

2014: The Kachina Society makes its first public appearance, advocating that the Southwestern tribes join Daniel Howling Coyote in his fight against the US. Redondo Peak erupts, burying most of Los Alamos and the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

2017: Shamans from the Kachina Society assist Howling Coyote in performing the Great Ghost Dance.

2022: Goblinization triggers uncontrolled gang warfare in Los Angeles. California mobilizes the National Guard to restore order, but the Guard can only contain it to the slums of south central LA. The city walls off that area, which locals eventually call "El Infierno."

2028: A major earthquake rocks Los Angeles and destroys Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

2033: Tablelands Software, a Pueblo-based software company, releases its Dreamcatcher Matrix-based operating system, thus establishing Pueblo's reputation as a Matrix giant.

2046: Rogue deckers, allegedly aided by a Los Angeles street gang, erase the results of California's gubernatorial election. The government sends forces into El Infierno to capture the criminals but fails. California's central government declares Los Angeles a Free City.

2053: An exposé in the Albuquerque media reveals an inner circle in the Kachina Society, called the Soyoko, conspiring to manipulate the Board of Directors. The reporter involved is later indicted in a stock fraud scheme.

2057: President Maria Alonzo suddenly retires. The Pueblo Board of Directors elects Emilio Cajeme as the next president.

20 November 2061: During a Kachina Society ceremony, four masked dancers draw automatic weapons and gun down several other dancers. Among the victims is Carlos Estefan, the current Chairman of the Board. The Board appoints Miguel Lusie'dzil as acting chairman.

2 December 2061: An earthquake demolishes LA. Walls go down, and riots and looting sweep the city.

8 December 2061: Pueblo forces cross the California border and deploy in Los Angeles, thus claiming LA and most of southern California as Pueblo territory.

19 December 2061: Pueblo issues conditional shares to Los Angeles and southern California residents, making them probationary Pueblo citizens.

18 April 2062: Miguel Lusie'dzil is formally appointed as the new Chairman of the Board during a shareholders meeting. Carlos Pomodre is elected to fill the vacant directorship left by Estefan.

PUEBLO AT A GLANCE

Population: 12,195,000
- *Human: 64%*
- Elf: 14%
- Dwarf: 6%
- Ork: 14%
- Troll: 2%
- Other: 0%

Tribal Affiliation: 59% of total population
- Hopi: 42%
- Zuñi: 41%
- Other Tribes: 17%

Per Capita Income: 29,300 ¥
Estimated SINless: 8%
Below Poverty Level: 16%
Corporate Affiliation: 57%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 10%
- High School Equivalency: 37%
- College Degrees: 38%
- Advanced Degrees: 15%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 90%
- Spanish: 64%
- Zuni: 32%

Currency: Nuyen
DocWagon Coverage: 30%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 15 Minutes

before the first Anglo ever set foot on the New World. But far from remaining locked in the past, we have embraced change. At the end of the last century, as the economic boom leading up to the Resource Rush transformed Albuquerque and Phoenix into technological oases, tribal members quickly learned the technical and professional skills so insatiably in demand by business. These skills would serve us in good stead later.

When Garrety condemned Native Americans to the so-called re-education camps, even the skilled and professional tribals of the Southwest were not immune from deportation, despite the minimal role we played in the SAIM. Local business leaders, however, were not as small-minded as the president and resisted this directive. Some simply "forgot" about hearing the order, while others actively hid members of our tribes from the feds.

- A move fueled more by self-interest than conscience, I should think. After all, heeding the president would send a large chunk of their skilled labor into the re-education camps.
- Cynic

When Daniel Coleman overthrew the re-education camp systems, many of the Pueblo joined with him in rebellion against the United States government. Leading the Pueblo contingent was a group called the Kachina Society.

Originally the Kachina Society was a heritage foundation dedicated to preserving the culture and traditions of the Hopi tribe. Apparently they kept alive some of the Hopi's more mystical secrets, as the society provided shamans who utilized the newly-returned powers of magic to assist Coleman in the Great Ghost Dance and other war rituals across the Southwest.

For the Kachina Society's assistance in bringing about the Great Ghost Dance, the Pueblo people received the right to form our own nation during the Treaty of Denver. After some debate, we decided *not* to return to outdated tribal government methods, but instead chose a more progressive form, imitating the new extraterritorial megacorporations. The Kachina Society, meanwhile, retired from its role in the forefront and returned to its traditional home in the Cibola forests, exercising only moral leadership as spiritual counselors for the Hopi and Zuñi tribes. Or so it seemed.


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POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

Though the Kachina Society professed complete disinterest in Council affairs, it soon became apparent that many Board decisions tended to agree with the Society's opinions. Moreover, several of the minority tribes accused the Board of slanting its opinions in favor of the Hopi and Zuñi. In 2053, an exposé in the Albuquerque press claimed that a secret Kachina inner circle, called the Soyoko, were pulling the Boards' strings behind the scenes. With both the Kachina Society and the Board of Directors under their thumb, the Soyoko used its covert influence to manipulate the Corporate Council, usually to the benefit of the Hopi and the Zuñi. Furthermore, the mastermind behind the Soyoko, according to the story, was none other than Carlos Estefan, then Chairman of the Board!

• In Kachina mythology, the Soyoko was an ogre-woman who terrorized misbehaving children. The meaning here, then, is clear: the Soyoko are interested in keeping the Pueblo nation in line with their vision of how things should be.
• Mongwa

• I remember that exposé. But if memory serves me right, the reporter who broke that story was indicted six months later of stock-manipulation fraud through false leads, which totally discredited her reputation. A little bit of disinformation, you think?
• Horo Mana

The grip the Soyoko held on the Board would eventually come to an end. Five years ago, in 2057, President Maria Alonzo retired citing ailing health. Everyone expected Antonio Popé, a protégé of Estefan, to succeed Alonzo, but the Board surprised everyone by voting for Emilio Cajeme, at that time a minor executive from the Acoma tribe.

• What was really surprising about the vote is how the Hopi board members suddenly abandoned Popé and threw their support behind Cajeme. In the past the Hopi voted in lockstep with the Zuñi, both usually following the Soyoko's "advice." The buzz I hear in Gallup is that there's been a recent falling out between Hopi and Zuñi factions within the Kachina Society, which may explain why the Hopi went with Cajeme.
• Talavi

• "Ailing health"—that's a good one, Pautiwa. More like a case of terminal lead poisoning, according to the wags here in Denver. Antonio's brother is one Jonathan Popé, who represents the Pueblo sector in Denver. Apparently Jonathan felt the time was right for a little bit of housecleaning.
• Prairie Dog

• Yeah, that's what Antonio's lackeys want you to believe. Despite the public façade, Antonio and Jonathan had way too much sibling rivalry to ever get along. That Alonzo bought it for Antonio, no argument there. But Antonio's lackeys put the smoking gun in Jonathan's hands so he'd take the fall. It's only by the grace of Ghostwalker that Jonathan still represents the Pueblo sector at all.
• Masau'u

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL

After Cajeme's surprise elevation, relations between the Board of Directors and the Kachina Society worsened, as the Society routinely criticized and denounced most of President Cajeme's decisions. But things escalated to crisis last year, during a ritual ceremony late in November. The Kachina Society was holding one of its more prominent ceremonial dances in Gallup, when four masked dancers threw off their robes, drew automatic weapons, gunned down several lead dancers and fled into the dark of night. As the victims were later identified, one of them turned out to be Chairman Estefan.

• Will no one rid me of this meddlesome priest?
• Henry

• Hey Cap, since when have you been letting dead kings post on Shadowland?
• Bung

With a murder as splashy as this, one would think the media would swarm all over Santa Fe, trying to pin the blame on Cajeme. On the contrary, it's been quiet here. Why? Because two weeks after Estefan's murder, Pueblo forces rolled into Los Angeles under the pretense of restoring order and protecting SoCal from invaders such as Aztlan and Saito. Now the spotlight is on the West Coast, but that only means the war between Cajeme and the Kachina Society goes underground.

THE CORPORATE COUNCIL

by Kaletaka

Okay, it's me again. Pautiwa's pretty much clued you in as to what's going on down here, but if you want a part of the action, there are a few things you need to know about working down here. One thing you have to understand about the Pueblo Corporate Council is that it's both a sovereign state *and* a for-profit corporation. While it incorporates properties of both, in the truest definition of terms it's really neither. This can make dealing with Pueblo tricky for both legitimate folks and shadowrunners, so here's a quick rundown of how it works.

COUNCIL SHARES

The first thing you have to realize is that there are actually two types of shares: preferred and residential. Preferred shares serve as investment incentives and have higher dividend payoffs. Anyone—even non-Pueblo—can buy preferred shares, but they carry no voting rights. More importantly, they grant their holder the right to enter and live in Council territory. In effect, preferred shares act as entry visas into the Pueblo nation.

• You don't have to have a SIN to purchase preferred shares, but if you don't, Pueblo will issue you one. Just a warning to those of you who don't like leaving an electron trail.
• Bränflux

• Because of its recent move into Los Angeles, Pueblo has created a third type of share: a conditional share. Each California native residing in the Pueblo-occupied area received one conditional share. Conditional shares are like preferred shares but they have no market value, so they allow California natives to reside in Pueblo territory for up to one year. A year after issue date (19 December 2062), conditional shares expire and the holder is deported. So basically a conditional share is a year's reprieve for former Californians either to apply for a citizenship share or leave.
• SFTS

• Not everyone is taking well to the idea of conditional shares. This certainly wasn't what the city elders expected! I wouldn't be surprised if the number of SINless in LA increases by this time next year.
• Vox Umbrae



Residential shares are available only to Pueblo citizens and carry full voting rights. Pueblo doesn't allow dual citizenship, so a person has to renounce citizenship to any other country (or corporation) before they can hold residential shares. All Pueblo citizens hold at least one residential share, which is often called the citizenship share. Children born to Pueblo citizens are automatically issued their citizenship share on their date of birth.

• The ban on dual citizenship applies also to emigration. If a Pueblo citizen decides to become a citizen elsewhere, he has to forswear Pueblo citizenship and sell back all his residential shares to the Council (at the market value on the day he gave up citizenship). Furthermore, all sales are considered to take place in Pueblo territory, so the poor slot also gets hit up with Pueblo capital-gains taxes!
• The Chromed Accountant
"It's all about dollars and sense."

Citizens can always buy and sell more residential shares, but they can never sell their original citizenship share. If a Pueblo sells his citizenship share, he becomes a non-resident alien and must either purchase a preferred share or be deported.

• Besides investment benefits, holding more residential shares gives you a bigger voice in government. Like any corp, stock holders with more shares can cast more votes, but unlike the corps, Pueblo vote allocations fall on a logarithmic scale: one share gains you one vote, ten shares gains you two, a hundred gains you three, and so on. This prevents any would-be Damien Knights or Lofwyrs from single-handedly dominating the Board.
• The Keynesian Kid
"Greed IS Good."

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

With only a few exceptions, corporations exist to make a profit. Pueblo is certainly no exception. The annual rate of return on Pueblo stocks has consistently exceeded 16 percent for the past eight years, and Pueblo stock funds have consistently outperformed the Standard & Poor 500 index since 2031.

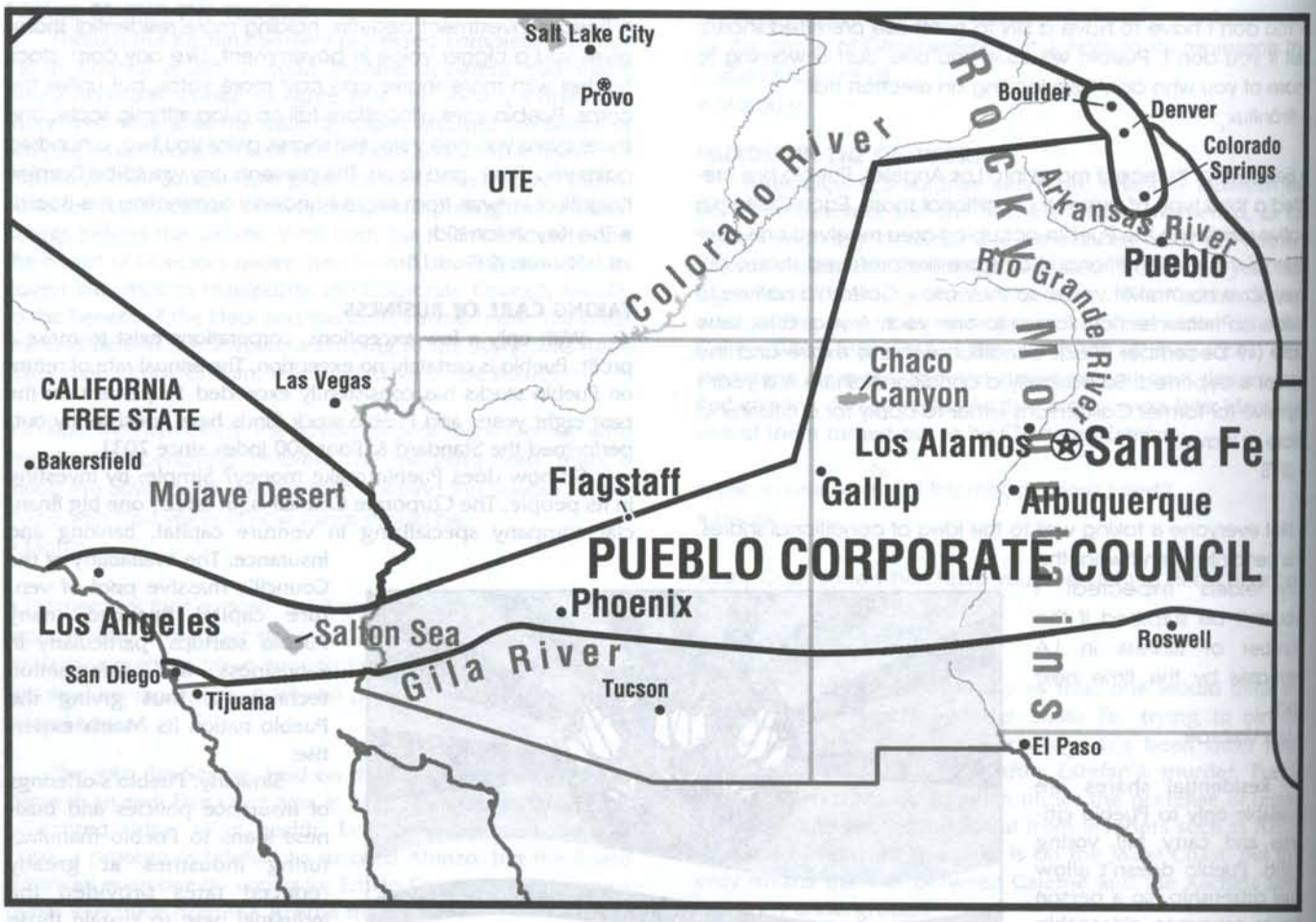
So how does Pueblo make money? Simple: by investing in its people. The Corporate Council is, in effect, one big financial company specializing in venture capital, banking and insurance. The availability of the Council's massive pool of venture capital financed many Pueblo startups, particularly in e-business and information technology, thus giving the Pueblo nation its Matrix expertise.

Similarly, Pueblo's offerings of insurance policies and business loans to Pueblo manufacturing industries at greatly reduced rates provided the industrial base to sustain those developments. As with any deal, Pueblo money comes with many strings attached. The main one is that the Corporate Council has a share of the ownership and reserves the right to veto any major financial decisions.

EXTRATERRITORIALITY

Pueblo really has no bias against the megacorps; after all, if you think about it, the Pueblo Corporate Council is one of *the* biggest extraterritorial corps in the world, geography-wise. On the other hand, Pueblo has heavily stacked the deck in its favor for megacorps doing business here. First, all residents and employees on extraterritorial property must hold at least one preferred share, whether they enter Pueblo jurisdiction or not. Also, most Pueblo insurance policies carry riders that invalidate them once they leave Pueblo jurisdiction (as is the case inside an extraterritorial enclave).

The main restriction is that all extraterritorial corporations must have an operating license to function on Pueblo land; in effect, they're paying Pueblo for the privilege of extraterritoriality. Furthermore, as part of the licensing agreement, the corp must submit to two audits a year by fair-trade auditors, one



scheduled and one unscheduled. Not meeting their rigorous specifications can result in anything from a warning to punitive actions to license revocation.

• These laws aren't anti-competitive, nor do they give Pueblo-based corporations any advantage. They do, however, outlaw many of the legal loopholes and shady business tricks the megacorps use elsewhere in the world.
• Unsuit

• Yeah, right they are. The operating license and audits are really more a moneymaking racket than a fair-trade measure. The corp has to pay for each audit, and auditors have this uncanny knack for digging up "non-conformances" that require "corrective actions" the auditors have to regularly follow up (and get paid for). So basically the corp pays the Pueblo nation for the privilege of being routinely insulted twice a year.
• Dogbrrt

• Business audits last for about three to four days, but even the team of auditors they send out can't uncover everything. They are unpredictable, however: auditors have a trick at examining the least expected subject, and they also have an uncanny nose for sniffing out buildrek. The unscheduled audit is even worse, as Pueblo only has to give a 24-hour notice on that. Many extraterritorial corps even resort to hiring runners to smuggle out suspect evidence for a few days while the auditors blow over.
• Horo Mana

• Some of the methods the corps use to hide evidence is truly bizarre. A Johnson hired my team to trash part of a Mitsuhama factory lab outside of Albuquerque. Knowing Mitsuhama, we prepared for the worst, but when we sneaked in, we found it unusually easy to get through. We thought they were setting up a trap when we ran into a squad of guards just inside the objective; but when we opened fire, they only put up a show fight. We ended up doing a lot more collateral damage than we intended, and when we beat feet, they strangely chose not to pursue. After getting paid off, I had a decker chummer check that plant out. Turns out they were about to have one of those unscheduled audits the day after we were supposed to trash the place, and we destroyed the lab they didn't want the auditors to see!
• Wawaru



• Last year the PCC made news by revoking Aztechnology's operating licenses for all of their Pueblo facilities and canceling policies for Aztechnology facilities and subsidiaries within Pueblo, only months after Aztlan had been booted out of Denver. The Azzies had been on "show cause" probation for about eight or nine years already. The Azzies were told to vamoose in six months, but they've been dragging their feet in packing up.

• Pyramid Watcher

WHO'S WHO IN PUEBLO

If you're going to run in Pueblo, you have to know the people. Here's a quick rundown of the major movers and shakers.

TRIBAL BREAKDOWN

The two major tribes in Pueblo are the Hopi and the Zuñi, who combined comprise over half the population. Though interspersed throughout Pueblo lands, the Hopi are more populous in the western half of the nation, while the Zuñi reside towards the east.

Though the two major tribes get along, they are the extreme opposites of each other. The Zuñi are generally a quiet, conservative people living a structured life, and they avoid extreme displays of emotion in public. On the other hand, the Hopi are an outspoken bunch and display a general dissatisfaction with the status quo, making them the primary agents of change within Pueblo.

• The Hopi have a saying: "One Hopi makes a good friend. Two Hopi make a disagreement. Three Hopi make a headache." The majority of Pueblo shadowrunners outside of California tend to be Hopi. Oddly enough, so are the majority of cops.

• Nevada

• An interesting subgroup recently emerged from the ranks of the Pueblo: Pueblo otaku, experiencing the Deep Resonance through the Pueblo grids. What's particularly odd is that almost all of them come from the Zuñi; only small handfuls come from the minority tribes, and there are no Hopi otaku whatsoever. Most of the otaku congregate around Albuquerque, particularly the eastern reaches, where the most advanced Matrix research and development is taking place. A new band of otaku, consisting of Zuñi and Zia kids, is starting to emerge around Alamogordo, very close to the Aztlan border.

• People Watcher

Minority Tribes

Comprising less than ten percent of the overall population, the minority tribes include the Acoma, Laguna, Yaqui, and the Zia. These tribes were hard hit by the Re-education Camps and were lucky to survive at all. Though the minority tribes have exercised little political power, the recent election of an Acoma as president signifies a turning point. Many minority tribes are now working to make themselves heard on the Board.

• C'mon Kal, don't tell me you actually believe that propaganda. After the Treaty of Denver, the Hopi and Zuñi "grandfathered" a whole lot of Hispanics residing in the Southwest into their tribes, claiming that since most Hispanics were mixed-breed mestizos, they could trace at least one Native American ancestor (North or South

America, they didn't care). On the other hand, the minority tribes adopted a more "purist" (more like honest, I should think) outlook and insisted that Hispanics prove their origins to the Pueblo tribes. Consequently the minority tribes remained small, while the Hopi and Zuñi swelled their ranks (and thus swelled their presence on the Board of Directors).
• Desert Cat

• Yeah, I know about that, but I ain't touching that issue with a ten-meter cattle prod.
• Kaletaka

• With all those Hispanics in their population, you'd think the Pueblo would be real chummy with Aztlan, but that ain't so. To be fair, Pueblo-Aztlan relations did start off on a friendly foot, but then decayed steadily. Most of the Pueblo Hispanics were Hispanic-Americans (legal or otherwise) who had lived long enough in the ex-USA to develop a mindset different from their Mexican brethren. When the Azzies invaded Texas, relations went from coldly neutral to downright hostile. Fearing they would be the next target of Azzie aggression, the Pueblo threw their lot in with the CAS, an alliance that stands to this day.
• Masau'u

• The Yaqui are making some noise in the Pueblo nation lately. Though not part of the "family" of Pueblo tribes, the Yaqui originally settled in southern Arizona and northern Mexico then relocated to the Pueblo Corporate Council after the Treaty of Denver. The Yaqui mostly live in the vicinity of Phoenix and have been aching to retake their tribal homelands (somewhat south of Tucson) from Aztlan. The Board of Directors, however, has resisted their demands; Pueblo is already overstretched by taking LA and doesn't have the means to go head-to-head with Aztlan. Many Yaqui have begun taking their own initiative, forming guerilla parties to cross the border and harass Aztlan forces around Tucson, Nogales, and Sonoita.
• MC Jammer

• The Yaqui are an unusual tribe. They converted to Catholicism centuries ago, when Mexico was still a Spanish colony. They have some practicing shamans who follow Idols rather than Totems, incorporating both Catholic rites and shamanic practices in their magical rituals.
• Holly

ANGLOS

Even before Pueblo annexed Los Angeles, there were still many Anglos living in the Council of completely non-native descent. Some of these lived in the eastern half of New Mexico, refusing to leave after the Treaty of Denver. More Anglos fled here in the 2030s when Aztlan invaded San Diego and El Paso. The Anglo population really jumped, however, when Pueblo annexed SoCal.

The addition of so many Anglos to the Corporate Council has alarmed many Pueblos. Before annexation, they weren't much of a voting threat. After annexation, Anglos now comprise more than forty percent of the overall population. While most of them hold non-voting conditional shares, within a year most will have become full-fledged voting members, thus creating a sizeable voting bloc to challenge the Hopi and Zuñi.

• Anti-Anglo sentiment is a lot less pronounced in Pueblo than in other Native American Nations. Many Pueblo remember the support they got from their employers in Arizona and New Mexico and so are more accepting of non-natives.
• Wawaru

• Not all Pueblo tribals share that sentiment, though. Some have decided to take matters into their own hands and have formed an anti-Anglo policlub called the Nataska. In Pueblo mythology, the Nataska were fearsome monsters who accompanied the Soyoko in punishing misbehaving children. The intent of the Nataska is to threaten and harass high-profile Anglo leaders and intimidate the Anglo population, particularly in newly-acquired Southern California, so as to remind them of their "place" in Pueblo affairs.
• Socio Pat

• The Nataska threat has already had one unintended side effect: boosting the growing popularity of the Humanis Policlub in LA. Humanis popularity was already on the rise, thanks to the wave of SURGE that struck Los Angeles. The appearance of the Nataska, however, has driven even more people into Humanis' hooded arms. It's only a matter of time before these two groups butt heads.
• Windtree

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The chief executives of the Pueblo Corporate Council, the Board of Directors consists of twelve people responsible for governing Pueblo. Not only do they develop policy, the Board also selects the president and the various staff, departmental, and regional vice presidents.

Following Estefan's untimely demise, the next senior director, Miguel Lusie'dzil (a Zuñi just like Estefan), has assumed the head position as Chairman of the Board. Doubting the youth of Estefan's protégé Antonio Popé, Pueblo shareholders recently elected Carlos Pomodre to fill the vacant spot on the Board. The funny thing about Pomodre is that he's one of the few tribeless Indians in Pueblo; Pomodre claims to be from the Jemez tribe, which died out in the Re-education camps. It'll be interesting to see how his presence plays out on the Board.

• With all of the internal squabbling and realignment of power, the various factions are each starting to make overtures to outside support. I hear poor Antonio, who's been left out in the cold, requested an audience with Ghostwalker.
• Masau'u

• You think wrong, O Bony One. My contacts in Phoenix spotted our boy Antonio having a power lunch with no one other than Richard Villiers himself.
• Sotungtaka

THE KACHINA SOCIETY

Officially the Pueblo Corporate Council doesn't have a state religion, but if you ask me, the Kachina Society comes damn close. Originally a heritage group dedicated to preserving Southwestern culture, the Kachina Society has evolved into its current role as spiritual advisors for the Hopi and Zuñi, and de facto the whole Council.

Though most Hopi and Zuñi regularly participate in Kachina Society ceremonies and other activities, their actual full-time membership only numbers in a few hundred. Most of its members are mundane; even a lot of their ceremonial dancers are non-Awakened. There are only a few dozen shamans, most of whom hold an important ceremonial or leadership role.

• Some Kachina Society ritual ceremonies serve as magical rituals, though they channel magic differently than other Native American ceremonies. I once had the opportunity to witness one while doing research. During the ceremony, one of the shamans performed what my guide told me was a ritual of summoning, to call the kachinas to him. Unlike other tribal rituals, where the spirits materialized physically in the world, the kachina entered into and possessed the shaman, forcing a physical transformation. (I believe the technique has recently been identified as Channeling by metaphysicists.)
• Holly

As Pautiwa mentioned earlier, many in the know think there's an inner circle of a dozen or so elders called the Soyoko who pull the strings from behind the scenes. They apparently have a small cabal of some of Pueblo's best deckers tied closely to them, so they can keep track of the deeper, darker secrets of the Pueblo grids.

• The Soyoko's membership consists completely of men, as does the Kachina Society's senior membership. Lately, however, there's been some dissension in the rank and file, as women shamans and ceremonial dancers have been demanding advancement into the higher circles. Although the Society has kept a tight lid on it so far, internal strife is growing.
• Horo Mana

THE KOSHARI

Every society has its unsavory element, and the Pueblo are no exception. Though they don't like to admit it, the Pueblo have their own homegrown mob, the Koshari. Taking their name after the raucous clowns in ceremonial kachina dances, the Koshari trace their origins back to the SAIM war and the Kachina Society. During the war movement, the Kachina Society attracted a lot of troublemakers in their fight against the US. After the Corporate Council's establishment, though, a few of them were too troublesome to settle down in the new order and went underground into organized crime, thus forming the Koshari.

Nowadays the Koshari are dominant in Albuquerque, Phoenix, and the Pueblo sector of Denver. Like their ceremonial namesake, the Koshari specialize in peddling vice: BTLs, drugs, prostitution, gambling, you name it. And like the syndicates we all know and love, these Pueblo mobsters also have the muscle and chrome to break the legs of anyone who would dare refuse their offer.

• Muscle, chrome, and mana also. The Koshari employ a lot of shamans in their mobs, particularly those following urban and trickster totems. Raccoon, Rat, and Raven are the most common totems followed by Koshari shamans. A couple of Koshari mobs in Phoenix also employ a few Polecat shamans as assassins and hit magicians to take care of particularly troublesome foes.
• Siynagephoya

• The Koshari have been looking to expand their influence for some time. With the annexation of Los Angeles, the Koshari have been attacking Mafia and Triad gangs and have managed to carve out for themselves a stronghold in the northern Pasadena district. Another target is Denver, where the Koshari have been trying to expand their influence beyond the Pueblo Sector—particularly into the CAS and UCAS sectors. Also, the Koshari have been fighting for some time to win some territory in Las Vegas, but the Mafia stranglehold on that city has been too strong for them to establish any base of operations.
• Sotungtaka

PLACES OF INTEREST

Places to go, things to see, people to do. Here are some of the major shadow hot spots in Pueblo.

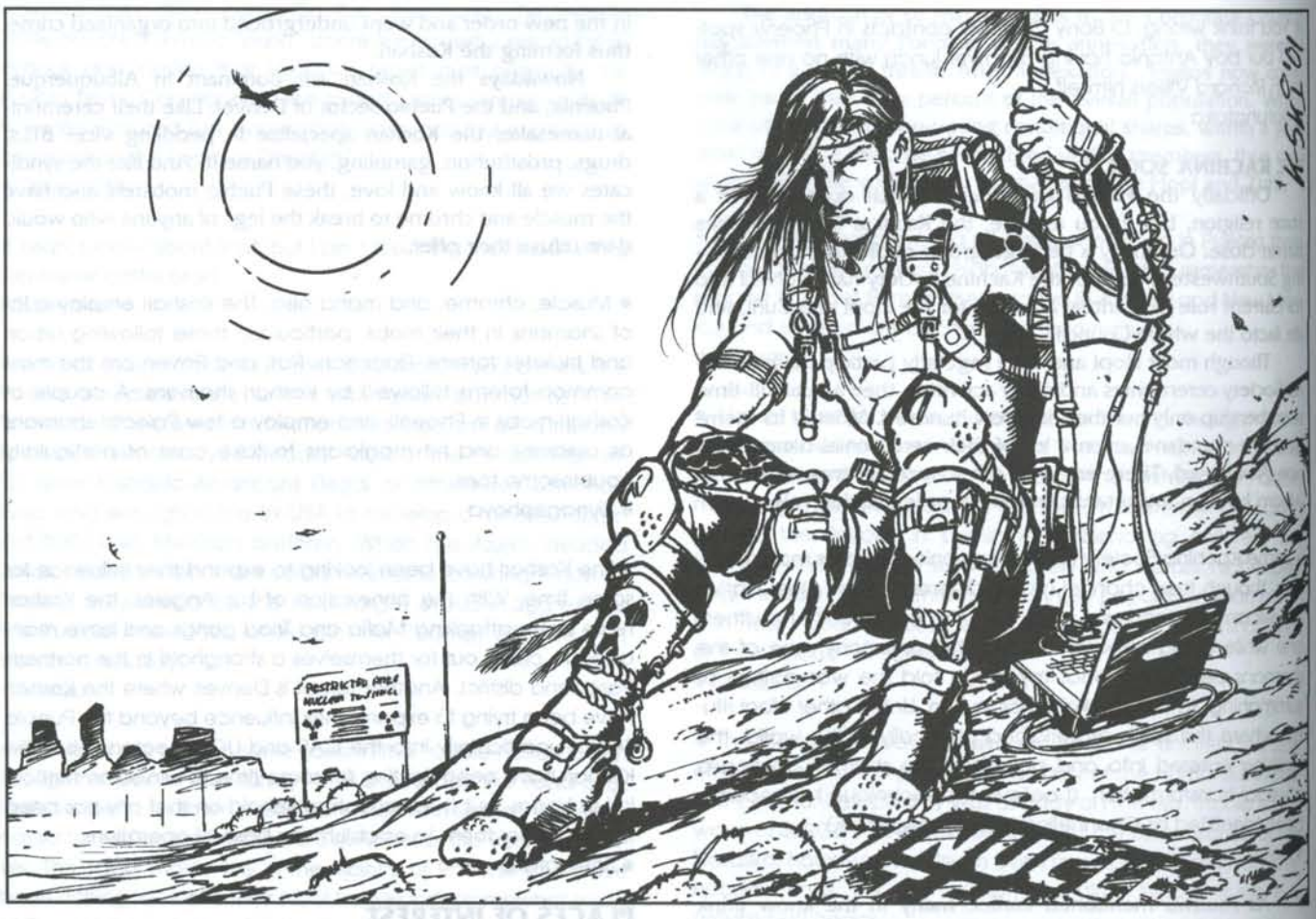
SANTA FE

As the capital of the PCC, Santa Fe has taken on a reputation as "Wall Street Southwest." The Council holds board meetings in the Palace of Governors, while the former New Mexico state capitol building on Paseo de Peralta has been converted into a stock exchange. Santa Fe used to be a pretty laid back town, before this whole Cajeme-Kachina Society issue sprang up. Most of the high-tech research takes place to the south in Albuquerque, so Santa Fe previously didn't attract a lot of shadow biz. Not any more.

• Aztlan ops have been snooping around Santa Fe quite a bit lately, hoping to turn the current political divisions to their advantage. If you don't mind whom you shake hands with, the pay is above average.
• Cucaracha

Los Alamos

Lying some thirty kilometers northwest of Santa Fe, this town used to be host to Los Alamos National Laboratory, where the former United States conducted nuclear weapons



research after World War II. The US was forced to abandon Los Alamos in 2014 when Redondo Peak erupted, signifying Howling Coyote's declaration of war on the United States. The resulting ash storm turned Los Alamos into a ghost town, a necropolis buried in the ashes of Redondo.

• It may be buried, but I don't think Los Alamos is entirely dead. Apparently the Pueblo have secretly excavated the Los Alamos laboratories and reactivated its nuclear reactors. I don't know what the Pueblo are up to, but so far no one's detected any nuclear weapons testing within Pueblo, either on the surface or underground. (And with today's technology, it would be impossible for Pueblo to conceal a test from anyone else.)
• Geiger

• The entire astral space around Los Alamos and Redondo Peak is a spooky place to be and, unlike the mundane world, not at all uninhabited. The astral background is high, and there have been several spontaneous manifestations of salamanders, those nature spirits of the flames. What's worse, many of those salamanders are misshapen and deformed, probably from all that nuclear research that went on in Los Alamos. Locals call these spirits nuke spirits, because when they materialize they have a tendency to set off Geiger counters and other radiometers.
• Karuna

ALBUQUERQUE

Albuquerque is Pueblo's technological capital. This is where most of Pueblo's research and development takes place, not just in Matrix technology, but also in avionics, solar energy, and lasers as well. The most advanced research takes place to the east at Sandia Laboratories. Sandia used to be a former US national lab conducting nuclear research, but after the Cold War the Department of Energy privatized the labs and redirected its focus toward computer and electronics development.

• Breaking into Sandia in the meat world is just as hard as trying to hack Pueblo's grid from the Matrix. This is where most of the Pueblo nation's computer research takes place, and they guard their secrets very jealously from outsiders.
• Dojjen

• MCT, Novatech, Renraku and Cross all have regional offices in Albuquerque but very few factories or research labs. The Pueblo suspect the corps use those offices mostly to spy on

Pueblo technological developments, but their audits haven't turned up anything suspicious yet.
• Silk

The other major site of interest in Albuquerque is the Kirtland Aeronautical Laboratories, sitting next to Albuquerque International Airport southeast of downtown. Originally an air base belonging to the US Air Force, Pueblo has converted it into an aeronautical research and manufacturing facility. The results have made Pueblo the leading aeronautical developer among the Native American Nations.

• The Pueblo have one of the most advanced air forces in North America, next to only the UCAS and Aztlan. They also have a large number of combat drones, thanks to their advanced proficiency in aeronautics and electronic warfare. This compensates for their ground forces, which are way understrength—especially compared its nearest neighbors: Aztlan or the CAS.
• Josie Cruise

Gallup

Gallup lies southwest of Albuquerque near the Cibola forests, believed in myth to be the location of the Seven Cities of Gold. Nowadays, though, it is the residence of the Kachina Society, where most of their leadership meets and most of the ritual ceremonies take place.

As if the intrigue between the Kachina Society and the Board of Directors wasn't bad enough, Gallup is also becoming a sore spot in Pueblo-Ute relations. Lying some sixty kilometers northeast of Gallup is Chaco Canyon, which contains the ruins of a city built by the ancient Anasazi tribe (not to be confused with those crazy pirates that currently roam the Mojave). Claimed by Pueblo as a cultural landmark, the ruins were largely ignored until last September, when visitors started having visions there. Pueblo immediately sealed off the Canyon while the Kachina Society moved in to investigate. The Ute have offered, sometimes forcefully, to assist in the investigations, but the Pueblo have continually rebuffed them. Everyone's afraid the Ute may decide to barge in without asking next time.

• The Cibola region has always been a source of great tension between Pueblo and Ute. The Ute claim most of northwest New Mexico and northeast Arizona, but many of the Hopi's sacred grounds lay there, particularly the San Francisco Mountains, the holiest of holies for the Kachina Society. The Society feels particularly embittered by these disputes and believes the Ute shorted them after they had helped Howling Coyote during the Great Ghost Dance.
• Masau'u

EASTERN PUEBLO

The deserts to the east and south of Albuquerque are largely unpopulated. Few Pueblo live in the eastern desert, believing that the land gives off "bad vibes" from all the nuclear testing and uranium mining done here. The large majority of residents here are Anglos who refused to leave after Pueblo claimed this territory under the Treaty of Denver. Since few Pueblo wanted to live here anyway, the Corporate Council saw no need to displace them. Most of these Anglos live in small towns, in a region anchored by the towns of Santa Rosa, Tucumcari, Clovis, Elida, and Fort Sumner.

• Novatech allegedly has one of its two deltaware clinics somewhere out in the eastern Pueblo. Most folks think it's somewhere southwest of Santa Rosa, somewhere between Vaughn and Pastura.
• Scritti P

The southern deserts near Alamagordo are starting to see a lot of activity as the Azzies and Pueblo build up forces along the border. The Azzies have made clear their intentions to take back their sector in Denver from Ghostwalker, and the easiest route up to Denver is along I-25, which runs straight through Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

• Scan that. Already several Aztlan smugglers have started forging a route between El Paso and Denver to get in arms and equipment to resistance groups in Mile High. They call it the Flying Saucer because it crosses the border at Roswell (which is in Azzie-land, for all you alien nuts). Pueblo security forces have been trying to shut it down, but their forces have been spread pretty thin trying to cover LA as well.
• Frohike

• These little towns are truly weird. Though the average population is around a thousand, you can always pick out a few folks who display some degree of eccentricity. I remember stopping by in one town off of I-40 to get a quick bite to eat. I walked into a diner, and the only other person there was an old man sitting at the counter, hunched over his lunch. I sat several seats down and was about to order a cup of soykaf, when he suddenly turns and shouts at me, "Do the words CALM and MURDER go together? CALM? MURDER!" Then, as suddenly as he yells at me, he goes back to gazing at his lunch. I skipped the soykaf and didn't stop again until I was well inside Albuquerque.
• Evil Ethyl

Trinity

The Trinity site, ground zero for the first nuclear explosion, lies directly south of Albuquerque not more than 50 kilometers away from the Aztlan border. Truly in the middle of nowhere, Trinity used to be shunned by all until recently. Lately a cult has sprung up in southeast Pueblo, calling itself the Atomic Kiva. Consisting mostly of Zuñis, Lagunas, and a few Anglos, the cult follows a lunatic Laguna shaman known as Sejuaro Protonés, who claims to follow the Atom totem. The cult has been conducting several rituals at Trinity, and they have also been spotted in Vaughn, where the US maintained a nuclear waste pro-

cessing plant, and Paguate, an ex-uranium mine halfway between Albuquerque and Gallup.

• The Atomic Kiva has also been causing trouble south of the Aztlan border as well, in White Sands, Las Cruces, and Carlsbad. The main problem they've had with the Azzies is trespassing, especially around the former missile ranges in White Sands. They've also been causing trouble in the Carlsbad Caverns, where the US performed underground nuclear testing,by trying to remove rocks from that cavern.
• Omicron

PHOENIX

As the largest city in the Pueblo nation prior to the annexation of Los Angeles, Phoenix is the heart of Pueblo's manufacturing industries. While Santa Fe comes up with the business plan and Albuquerque engineers the design, most of the mass production takes place in Phoenix.

• Though the Pueblo conduct most of their research in Albuquerque, they still do some research in Phoenix. Most of it deals with the infrastructure that supports the Pueblo Grid: telecommunications and industrial electronics. Novatech owns a few plants in Phoenix that research application-specific hardware for industrial controls. Cross also has a few offices here, but they are constantly hassled by Novatech and local Pueblo-based electronics manufacturers.
• Desert Cat

• Some low-level smuggling takes place north of Phoenix, around the Flagstaff area. Flagstaff sits right on the border between Pueblo and Ute, and Pueblo smugglers carrying chips and contraband to Las Vegas frequently pass through Flagstaff. With tensions growing between Pueblo and Ute, however, Ute border patrols have tightened considerably around the Flagstaff area.
• Wawaru

On the southern reaches of the Phoenix sprawl just beyond Tempe lies South Mountain Park. What's notable about this nature reserve is that it maintains an active gold mine, which is still run by Pueblo. When Pueblo took control of Phoenix, it drastically scaled back the mining operations, returning in some cases to traditional low-tech mining techniques. Though closed to the public, the mine still turns out a regular supply of gold.

• The South Mountain gold mine is actually a Pueblo artificing lodge, where Pueblo shamans refine gold, silver, and turquoise into metal and mineral radicals. This is why the park is closed to the public, not only to prevent poachers from tapping the gold vein, but also to guard Pueblo enchanting techniques from unwelcome spies. The Pueblo take their enchanting here very seriously, and the area is heavily guarded.
• Ambril

• There's something fishy going on in the South Mountain mines. I'm sure of it. I had a rigger friend do an overhead flyby, and I compared notes with shipping records I "lifted" from the Phoenix grid. Even with the primitive mining and refining techniques used by Pueblo enchanters, the productivity should be much higher than the output. The Pueblo must be diverting some of the radicals elsewhere, but I don't know where.
• Horo Mana

• I can tell you where they're going: they're going east to the CAS. Everyone knows that Pueblo and the CAS are quite chummy, thanks to a mutual enemy lying just to the south. Pueblo sends the radicals east to Confederate combat mages, in return for Confederate arms and explosives.
• Mojo Pojo

• You are so full of drek. The Pueblo don't need CAS arms; theirs are already pretty damn good. What the Pueblo need are troops, but I don't think they'd let the CAS Army roll across the border, do you?
• Diamondback

• Forget the CAS angle. I've also noticed the disparity between production and output at South Mountain, but I'll tell you something else: the disparity really widened three years ago, in 2059. During that same year, Arthur Vogel (you remember him: that halfer eco-lawyer who ran for president of the UCAS?) made a quiet, unscheduled visit to Santa Fe, with side trips to Gallup and Tempe to meet with Chairman Estefan. I'll bet you nuyen to nutrisoy the Soyoko are behind the South Mountain mines and are secretly shipping Vogel a share for his own ends.
• Mongwa

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

by Slave to the Beat

All the leaves are brown and the sky is gray, but you won't be safe and warm if you are in LA. A wave of chaos has washed across the West Coast, as SURGE struck the Los Angeles' Beautiful People and the San Andreas fault shook at the sight of Halley's Comet. The quake opened the graves at Forest Lawn and Rose Hills, freeing the undead shedim from their resting places. The Los Angeles city elders sent out a plea for assistance, and the Corporate Council responded. Faster than you can say "acquisition merger," the Pueblo Corporate Council annexed Los Angeles and the San Bernadino Valley. The earthquakes may have subsided, but the real tremors are just beginning to rumble.

FALLEN ANGELS

So how did this jewel of Southern California become a Pueblo acquisition? Our current troubles are just the latest in seventy years of continual decline. First there were the '92 race riots, after four cops got caught on videotape beating a black man and were acquitted. Then Orange County went bankrupt in 1995, thanks to municipal mismanagement, and many local companies started having doubts about SoCal.



After the 2001 energy crisis, when gas prices surged to new highs and rolling blackouts kept most of the city in the dark, many companies made up their minds and moved away just to stay in business. Race riots reared their ugly head again in 2022 when Goblinization came around, forcing the city elders to wall off that section of South Central we now know as El Infierno. Six years later, an earthquake destroyed most of LAX airport and uncovered toxins that shut it down for good.

In 2046 a decker gang from El Infierno broke into the Sacramento election computers and wiped clean that year's gubernatorial election, creating a statewide crisis. Sacramento vowed to comb El Infierno to catch the perps, but as usual, they cocked up the plan and turned the hunt into a giant bloodbath. Embarrassed by their failure (once again caught so succinctly on trid), not to mention tired of the meager tax revenues they could scrounge from LA's non-extraterritorial poor, Sacramento redesignated Los Angeles and Orange Counties as the Greater Los Angeles Free Metropolitan District. Oh sure, there was a dog and pony show about local autonomy, but for all intents and purposes, Sacramento wrote off LA and divorced it from the rest of California.

For a long time the local Powers That Be followed Sacramento's lead and denied LA had a problem; high walls and higher prejudices helped keep those problems out of sight and out of mind. SURGE tore down those prejudices, however, while an earthquake tore down the walls. In desperation city aldermen put out a cry for help, and the Pueblo responded.

• The party line says the Pueblo got LA because they were fastest on the draw, but the reality is more complicated than that. Despite the city's dire straits, no one in their right minds wanted Aztlan swarming up the coast into LA. The Ute with their anti-Anglo biases were just as bad. It was generally known that the Pueblo tended to be more Anglo-tolerant the most, and they had a lot of advanced computer and ASIST technology the studios wanted to get their mitts on. So when the city elders cried for help, they tended to shout more loudly at the Pueblo than anyone else.
• Vox Umbrae

• Also, acquiring LA now gives the Pueblo direct access to the Pacific and overseas markets, which is another plus.
• Alan

• And if what Kaletaka says is true, it also takes the spotlight off of Santa Fe and the growing rift between the Board and the Kachina Society. The best case of "wag the dog" I've seen since an American president ordered airstrikes in the Balkans to distract attention from an ongoing impeachment trial.
• Nightstalker

Pueblo annexation, however, has made enemies on three sides: Aztlan, California and the Ute. Harsh words and frequent saber-rattling has passed between them, but no one has declared war—yet.

• Of course, the Pueblo have never gotten along well with any of the three. Californians are a xenophobic bunch and distrust all foreigners. The Pueblos' Anglo-tolerant attitude has never endeared themselves to the Utes. And the Azzies—well, they're Azzies. What more needs to be said?
• White Eagle

• Though some harsh words are coming out of Sacramento, most of it is just trash talk to please the public, particularly General Saito and his Japanacorp backers. Sacramento already wrote LA off, so they couldn't care less if the Pueblo snatched it. The truth is, while Governor Whitman is blasting the Pueblo in public, his cronies have been talking with the Pueblo behind the scenes, thanking them for building up peacekeeping forces attached to the Pueblo embassy in Chico-Oroville.
• Chico Man

• The annexation has put a further strain between Pueblo-Ute relations, which had steadily declined ever since the beginning. Fortunately, the Ute have had as little success in taking the Mojave as the Pueblo, so the desert serves as a buffer zone protecting SoCal from the Ute. Besides, Ute's militia was never that strong to begin with.

Aztlan is another question. They may be hurting now, but they'll be back eventually. The Azzies want to wreak some serious payback against Ghostwalker. Some Angelenos are worried the Azzies might make a two-pronged attack, driving up the coast from San Diego at the same time they march up I-25 to retake Denver.
• SFTS

• With the way the Azzies are tied up in the Yucatan, I wouldn't count on it.
• MC Jammer

A DEAL YOU CAN'T REFUSE

When Pueblo annexed Los Angeles, it swallowed up LA's underworld along with it. And just as Pueblo started issuing IPOs to Angeleno residents, the Koshari muscled their way onto the scene. So now a three-way battle is underway in LA's underworld, as the Mafia and the Triads try to protect their holdings from the newcomers.

The Mafia

Los Angeles has been the Mafia's West Coast capital for a long time, but recent events have put the Mob on the defensive. The two major families in Los Angeles—the Larragas and Gillespies—used to control most of the BTL and CalHot distribution. The decline and subsequent buyout of many simsense studios by the Pueblo, however, has taken most of that market away and given it to the Koshari. Though both the Larragas and Gillespies have other rackets to fall back on—namely the resort industry and gambling—the loss of most of their chip business has been a major hit. The Mafia are by no means out, but their dominance of LA is no longer assured.

• The Larragas have responded to the Koshari by taking the battle back to them in Phoenix. As the largest city in Pueblo before annexation, Phoenix also has the largest population of Anglos. The Larragas have been successful in establishing a foothold in Tempe, but the Koshari have fought back fiercely.
• Sun Devil

The Triads

Ever since the last century, LA has been home to many Chinese immigrants (not to mention Korean, Vietnamese, and many others)—not just in the downtown districts near Hill Street, but also in many outlying suburbs such as Torrance, San Gabriel, and Monterey Park. After the Awakening, the Triads fought the Yakuza for control of Chinatown, but the Yaks were never able to overcome the Triads' magical edge. (That, and most Asians living in LA hated the Yaks.) When the Imperial Marines first set foot in San Francisco way back when, the Yaks decided to cut their losses and fled for the safety of the Bay Area.

The Triads in Los Angeles focus primarily on smuggling (particularly magical goods), fencing and protection rackets, leaving the more traditional "vices" to the Mafia. While their interests don't directly collide with the Koshari, the presence of another magical syndicate in LA has gotten the Triads all riled up. Already a few clashes have broken out between the Triads and the Koshari, contests of magical one-upsmanship for bragging rights.

• The Triads in Monterey Park and San Gabriel have seen an interesting twist to their protection rackets—providing protection for graves! Many Chinese residents are worried that the shedim marauding the Rose Hills Memorial Park, where many Chinese are buried, might take over the corpses of relatives and ancestors. They have been coming to Triad geomancers asking for blessing over gravesites, in the hopes that their feng shui might ward off these undead spirits.
• Digger

• A few Triad gangs have taken a more direct interest in the shedim themselves, in the hope of binding the spirits and selling them as cheap labor elsewhere. One gang, the Twenty-eight Hands, has put out a bounty in the LA shadows for the capture of a "live" shedim for their own study and dissection.
• Lo Fu Chee

HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD

So if Los Angeles is such a festering hellhole that California seceded it from the rest of the state, why would the Pueblo, as driven by the bottom line as most Anglos, want to move in? One word: simsense. The earthquake that devastated most of Pasadena and Hollywood threw many studios into bankruptcy, which the Pueblo moved in to buy out.

Of all of Los Angeles, Pueblo presence is the most visible in the formerly walled studio districts. The Pueblo bought out Amalgamated Studios, which has given the Pueblo not only control of the Studio City simsense studios, but also the

Fun City theme parks as well as a large chunk of North America's audio/trideo programming. AS's main rivals, Affiliated Artists, have remained independent of Pueblo influence. As newly naturalized citizens of Pueblo, however, they may find it hard to go it alone.

• The Pueblo may find Amalgamated Studios harder to digest than they thought. Even before the buyout, AS was having problems with internal fracturing—particularly with LivingWord Productions, a division producing religious-oriented simsense and trideo. Recently Buna Chima, LivingWord's division head, made several trips to Nashville to meet with executives from TriVol Technologies, an up-and-coming CAS entertainment company. Scuttlebutt suggests that Buna may be making the jump to Music City within a year's time, taking LivingWord with her. And since TriVol isn't large enough yet to take on a giant like Amalgamated in the boardroom, you might be seeing a couple of Johnsons with Southern accents in the LA shadows pretty soon.
• Kidd Trideo

• Maureen Skogan, head honcho of Affiliated, has been fighting with the Pueblo tooth and nail. She has hired out a few runners to sabotage Amalgamated's studio operations. The Pueblo have reciprocated in kind by hiring other runners to poach away Affiliated's top talent.
• Daredevil

• Amalgamated and the Pueblo aren't Skogan's only problems. When the Containment Zone went down over Chicago, many Chicago simsense studios, such as Truman Technologies and Brilliant Genesis, came to Los Angeles and eventually got snapped up by Affiliated. With Chicago being bug-free for the better part of four years, however, many of these Midwesterners are starting to get homesick (or they can't stand Skogan's tyranny). Daniel Truman, head of Truman Technologies, has been making rumblings about returning to Chi-town, but everyone knows he can't go it alone. I suspect he may find some "help" from the shadows in making his breakaway.
• StudioTech

UCLA

The University of California at Los Angeles lies just west of the studio districts, situated between Beverly Hills and Santa Monica. As one of the top-rated North American universities, UCLA is recognized for its medical, simsense and thaumaturgical programs. It is also infamous for the Magic Wars between it and USC (the University of Southern California in downtown LA), which had twisted the manasphere around the Santa Monica region long before the so-called "Year of the Comet."

• The appearance of the comet and the effect it had on the worldwide manasphere made things even worse in LA. LA got hit much harder by SURGE than many other places in North America, and LA has had more problems with shedim possessing dead bodies than any other sprawl in North America, save Vancouver and DeeCee. A lot of theorists blame the Magic Wars for exacerbating these effects.
• Little Lulu

• If you ever have a job "recruiting" students and grads at UCLA or "auditing" some of the advanced research going on, you'd be well advised to leave your magicians at home. The mana surges have made any spellcasting dangerous, and wild magic effects make it more likely for a rogue spirit to spontaneously appear and ruin your day.
• Student Prince

EL INFIERNO: HELL ON EARTH

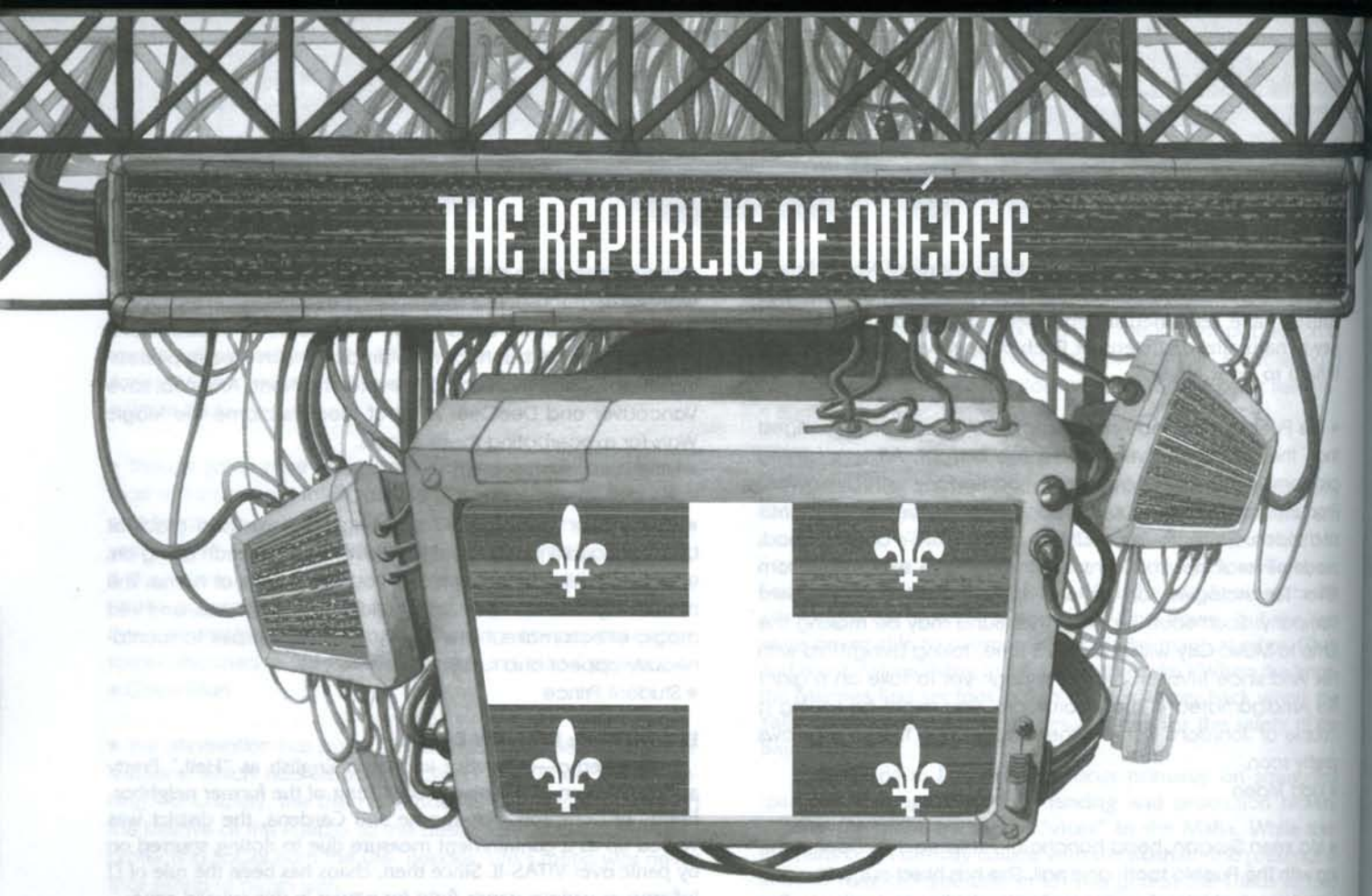
El Infierno—otherwise known in English as "Hell." Pretty apt description of the place. Consisting of the former neighborhoods of Compton, Hawthorne and Gardena, the district was walled up as a containment measure due to rioting spurred on by panic over VITAS-II. Since then, chaos has been the rule of El Infierno as various gangs fight for power in this squalid zone.

When the earthquake knocked down the walls surrounding El Infierno, its desperate inhabitants poured out in droves, ransacking downtown Los Angeles in an orgy of pillage and plunder not seen since the barbarian invasion of Rome. Then Pueblo came in and restored order in the outlying districts—but not El Infierno itself. Like its predecessors, Pueblo has decided the best answer to El Infierno is containment, only this time with troops rather than walls.

• Ironically, gang violence in El Infierno is down since Pueblo moved in, but not because of any peacekeeping measures. No, whenever a fight breaks out in El Infierno, Pueblo soldiers gather but don't interfere until the dust clears. At that point they haul away the aggressors—and ship them down to Alamogordo to dig fortifications along the Aztlan border. Without guns. Within shooting range of the Azzie patrols. This got rid of the worst elements and the remaining gangs took the hint.
• Blood Prince

• Yeah, but that only means there's a running gang war on the streets every other night.
• Scrambler

THE REPUBLIC OF QUÉBEC



I've come across Bowser a few times during my visits to Québec. He's been around the block a good many times and, while he should step down from his soapbox once in a while, attention should be paid to what he has to say. The Republic of Québec is going through some drastic changes of late, and I know of no better person to give us the lowdown on what's happening.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 17:11:49 (PST)

by Bowser in Blue

I'm an Anglophone in Québec. That means I'm an English-speaker in a country where French was the only legal language for decades.

This country is and always was a distinct society, long before the Republic was even a possibility. The French-speaking majority culture has long feared that English-speaking cultural imperialism was encroaching, threatening to wipe out their identity as a people. This has driven Québec to become isolated and overprotective of its Francophone roots and culture, going so far as to cut off its own links to the rest of the world to preserve its individuality.

But now the mountain bear is shrugging off the last numbness from its long slumber and gazing upon the first rays of sunlight from the coming spring. Whether it goes on to survive or starves to death in its own cave, we shall see.

HISTORY

Québec, even when it was still part of Canada, struggled hard to preserve its Francophone nature. What started as benign laws to keep French dominant in street signs culminated into a separation from the rest of the Canada. The province of Québec became the Republic of Québec in October 2010, adopting the New Franc as its own currency. But the new government went too far, mandating that the only legal language of commerce in Québec would be French.

• Too far? Easy to say from your perspective, Mr. Anglophone. The first step to global corporate rule is to have everyone conform—distinct cultural identities, languages and similar

pesky things keep us from being assimilated into good consumer drones.
• Red Star

• Last time I checked, my grocery aisle electronic displays provided info on products in over fifteen languages. If you try and tell me that Québec's cultural nationalism prevents some corps from exploiting you, then I'd bet there's a little angel whispering in your ear.
• Perlman

The economy was severely stunted by the enormous brain drain as Anglophones fled the Republic. Whereas Québec had before been a leader in the software and electronics industry, the exodus of more than a third of its population nearly killed it.

When metahumanity came into the picture, the Québec government was quick to extend rights to all Francophones, whatever their race may be. While this avoided another large and crippling exodus, it doomed metahuman Anglophones … until they learned French, that is.

While the rest of North America was dealing with the Amerindian population's demands and signing over massive amounts of land, Québec remained strong. The lure of obtaining a truly sovereign state for themselves almost seduced the Republic's Amerindians, but promises and concessions pushed the tide back towards a new compromise. These concessions included complete extraterritoriality on their own reservations as well as tax exemption and low to null prices on government-based products and services. This deal was enough to quell rebellion in the Amerindian populace.

• A lot of Québec Native Americans jumped ship despite the good deal, taking up residence in the newly formed Algonkian Council.
• Cree Dog

Internally safe from conflict, Québec continued working on its development ceaselessly before the Crash of '29 destroyed its tertiary industry for good. The Republic slowly built itself back up, instituting strict isolationist trade laws to protect its native interests. Once corp in particular used Québec's heavy regulations against outside markets to its advantage: Cross Applied Technologies Corporation (CATCo). By the early 2050s, CATCo had achieved extraterritorial megacorporate status. As the Republic's pet giant, CATCo was granted outrageous liberties. Using the Seraphim to seed his home ground and dipping his hand into the political scene, Lucien Cross made himself out to be Québec's guardian angel. Where Aztechnology has Aztlan, CATCo now has the Republic of Québec, though to a lesser extent.

• Only lesser in the public eye. Cross owns Québec from the inside out, chummers.
• De la Rochelle

RECENT POLITICS: CHANGING OF THE GUARD

From the beginning of the Republic, Anglophones were treated like second-class citizens. The Parti Québécois dominated the government for almost fifty years, giving privileges to Francophones and enforcing the country's isolationism. Yet with each passing election, their margin of victory grew thinner. Slowly but surely, their grip weakened and the Démocrates Mondains—a party dedicated to opening borders to international trade, loosening the business language restrictions and finally bringing the Anglophones back up to everybody else's level—grew stronger. On January 1st, 2061, the Parti Québécois triggered elections a year early as a desperate publicity stunt, but the Démocrates Mondains swept the polls and were elected to the majority by a single seat.

• For those unfamiliar with Québec's government, your vote goes to elect a deputy (1 of 125) to the National Assembly. Whichever party has the most deputies occupying seats wins Majority. The second highest gets the Opposition ticket, and the runners-up get to watch.
• Michael

• Up to now, your vote only counted if you could prove your identity in perfect French, though I expect this to change soon. C'est bien le fun, hein? Of course, most Anglophones have either learned French by now or spent the cred on a chipjack and linguasoft. And that's a lot of votes building up against the Parti Québécois.
• Dub51

• A lot of foreign corporations have very keen interests in seeing the French requirement lifted from trade regulations and seeing Québec opened up to trade. Guess where the Démocrates Mondains is getting support from?
• Jean D'Armes

The new government deems Québec strong enough to stand on its own in the international market, as CATCo has nicely demonstrated. The physical and virtual borders of Québec are opening up and trade limitations are disappearing. There's already a deal with the UCAS to lower tariffs and trade restrictions and a tentative agreement with Tir Tairngire to exchange information and technology via Cross Corp's Québec and Tir subsidiaries. They've also announced that by the end of the year the nuyen will replace the New Franc as public currency. And English will soon return as a legal business language, next to French.

• What happens to New Francs once they get the nuyen back in?
• Lara

• Cross Corp is already using it as its own corporate scrip. When the nuyen becomes official, any leftover francs will have to be piped back into Cross. Clever, eh?
• L'Aspirateur Conspirateur

QUÉBEC TIMELINE

October 31, 2010: Québec secedes from Canada and becomes a republic.
February 7, 2011: French becomes the only legal business language.
May 3, 2011: Vieux Québec Riot burns down the Latin Quarter.
January 27, 2014: Treaty of Kahnawake passed to preempt Amerindian dissidence.
May 1, 2021: Harmful Paranimals Act passed.
June 28, 2053: Cross Applied Technologies achieves AA extraterritorial megacorp status.
April 15, 2060: CATCo acquires AAA status and takes a seat on the Corporate Court.
January 1, 2061: The Démocrates Mondains become the new ruling party.
September 19, 2061: Harmful Paranimals Act amended to include SURGEd species and exclude dragons.
March 2062: Republic borders open wider to tourism, trade and immigration.
July 2062: English enters trial period as legal business language.

QUEBEC AT A GLANCE

Population: 10,467,000
- Human: 78%
- Elf: 10%
- Dwarf: 5%
- Ork: 6%
- Troll: 1%
- Other: 0%

Per Capita Income: 21,000¥
Estimated SINless: 18%
Below Poverty Level: 36%
Corporate Affiliation: 29%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 20%
- High School Equivalency: 45%
- College Degrees: 28%
- Advanced Degrees: 7%

Major Languages Spoken:
- French: 77%
- English: 42%

Currency: New Franc (nuyen also accepted)
- Exchange Rate: 1f = 0.5¥

For the first time in history, the balance of power has shifted. The Démocrates Mondains now bring forth their view of Québec as a bear in hibernation, waking up to the bigger world that awaits it. And that's making some people happy, and a lot of people very, very angry.

• And a lot of people like us very, very in demand.
• SMG Guy

• Despite the pretty pictures the newsnets have been showing of the transition, Québec has seen an unusually high amount of limo accidents, hotel fires and mass transit crashes lately. Never mind the sheer quantity of border drones and "nonprofit" organization headquarters innocently bursting into flames. With the amount of lobbying going around, everybody needs us. You can't swing a dead cat in Québec anymore without hitting a shadowrunner.
• Mac

THE FACTIONS

Who's got the goods, the jobs and the francs? Find your Johnsons here.

DÉMOCRATES MONDAINS

President Hélène Bard (pronounced "bar") is the driving force behind the Démocrates Mondains plan to open up Québec, dubbing it "Le réveil de l'ours" (the awakening of the bear). Her passionate speeches have swept up public support and earned her countless enemies. Vice-President François Lemay is somewhat more reserved in his appearances and tone. While many think of him as a silent oaf, many more are inclined to hear what he has to say rather than face Bard's dramatic and inspirational displays.

• Which goes right along with his little plan. Bard may be an idealist, but Lemay's the one in charge, and he takes his orders from someone else who has Québec's interests at heart. He's hiding angel wings under that suit.
• De la Rochelle

Maryse Chouinard and Jean-Louis Frenette Jr., ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance respectively, have been put in the spotlight recently as the people responsible for making the changes go smoothly. The media provides day by day reports on their progress to keep "loyal Québécois posted." The reality of the matter is that they're waiting for either or both of them to frag up something fierce and get the story first.

• You can be sure the Parti Québécois is doing their utmost to help those media snoops find some scandals—real or contrived—in the public interest, of course.
• Lisa Diamond-Eyes

PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS

Joel Jénache, the deposed president, is working hard to curtail the changes that the Démocrates Mondains are pushing through. They hope to force Bard's party into holding another election as quickly as possible, and so have increased the pressure on all fronts. Parti coffers are running low with all of the shadowrunners being hired.

• Which means that the Démocrates are also hiring more to protect their interests. Y'know, a smart runner could play both sides ...
• Yojimbo

The Parti is also scrambling for allies, though they've discovered that in their arrogance they burned a few too many bridges in the past. This has inspired some to advocate a less radical position, and to try and adopt a middle ground between the Parti and Démocrates. Jénache won't have any-


WELCOME TO
ONE-WAY
Djurdjevic

thing to do with this talk, prompting some to whisper about removing him from his leadership position.

THE MINOR PARTIES

Three other parties also have a small but vocal impact in the Republic: the pro-Anglo Greens, the Alliance Francophone and the pro-meta Alliance Métahumaine.

The Greens and Alliance Francophone are polar opposites. The Greens are invigorated with new life. Under the leadership of aging Steve Castonguay, they are the most fervent supporters of the Démocrates Mondains's plans. Their support of pro-Anglophone organizations and events has settled their image into that of a caring group of human beings. The Alliance Francophone, on the other hand, is certifiably hostile. Their nationalistic pro-French program has lost much support over the past few years, driving their radical underground wing, the Force Populaire, to more extreme actions.

• The Force Populaire has claimed responsibility for firebombing cafés and pubs with English menus, assaulting Anglophone activists and other acts of terror. They've got a lot of skinhead streetfighters who stir up trouble, and they're known to have connections with some of the roving biker gangs.
• Antifa



• Popular opinion is on their side. Despite the changes, the majority Francophone population still has a strong bias against Anglophones. Speak English in public at your own risk.
• Lingua Franca

• For friendly folks, the Greens sure don't seem to have many qualms about hiring "outside help" to take care of their competitors or particularly vocal opponents.
• Lisa Diamond-Eyes

The Alliance Métahumaine is a rabble-rousing group, usually first at the lobbying table and responsible for many civil demonstrations for metahuman rights. They had their hands full protecting SURGE changelings during the troubles last year, and have gone so far as to organize "community defense groups" in some neighborhoods.

• All of these fringe group jobs are the gift baskets of shadowruns. Frag blowing up R&D compounds; it's less harsh on the meat to just destroy a front organization or produce "irrefutable" proof that the other club's new showcase company is really selling orphans on the black market.
• CASper

• A good way to go if you happen to be totally bereft of a conscience, yes.
• Lisa Diamond-Eyes

CROSS

Patriotism goes a long way, especially when driven by someone with Lucien's charisma. Support for Cross is losing strength, however, as the political landscape changes. Nearly all the Francophone parties follow Cross, but many of the metahuman and Anglophone interests are at odds with the megacorp. Despite Lucien's efforts to hire on more metahumans and show himself as sympathetic to their cause, it's simply not working with the general populace.

• Lucien's problem isn't with quantity, it's with quality. He has enough metahumans working for him—they're just not occupying places with any kind of power.
• Chauffard

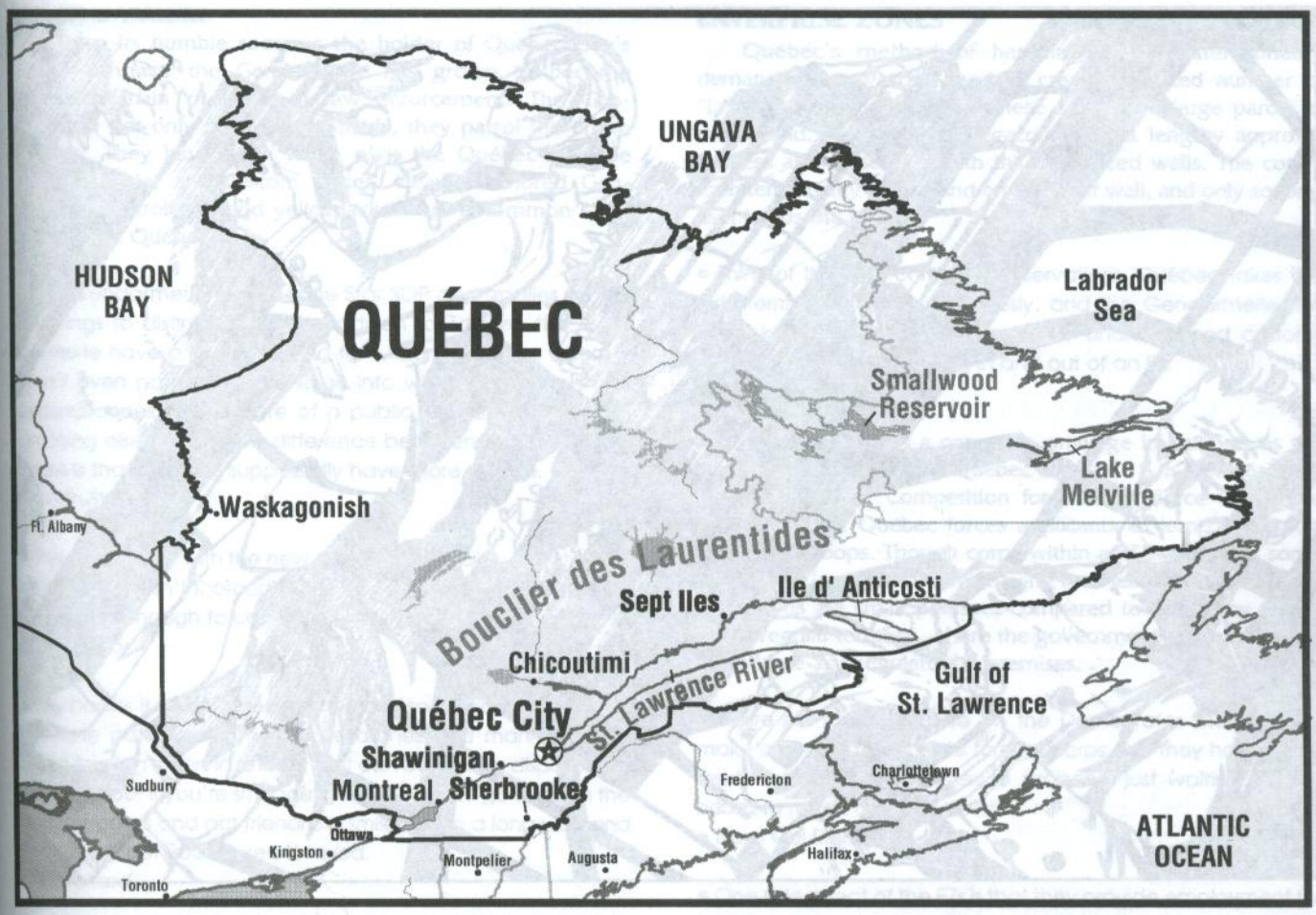
There's been some speculation as to why Cross didn't throw more weight behind the Parti Québécois in the last elections. Some chalk it up to a tactical mistake, but others argue that Cross has seen which way the wind is blowing and is acting appropriately.

• Parti Québécois leader Jénache has harsh words against Lucien Cross in private. In Jénache's view, Cross has betrayed them and is secretly pushing to open the borders. Rumor is that Ares and Jénache are sniffing each other out as potential allies.
• Monger

• Where the frag do you get your information?
• Skeptic

The influence of Ares within Québec is a growing concern for Cross. Ares has gained some popularity through careful dealings, publicity campaigns and heavy support of Anglophone interests.

• It's possible that Ares has backing within CATCo itself; it's no secret that the CATCo corporate board is not exactly Leonard Aurelius' best friend. Then again, it's a certainty that CATCo has its feelers in Ares too.
• Michael



• CEOs aside, Ares itself is only too happy to sell its services to the lesser parties if it'll mean that Cross or Cross's allies get the hit.
• Nightfire

The Seraphim

The Seraphim are Lucien Cross's personal spies. They have a reputation as one of the best information agencies in the world, dipping their tendrils into nearly every organization that spans the globe. Seeing as how CATCo is headquartered in Québec, it's obvious the angels' presence is felt strongly here. I had a friend who was a member of the Seraphim once, before disappearing. In the end, the Seraphim vanish without a trace ... like the angels they emulate.

• The Seraphim organization is split up into ten levels of operatives who answer to nine varying degrees of assignments. Seraphim agents range from H1 to H10 while assignments range from C1 to C9. My understanding is that H1 agents are outside the organization and consist mainly of support personnel ("concerned citizens"). H2 and H3 agents are noncombatants, administrative personnel and data workers. H4 agents are Cross' personal guards and security forces. H5 are trained as spies and infiltrators. H6 agents are combat-ready black-ops teams. I don't know what the H7 and up agents do.

The assignment levels were much hazier. It is my understanding that C1 to C3 are observational, C4 to C6 are interventional (Seraphim agents infiltrate the target passively) and C7 to C9 are destructive; Seraphim agents infiltrate the target and begin to destroy it from within.
• Solomon

• There's only one H10 agent—Lucien Cross himself.
• L'Aspirateur Conspirateur

• Why would he be an agent in his own organization? The only H10 agent is Lucien's personal bodyguard, modified and trained to be his perfect double. That's why so many attempts on Lucien's life failed. Twice now his H10 agent has perished, leaving Mr. Cross alive and well.
• Two-Wings Allaire

• Please. Conspiracy theory forums are two doors down the hall.
• Rubik



• Clever. Ten levels of agents, nine levels of assignments. Ten levels of heaven, nine levels of hell.
• Dawn'Tae

The Seraphim are littered throughout the world as spies and informants, but they are concentrated within Québec. The Seraphim have invaded every aspect of Québécois life—the government, the Gendarmerie, the media, the gangs, smaller Québec corps, the schools, your babysitter, you name it. This is why Cross truly has so much power in Québec. He doesn't have to throw his weight around because he already knows everything going on and has people in place to act upon it.

• And, of course, there are angelboys spying on CATCo from the inside, ratting out any potential traitors or troublemakers.
• Wavelength

• I know a trid snoop who tried to do an exposé of Seraphim back-room deals and crimes. He did his entire investigation in secret and even found a few anonymous sources with good dirt. The day before he finished the piece, he told his senior editor what he had in store. That night his house and office were burglarized and all his records taken or destroyed. His sources all died mysteriously or clammed up. He was fired from work the next morning for "unethical behavior"—no other news agency would touch him with a stick. A week later he was tipped off that a warrant was issued for his arrest for Matrix fraud, tax evasion and child abuse. He was lucky to get out of the country in one piece.
• Buscemi

The Seraphim even sometimes work openly in the Republic, flashing badges and acting with the authority of supra-governmental Men In Black. Very few dare to cross them for fear of being blacklisted. As a result, Seraphim agents face few restrictions and are known to "pull rank" on the Gendarmerie during investigations.

• Paranoia. Everyone here is exaggerating the Seraphim's abilities. There aren't enough Seraphim to cover every single angle in Québec and still carry on their operations overseas. Most of the Seraphim's might comes from myth and reputation.
• Spotlight Sally

• You just keep telling yourself that, Sal.
• Buscemi

THE GENDARMERIE

From its humble roots as the holder of Québec City's police contract, the Gendarmerie has grown to become Québec's main provider of law enforcement. The Gendarmerie not only patrol the sprawls, they patrol the entire country. They have even taken over the Québec Defense Force's border and custom duties. Heavily-armored Gendarmerie patrol cars and yellowjackets are a common sight throughout Québec.

• The Gendarmerie follows Lone Star SOP and applies security ratings to distinct areas. In addition to Z-zones, the Gendarmerie have a W-zone rating for wilderness zones where it won't even patrol, much less go into willingly under normal circumstances. This is more of a public relations move than anything else, as the only difference between Z zones and W zones is that W zones supposedly have more wildlife.
• North Star

• The good thing with the new open border policy is that every single vehicle isn't thoroughly searched anymore, though anything large enough to carry freight will get the full treatment.
• Sixth Gear

• The border is still guarded efficiently, if sporadically. The Gendarmerie patrols use small, agile drones and manned units, with a few big hitters in reserve that can be quickly dispatched. The safest bet if you're smuggling small stuff is to go through the customs gates and act friendly; a smile will go a long way and a frown will get your boxers X-rayed.
• Chauffard

The kicker is that the Gendarmerie are a Lone Star subsidiary, operating with a very lucrative contract. The Québec government keeps them close by denying them extraterritoriality and forcing them to abide by all of the standard Francophone business laws. Despite this, Anglophone Gendarmerie officers are not uncommon

The head of the Gendarmerie in Québec is Jérôme Saint-Pierre, a hoary old man who wields a mean walking stick. Jérôme is far older than the republic itself, but he's only gotten more cunning with age. He long ago cut the strings his Lone Star masters kept trying to attach to his back, and so the subsidiary has achieved a substantial amount of autonomy.

• On the surface, the Gendarmerie and CATCo are bosom buddies, backing each other up "for the good of the nation." Behind closed doors, there's a lot of tension, primarily because Cross is constantly stepping on Gendarmerie toes and there's frag all they can do about it. Jérôme isn't stupid enough to cross Cross, but I'd bet my cyberleg that he'd take any chance he could get to knock him down a peg.
• Gimp

ENTERPRISE ZONES

Québec's method of handling the extraterritoriality demands of megacorps was to create a limited number of "Enterprise Zones." Each of these zones is a large parcel of urban land, leased by a megacorp after a lengthy approval process and closed off with tall, reinforced walls. The corp's extraterritoriality begins and ends at that wall, and only so long as it keeps the lease.

• Think of them as corporate reservations. Québec takes the extraterritoriality bit very seriously, and the Gendarmerie has been known to establish temporary unannounced customs posts to scan people going in and out of an EZ.
• Scag

Leasing an EZ is a corporate privilege in Québec, as the country only allows 12 in Québec City and 18 in Montréal (and none elsewhere). Competition for them is fierce when one opens up, and Québec forces applicants to jump through a number of hoops. Though corps within an EZ still suffer some restrictions (and the threat of having their lease revoked), those restrictions are small potatoes compared to what they would get in regular territory, where the government has full rights to investigate and regulate the premises.

• There's a lot of pressure on the Démocrates Mondains to make new EZs available to foreign corps, but they have so far resisted the demands. They're probably just waiting for the bribes to reach a higher point.
• Nous Qui Rions

• One side effect of the EZs is that they provide employment for Anglophones, as corporations are free to use any language they choose within them. This really pisses some of the hard-line Francophones off—they won't even enter an EZ on principle, unless the corp is CATCo.
• People Watcher

• The big thing to remember about the EZs is that the megacorps still have holdings outside of them in the rest of Québec—they just aren't extraterritorial. That means corp security has to follow local laws and has to answer to the Gendarmerie when a hail of bullets and some fireballs wake up the neighbors.
• Prime Runner

• Before you get your hopes up about DocWagon being able to haul yer hoop off of corporate property—forget it. Neither DocWagon nor any of their competitors operate in Québec. It seems the government isn't too keen on armed EMTs running around their country, no matter how good their intentions are.
• Black Cross

Only eleven of Québec City's Enterprise Zones are claimed, and a heated battle is developing over the twelfth. The established zones are located in outlying areas of the sprawl, belonging to: Ares (much to the vexation of Lucien Cross), Aztechnology, CATCo (owns two), MCT, Monobe, Novatech, Renraku, Saeder-Krupp, Yamatetsu and Yokogawa-Honeywell. Each of these corps also owns at least one EZ in Montreal, with the leftovers belonging to a handful of smaller AA-megacorps. Of the AAA-megacorps, only Shiawase and Wuxing are without representation, which is making both nervous. Several smaller corps, both local and foreign, are also interested. Bidding wars, both over and under the table, are hot—and rapidly approaching meltdown.

QUÉBEC CITY METROPLEX

Our capital is a mixture of anachronistic structures and modern economic power. Québec City houses 12 hotly-contested Enterprise Zones, the majority leaders of parliament (who reside in the lavish Château Frontenac), the Gendarmerie headquarters, the National Assembly building and other historical sites and government-run buildings. Though it celebrated its 450th anniversary in 2058, Québec City only became an actual metroplex a few years before that, after absorbing many of the surrounding towns, cities and counties.

THE SIGHTS

To understand the layout of Québec City's hills and narrow, winding streets, you need to realize that part of the town is built along the St. Lawrence River while the other half is built overlooking it, on a cape above.

The highest point in this hilly city is the Latin Quarter, boasting centuries-old buildings and genuine cobblestone streets. Actually, this all burned down decades ago in a riot (attributed, of course, to Anglophones), but the government has worked hard to rebuild their precious capital. Today's Québec looks very much like the Québec from a hundred years ago as far as the Latin Quarter is concerned, except that the antique buildings house high-tech firms. The National Assembly meets here at the Hôtel du Gouvernement, and the President's family and advisors all live in the majestic Château Frontenanc.

• Those government buildings may look old, but behind the façade are some seriously high-tech rigged security systems.
• Chauffard

Just below the Latin Quarter is the downtown area, where most of the city's corporate offices and modern buildings are clustered. The Citadel—the city's huge old fort, revamped with modern defenses—is now the Gendarmerie HQ. The largest structure in the city is the Laurier Arcology in the Sainte-Foy district. CATCo is slowly buying out the arc's real estate.

• Cross hopes to get the arcology declared an Enterprise Zone once he snaps the whole thing up.
• Jean D'Armes

The Old Port, an aging sector at the edge of Québec's main maritime port, is where most of the low-class Anglophones and metahumans eke out a living. It is now nothing more than a huge expanse of old buildings and houses rotting from the ground up, inhabited by the SINless. It is not only depressing but also dangerous to walk through at night.

• The Old Port is a dump. Not even a worthwhile dump with the usual amenities you'd expect in an area forgotten by security—it's depressingly void of all soul. Don't go there unless you want to ruin a perfectly good trip.
• Grind

• What if I wanted to ruin a perfectly good chase?
• Sixth Gear

• Security will definitely follow you in, but finding you is another matter if you're halfway competent at hiding in plain sight. The Gendarmerie rates the area as an E-zone.
• De la Rochelle

Québec City hosts two magic schools. The downtown L'Institut Thaumaturgique de Québec (ITQ) is at the top of the charts, thanks to heavy corporate funding. The only government-funded establishment for learning magic, the thaumaturgy department at Québec City's Université Laval, hardly makes it into the top 10. It's based at the edge of the Latin Quarter, out of the old Fabrique building.

• The ITQ is bought and paid for by CATCo. Top achievers in most classes are "offered" a position in the Seraphim.
• Lisa Diamond-Eyes

THE DEALS

Industry-wise, Québec City is a growing focal point for cybernetic electronics companies, thanks to the dedication of Minister of Information Technologies Duane Pelletier. Duane has helped many local second and third tier corps get their start, such as the up-and-coming MultiOcto corp. This has won him some animosity with CATCo, who feels it can handle the nation's needs in these matters by itself.

• Québec-based MultiOcto is close to releasing a new type of "less invasive" headware memory, though it's rumored that their design was pirated from one of the big boys ... with the aid of runners paid for by the Ministry.
• Ti-Jos Connaissant

Québec City is also seeing an influx of growth from the entertainment industry. It now boasts such creations as Tridéovision Quatre Éléments (TQE), the only trideo station devoting its entire programming to magically-oriented shows; the Club 101, a prime Francophone hub; and the Coquerelle Nucléaire, reputed to be the hottest restaurant bar-dance club-hotel in the entire Republic. Despite its former isolationism, Québec is still up to date; it's as easy to find the

latest Seattle SimSenSational premiere release as it is to find aging music magnate René-Charles Angélil's twelfth attempt at becoming popular again.

• QC recently began offering incentives to a few Los Angeles studios, hoping to convince them to relocate here rather than New York or Toronto. A lot of pressure has been placed on Truman Technologies in particular, and not just the monetary kind.
• Bridges

THE POWER

The nine members of the city council—the Mayor, seven alderman, and the Chief of the Gendarmerie—call the shots for Québec City. Mayor Andrée P. Boucher III, an ork of administrative lineage, has her hands full running the show and keeping the aldermen in line. A lifelong Parti Québécois member and lapdog to Lucien Cross, Boucher is considered by many to be a token figurehead.

• She likes people to underestimate her like that. Then she politically eviscerates them while they're paying attention to her "string-pullers." Not a nice lady.
• Mac

The aldermen are a squabbling pack of elected officials. Each of the major policlubs has at least one bought alderman, and a few are under the influence of CATCo. The only one worth mentioning is Oliver McClure, a popular favorite who also happens to sit on the board of Aztechnology thanks to a fluke in Dunkelzahn's will. McClure has a solid rep for being clean and conscientious, and he's publicly shredded several corrupt officials in the past. He spends a lot of time making sure the Aztechnology EZ and Azzie ops in the Republic are squeaky clean.

• McClure may be dirt-resistant, but he's not above paying shadowrunners for research or exposure jobs. He keeps his distance of course, working through a weird fixer called the Mime.
• Aoiji

Sébastien Hull, current Chief of the Gendarmerie and a battle-scarred Desert Wars vet, is a sight to behold. Though he technically holds no vote on the council, the fact that so many aldermanic heads swing in his direction whenever a vote comes up speaks to his influence. Hull runs the Gendarmerie like a tight ship. Despite being undermanned and overworked, the Québec City cops maintain impeccable uniforms, drive sparkling vehicles and follow the law like hounds. Only the best and brightest officers are promoted to work in the city, which is considered the ultimate assignment. The Gendarmerie's contract depends on a flawless performance, and they strive hard to maintain their record.

• Bowser's not kidding. These cops will treat you politely no matter how much of a gutterpunk you are. "Please lower your Ares Predator and place it on the ground, sir." Of course, once they pull you into the dungeons after a firefight that left some of their cop pals bleeding in the street, it's a different story. But isn't it always?
• Mongoose

• All praise for the Gendarmerie aside, this level of dedication is important. It means few if any cops will accept bribes or let you off easy in Québec City. Concentrate on not getting caught.
• Chauffard

MONTRÉAL

The city of Montreal includes the Île de Montréal and the sprawl surrounding it on both the North and South shores. Once the Republic's largest urban center and Québec City's rival in many ways, Montreal has been neglected in past decades as attention and resources were diverted towards the capital to keep it strong. As a result, Montréal slipped into decay, becoming the dark blight next to Québec City's shining star.

INDUSTRY

Montreal's diminished land value has attracted the better part of Québec's industry, and Montréal is now mainly a blue-collar city. Whole residential neighborhoods have been bulldozed, displacing thousands, to make room for new Enterprise Zones and new factory complexes. The CATCo headquarters EZ dominates the downtown area, near the city's namesake hill Mont Royal. This downtown area is by far the safest, and the only one regularly patrolled by the Gendarmerie—the further you are from it, the more dangerous the streets are.

• Québec's economy is making a comeback, so there's a lot of hot tech coming off of those assembly lines, from cyberlimb actuators to automated medkits to Matrix relay systems. Easy cred if you can sleaze the security or grab a truckfull.
• Prime Runner

Some say all that's left of Montréal is in the Enterprise Zones; the rest is decay best forgotten. The recently constructed Autoroute Clément (known around Montréal as the BUM-86 Expressway) is a direct pipeline from downtown to the periphery, which helps travelers bypass the slums.

• Gendarmerie yellowjackets with thermo spotters and improved sensor systems patrol the BUM-86 day and night, so even the biker gangs don't harass the norms ... much.
• Chauffard

CRIME

The majority of the Montréal sprawl consists of vast crumbling neighborhoods and slums with a majority Anglophone population. Security is lax, nonexistent or corrupt at best, and the crime rate is off the scale (not that much of it gets reported anyway). Of all the criminally inclined Québécois in the Republic, more than half started their careers here. Montréal is the gateway into Québec's underworld, with hundreds of

small gangs and independents eager for fresh blood. The biker gangs dominate the black market, using smaller gangs to handle their gruntwork.

• Not everyone in Montréal is content with this downward spiral of feeding off each other. More and more gangs are taking on a community defense role, opposing the corporate land grab and labor exploitation with sabotage campaigns and organized work stoppages. In response, the corps are hiring legbreakers to keep the proles in line.
• Red Star

• The haze of despair and animosity that lingers over Montréal is quite real. In many areas, the astral is tainted with a sour-tasting background count. The spirits point to the old Olympic Stadium as a primary source of dismay. They tell me it was erected upon a former holy site, angering them. Others point to the subway tunnels, dug through sweat, blood and dead bodies. Steer clear of any path without light.
• He Who Breathes Shallow

• The subway stations out of corporate territory look as pitiful as can be. Still, the price is right, and common people will take it in packs figuring that whatever's down there can't catch all of 'em. Beats walking.
• De la Rochelle

BIKER GANGS

Biker gangs defined organized crime in Québec, even before the Republic. Starting out as motorcycle clubs, they developed into criminal organizations, true contenders to the Mafia and Yakuza. Neither of those two syndicates ever managed to get a foothold in Québec—both tried, and both were quickly and violently sent back out, for the most part in several pieces.

The biker gangs have retained many of their club trappings. The typical gang has two to three dozen members with a leader, a lawyer and a treasurer. Every certified member votes in gang decisions. New members must go through a period of service as a "striker," a form of apprenticeship. After undergoing a rite of passage and becoming a member, they earn their colors. Their colors are their lives—ridiculing, staining or even touching a member's jacket logo will get you beaten or geeked. These gangs take pride to a twisted new level.

The bigger ones will hold dozens of lesser gangs under their wheels. Learn to recognize, and respect, their colors. Almost all biker gangs are Anglos, though many know French. All of them, to some extent, have metahuman members; they unite the outcasts of society under a single bloodied banner.

THE HELLSOULS

The Hellsouls are an old gang, bearing a logo of a large, flaming, horned skull surrounded by barbed wire. They are the resident power behind most of the Montréal sprawl, with at least fifteen gangs serving them. They accept anyone as a member; all races are wild, though most members are Anglophones. They favor large bikes and heavy firearms.

The current leader is Massive, a large, blond-bearded, bald dwarf with a quick temper. The Hellsouls are headquartered in a large run-down castle-like building (an old armory) on the east side of the Montréal island. Rumors run rampant about the catacombs beneath it.

• The Hellsouls also have ties to the Greens, having torched more than one Alliance Francophone office in their day.
• Green Pixie

• That may be, but the Hellsouls only work for themselves—they don't take jobs and they don't give jobs. You're either in the gang or you're against the gang, so steer clear of them.
• Mac

• Thankfully, most other gangs aren't that squeamish about outside help.
• SMG Guy

THE SPINE BREAKERS

New on the block, the Spine Breakers have done more in the past six months than the Hellsouls have done in six years. Their current goal is to dethrone the Hellsouls, and they've been picking up the most violent and aggressive help they can find, as well as any magical help they can lay hands on. Their leader, a young human named Beton, is reportedly an adept and new to Québec; his unquestioned leadership is taking the gang up the ranks fast.

• I've heard some say he was raised in a Seattle church and that a demon taught him how to fight. Please.
• Jean D'Armes

The Spine Breakers are headquartered in a large factory in the small, quiet industrial town of Laurier Station between Québec City and Montréal. Their logo consists of a sledgehammer halfway through a spine and ribcage, set inside a circle of stones.

• I hear the Cutters have made contact with the Spine Breakers. I guess they like their style, and are hoping to draw them in and use them to help rebuild their continental strength.
• Roadkill

THE DEVIL RIDERS

Their emblem being a simple spiked wheel in flames, the Devil Riders are the most stable of the biker gangs. Now totaling more than a hundred members, they control most of the western towns and cities of Québec with a steady hand and little fanfare. The Riders have been linked to a smuggling pipeline that reaches all the way to Toronto in the UCAS; most smuggling and traffic going in or out of Québec passes through them first. If not, it tends to never pass through again.

If the Devil Riders have a current leader, he's keeping a low profile. They have no known headquarters.



• The Devil Riders also recruit heavily in the shadows. So far they're the only ones who truly appreciate the deniability and reliability only shadowrunners bring.
• Sixth Gear

• Be careful what you get into. My sources say a Seoulpa Ring bought out the Devil Rider leadership and is slowly replacing the gang from the inside. They're only keeping up the charade to keep everyone in the dark.
• Tripletip Sil

• Not to mention the gang's elves. At least one elf in every ten is a plant by the Ancients, and everyone knows the Ancients work for the Tir. All those long ears are just big tall antennas radioing everything they hear back to the Tir Princes.
• L'Aspirateur Conspirateur

LE BOUCLIER DES LAURENTIDES

Once known as the Canadian Shield, the Bouclier des Laurentides are an ancient set of rolling hills—a large area of tundra, forests, lakes and rivers. This is the source of Québec's main industrial strength—hydroelectricity.

POWER IN THE WILD

With the exception of a few larger towns, the Gendarmerie treats the Bouclier like hostile territory. This makes the region popular for smuggler traffic. Since it sees little to no patrol, stealth can be toned down in favor of speed as many T-bird couriers make their way from Montréal to La Baie, the main center of population in northern Québec near the Hudson Bay. Talisleggers also thrive up there, with an abundance of material to collect. If you don't mind the cold, La Baie is a great place to meet people.

• The Bouclier is also the perfect place for corps to set up secret compounds or R&D centers, though the cost would be prohibitive.
• Jean D'Armes

The real power (pun intended) in the Bouclier lies in La Grande/Manic Hydroelectric Cascade. This series of large dams provides the majority of Québec's power, generating huge amounts of electricity down to Québec City and along the Fleuve Saint-Laurent, which runs through the civilized centers of the Republic. Maintained by the Republic-owned Hydro-Québec corp, the dams have been turned into well-defended security outposts in reaction to paranormal animal incidents as well as increased attacks by unidentified groups. There are now twelve major hydroelectric installations; the power lines linking

REPUBLIC OF QUÉBEC
MINISTRY OF WILDLIFE
PARANIMAL BOUNTY LISTING

Last Updated: August 2062

Remember! In order to collect your bounty, 90 percent of the pelt (including the head) must be brought to a Ministry of Wildlife Processing Facility near you!

Class E Paranimals (devil rat, SURGEd vorpal beaver, etc.): 50¥ per pelt
Class D Paranimals (barghest, cockatrice, demon rat, ghoul, sasquatch, etc.): 500¥ per pelt
Class C Paranimals (basilisk, eyekiller, griffin, harpy, etc.): 2,000¥ per pelt
Class B Paranimals (banshee, wendigo, vampire, etc.): 10,000¥ per pelt
Class A Paranimals (horned bear, night manta, piasma, shambler, etc.): 20,000¥ per pelt
Class S Paranimals (free spirits): 50,000¥ per pelt
Class X Paranimals (wyverns, kraken, etc.): 100,000¥ per pelt
Note: Dragons are no longer part of the Harmful Paranimals Act—update your registries!

them to civilization are also protected vehemously by the Gendarmerie's special forces.

• Hydro Québec also sells a lot of power to the UCAS—enough to give Québec a major bargaining chip.
• DeeCee Insider

• Though eco-activists get the blame, Shiawase is probably responsible for some of the attempts on the dams. Québec's power grid is coming closer and closer to the edge, and all it would take is one dam with problems to brownout entire sectors and cause enough public outrage for new power plants to be built—and that's where Shiawase the power corp steps in.
• Spotlight Sally

BOUNTY HUNTING

It is still perfectly legal in Québec to hunt down nearly anything that is paranormal; there are even bounties offered to those who bring back proof of kills. The administration still treats paranormal life as threats rather than fauna. As the Minister of Wildlife, Jennifer Kitzman puts it, "There's no telling what impact Awakened creatures can have on the ecosystem—we have to keep our wildlife safe."

• This is why Québec City is the only city in the world that claims to be completely rid of devil rats; the initial rush of bounty hunting was so great that within the capital's limits the species is extinct.
• Coureur Dubois

• So they claim. Rat says something different.
• Skaven

• The Démocrates Mondains were quick to clarify that metahuman changelings were not considered "fair game" under the Harmful Paranimals Act, though other SURGEd creatures weren't so lucky. At the same time, someone managed to slip in an amendment that dragons were no longer to be hunted as well. I wonder who arranged for that?
• Snippet

Due to the bounty hunting, many paranimals have retreated from the civilized areas of Québec to the uninhabited parts of the Bouclier. Naturally, the bounty hunters followed, and now many fringe towns and abandoned outposts have been revitalized into resorts, catering to the clique of bounty hunters who are attracted by the money and thrills offered.

• Alongside eco-cells, some of the Manitou and other residents of neighboring NAN lands are taking steps to stop this travesty. Packs of hunt saboteurs will follow bounty hunters in the wild and intentionally interfere with the hunt. Some of the more extreme animal libbers go so far as to ambush the hunters.
• Cree Dog

• The Amerindian tribes are mainly pissed about it because some hunters are killing critters on NAN land and then smuggling them back in for the prize. Less competition that way.
• Two-Fists

• Old news. SURGE has brought in so many new funky critters (and brought back so many old ones) that there won't be a shortage of bounties for a good long while.
• Coureur Dubois

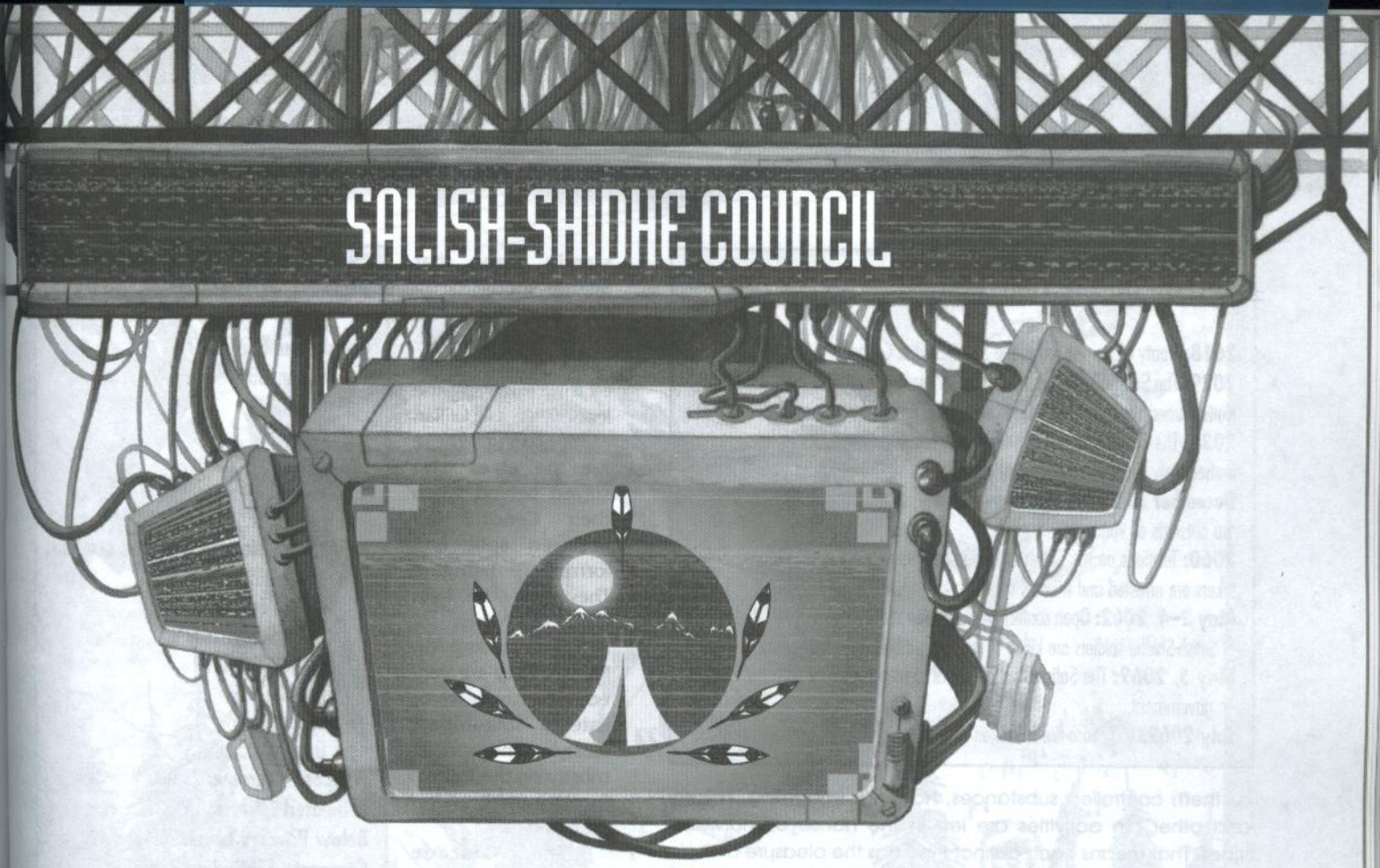
• Besides, you can always do what a buddy of mine did—steal the pelts back from the Ministry of Wildlife's warehouse facility, remove the processing marks and sell 'em back again. You just have to hurry before they start to rot.
• Kzeentch

• Charming. Almost as cute as the hunting parties some Humanis types are setting up to see how hard it is to bring down a troll.
• Jon Who?

Rumors persist that more and more hunters are simply disappearing and not coming back. Some tales claim that the sentient creatures—free spirits, shapeshifters, sasquatch— are fighting back, attacking resorts and hunter camps. The resorts and towns have hired additional security and are on the constant lookout for ferals since the Gendarmerie considers this hostile uninhabited territory and won't go anywhere near it.

• Wait a second. Free spirits? How do you get a pelt, much less confirm a kill, on a free spirit?
• Prickly Pear

SALISH-SHIDHE COUNCIL



Next up, we have the lovely Salish-Shidhe, our close neighbor just over the Seattle border. Though their economy continues to be prosperous, there's always something afoot in the Salish to make the natives restless. They are currently embroiled in a nasty fight over resources and national pride with Tsimshian. This simmering border conflict threatens to blow up into a major war, potentially affecting nearby lands such as our hometown. I've recruited a few runners from inside the Salish to give us the latest paydata. Changes occur on a daily basis, though, so keep an eye on the news.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 17:15:47 (PST)

by Old Brave

The first thing you need to understand about the Salish is that we are the most tribally oriented nation of the NAN states. Tribal affiliation is important not only culturally, but in terms of power. Though each tribe sends a representative to the Salish-Shidhe Council (SSC) and contributes to state resources, military efforts and so forth, the tribes are very autonomous and self-governing. Though the tribes trade and communicate, they maintain their own laws, traditions and ways of life, and try to avoid interfering with each other.

• What this means is that a lot of the real estate in the Salish interior is officially under the jurisdiction of a specific tribe. Naturally, the bigger tribes own the major cities and other large chunks of the country, while the smaller tribes have carved out small enclaves for themselves here and there.

• Findler-Man

• Pay attention, chummers. This means there are two sets of laws you need to watch for. The Council only has a few nation-wide civil laws for big no-nos like murder and the typical weapon, cyberware and travel restrictions that shadowrunners often get nailed for. The Salish Border Patrol and Rangers enforce these laws, and they're strict. But other matters, such

SALISH-SHIDHE TIMELINE

2018: Treaty of Denver forms the Salish-Shidhe Council.
2029: The Salish-Shidhe Council opens its borders to all metahumans (not just Native Americans). The Sinsearach elf tribe is founded in the south.
2035: The Cénesté branch of the Sinsearach elves establishes Tir Tairngire and immediately secedes from the NAN.
December 3, 2059: An earthquake levels the area known as Richmond on the outskirts of Vancouver.
2060: Tensions on the Salish-Tsimshian borders escalate when a dozen Salish hikers are arrested and tried as spies.
May 2–4, 2062: Open conflict breaks out on the Tsimshian border. Thousands of Salish-Shidhe soldiers are killed by what some believe to biowarfare agents.
May 5, 2062: The Salish-Shidhe Council signs a cease-fire with the Tsimshian government.
July 2062: The cease-fire is broken by a series of attacks by Salish militias.

as theft, controlled substances, hacking, smuggling, bribery and other fun activities are left in the hands of individual tribes. That means each distinct tribe has the pleasure of making laws and enforcing them as they see fit. No corporate rent-a-cops are used.

The larger tribes take this responsibility quite seriously. The Makah and Salish, for example, have their own tribal police forces and will arrest you, try you, and throw you in jail for the standard offenses. The smaller tribes tend to have laws that relate more to their tribal traditions. The Nootka, for example, couldn't care what sorts of spirits you summon or spells you sling, but if you drive an oil-leaking, air-polluting gas-guzzler through their land, you're in trouble. Punishments also vary according to tribal custom, from simple banishment to indentured servitude.

• Legal Beagle

For those of who aren't familiar with the Salish tribes, here are capsule summaries of the major ones you need to know about.

The **Salish,** led by Chief Harold Gray Bear, is the dominant and most prosperous tribe. A technologically gifted tribe, they control Gaeatronics and provide the fusion, solar, wind and geothermal power for the Salish-Shidhe, Tir Tairngire, California and Seattle. This economic clout keeps them on top of the nation. Their tribal territory includes most of the land west and south of Puget Sound.

The **Makah** tribe, led by Chief George Lodgepole, control most of the country's military bases and assets. Their territory is the northwest Olympic peninsula, where they profit from a state-of-the-art eco-friendly (or so they say) timber business.

Chief Frederick Eye-Like-Eagle heads the **Cascade Crow,** who control most of the land between Seattle and the Cascades as well as the major port of Vancouver. They are infamous for their strong anti-Anglo sentiments, and they constantly argue that Seattle should be in their hands.

The **Sinsearach** are a predominately elf tribe following the leadership of Gillian Morningsong. These are the elves who stayed behind when their Cénesté elf brethren split and formed Tir Tairngire. They hold the land just southwest of Seattle, including Mt. Rainier. They are very eco-conscious, advocate a low-impact lifestyle, and survive mostly on the tourist, forestry and craftsman trades.

The **Cascade Ork** tribe, led by a troll named Pawl Shaggy Mountain, are a mostly ork and troll tribe with holdings in the Cascade Mountains. It's an open secret that the Cascade Orks profit heavily from the smuggling trade that passes through their lands.

There are many other tribes in the Salish-Shidhe, including the Nootka, the Musqueam and the Squamish. Several tribes of "pinkskins" (non-Amerinds who have adopted a tribal lifestyle) also have land, such as the Tsawassen band.

• The latest proto-tribe to seek recognition is a group of changelings called the Metamorphics. They've drawn in a lot of people transformed by SURGE and driven out of the sprawl by prejudice.

• Evolver

SALISH-SHIDHE AT A GLANCE

Population: 8,590,000
- Human: 63%
- Elf: 11%
- Dwarf: 9%
- Ork: 12%
- Troll: 3%
- Other: 2%

Tribal Affiliation: 86% of total population
- Salish: 25%
- Makah: 16%
- Cascade Crow: 14%
- Cascade Ork: 11%
- Nootka: 10%
- Sinsearach: 6%
- Other Tribes: 18%

Per Capita Income: 26,000 ¥
Estimated SINless: 15%
Below Poverty Level: 20%
Corporate Affiliation: 23%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 7%
- High School Equivalency: 57%
- College Degrees: 28%
- Advanced Degrees: 8%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 82%
- Salish Dialects: 16%

Currency: Nuyen
DocWagon Coverage: 50%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 15 Minutes

TIME AND TIME AGAIN

Things happen slowly in the SSC. As far as many tribesfolk are concerned, if it doesn't directly impact their lives then it is best ignored. This attitude has been slow in changing, but changing it is, especially given recent events that have forced our people to change and adapt.


PRESCOTT
SR
14
ROTT FACE

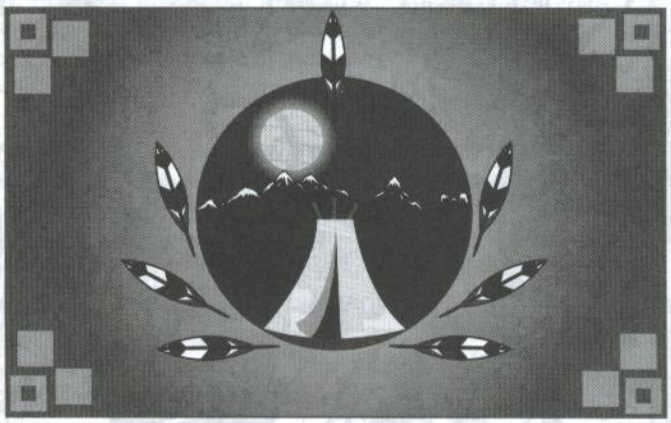
TURBULENT BEGINNINGS

Though the Salish nation went through the same troubled beginning as other NAN countries, it handled some of the difficulties with more tolerance. A much larger percentage of former Americans and Canadians were integrated into Salish society by simply assigning them tribal affiliation. Some Anglos took advantage of this to establish their own pinkskin tribes, making lifestyle concessions in exchange for stability.

The Salish opened its doors even further by opening its borders to all metahumans in 2029, in response to the racial intolerance metahumans suffered elsewhere. The country became known as the Salish-Shidhe, and the Sinsearach and Cascade Ork were the first metahuman tribes to be established, though others quickly followed. This policy backfired when the majority of the Sinsearach tribe broke away in 2035, establishing the elven nation of Tir Tairngire.

RECENT EVENTS

Thanks to the low presence of megacorps in the SSC, the country experienced only minor spillover from the recent Corp War (though almost all of the megacorp facilities suffered runs of some sort). Most of the activity centered on Universal Omnitech, given its tug-of-war position between Aztechnology and the Pacific Prosperity Group.



The Renraku Arcology situation was a much different matter, as the sudden arrival of several thousand UCAS troops in Seattle put the SSC on a state of alert. It quickly became apparent that the UCAS troops had their hands full simply guarding a single building, and in the end relations between the two countries experienced a marked improvement. Combined with joint economic action against the Tir for their unfair trade practices, many on the Council are starting to advocate a more open and free relationship with their western neighbor.

• There's been a lot of talk in the political shadows for some sort of military deal with the UCAS. The UCAS will provide military aide to the Council and in exchange the Salish will overlook all of the pollution and toxic nastiness that the Seattle sprawl spews onto their lands every day. Stay tuned.
• KSAF_Online

• You have to be kidding. The UCAS can't keep the bugs out of Chicago, their president from being assassinated or riots from breaking out on a yearly basis. Do you really think they'll help us keep the rabid dogs of Tsimshian out of our land? That sort of help we can do without.
• Jasper Red Ribbon

The recent tumult following Halley's Comet also affected the Salish-Shidhe, as dozens of new power sites were identified across the land (and some old ones disappeared). The Sinsearach and Nootka tribes have claimed some of these sites, but others have become sources of intertribal conflict, such as the Whidbey Island formation claimed by a pinkskin tribe, but contested by the Makah.

The Salish-Shidhe seemed to experience a smaller percentage of changeling SURGE transformations than other countries, and suffered none of the panic riots that followed.

THE TSIMSHIAN BORDER WAR

by Spark

Perhaps we were too cocky with the success of the Ghost Dance and the spirit of peace that united the northwest tribes in the Council. We should have been wary when our "brothers" in Tsimshian pulled out of the STC in 2037. We should have been on our guard when they became irrational over our calm requests to keep their environmental devastation from infringing upon our land. Now we have paid for our folly, as thousands have already died in the conflict, victims of Tsimshian treachery, the largest crisis to threaten the country since the Cénesté seceded.

THE BUILD UP

The exact origins of the conflict are unclear, hidden behind megapulses of nationalistic rhetoric from government mouthpieces on both sides. Both countries have always disagreed over small border issues, pollution and environmental policies. A Tsimshian military buildup along the border aggravated the situation and was followed by a lengthy stretch of Ranger "field exercises" on our side of the line. "Border incidents" became common, as soldiers on either side couldn't resist tempting or testing their opponents. The arrests of Salish hikers in disputed border areas for "espionage" in 2060 fueled the fire, and tension remained high throughout the many disturbances brought by Halley's Comet.

• There was more to it than that. From February to April of this year, there was a flurry of high-level communication between the Tsimshian and Salish-Shidhe, including a lot of threats and posturing. In the middle of April, a warehouse for Pentacle Distributing and a field office for Soonan Simsense (both Mitsuhama subsidiaries) went up in smoke, and several dozen Mitsuhama citizens in the country were arrested off the street, interrogated and then deported.
• Chrome Coyote



• My sources tell me that the dispute centers on a newly emerged manaline and a few connected power sites on the Salish side of the border. Tsimshian wants them bad for some reason, and eventually decided to try and take them by force.

• Night Owl

• That's weak, but close. There's a manaline involved, but it's pumping toxic mana straight from a despoiled toxic zone on the Tsimshian side into the Salish. The SSC wants to cut off the nastiness at the source.

• Kzeentch

• Manalines don't have anything to do with it. This is all about high-level economics and old grudges. The Tsimshian need a war to bolster their economy and distract their dissidents. The SSC wants to reclaim the land for the NAN, before the Tsimshian have raped it all.

• Haida Hunter

CLASHES AND WAR CRIMES

In May of this year, all hell suddenly broke loose, though no one has yet offered an adequate explanation as to why. There were no formal declarations of war and neither side can conclusively prove who fired the first shot, but few have any doubt that the Tsimshian dogs attacked first.

• This is a pre-emptive strike. You can fan the flames of war (or peace) in the appropriate SIGs. You will get no further warnings. That counts for recruiting as well—the merc hiring halls can be found in their usual spots.

• Captain Chaos

"I am everywhere!"

[15.65 Mp Deleted]

The Tsimshian forces quickly overran our sparsely defended northern outposts and struck deep into the SSC, down into the area of Okanagan Lake and the city of Kelowna. Our forces struck back, and we had the craven Tsimshian dogs on the run after the Battle of Revelstoke. By May 4th we had pushed

them back over the border and were pressing on into Tsimshian itself. In our hour of triumph, though, our troops were cut down and massacred by some form of biological agent. Over a thousand troops and Salish civilians died before medical care could be applied, and hundreds more died in the intervening weeks from mysterious ailments.

• Okay, the Salish propaganda machine has been pushing this biological warfare angle like crazy, but they've offered very little evidence or details. Anyone got the scan?
• Argent

• I saw some of the aftermath. I'm not sure what it was, but there was a lot of dead Salish, that's for sure. It certainly had all of the earmarks of some sort of bioweapon—mass indiscriminate carnage, no immediate signs of injury. I suppose it could have been strong magic of some kind. I've heard that shamans are steering clear of the battlezone, and that no one's been able to summon spirits there.
• Wenatchee Warrior

• The Kootenai tribe was especially hard hit; two-thirds of the dead were from their tribe.
• Magnificent Edward

• The SSC has clamped down on the details on the wounded, but I know some of the victims survived the attack, only to slowly go crazy and die later after suffering a lack of REM sleep.
• Tasp

• Sleep is what you need, pal. I've heard a zillion different rumors and unsubstantiated injury accounts—clearly someone has engaged in a massive misinformation campaign. Whoever did this is covering their tracks. What makes me suspicious is that the SSC is interfering with observers from independent and foreign organizations, from the CDC to the STC to NATO. If they're really the victims, what are they hiding?
• Libby

• I've heard that some Tsimshian soldiers were caught up in this alleged biowar attack as well. It could be that the SSC was planning on unleashing something, and it went horribly wrong. Only the Tsimshian have denied that their casualties were related in any way, and have also blocked outside observers. (Some of those observers want in real bad, by the way—bad enough to hire shadowrunners ...)
• Haida Hunter

• It's also possible that a third party is involved. What better way to field test a research project?
• Conspir-i-See

THE SITUATION NOW

Outraged and needing to regroup, our leaders agreed to a cease-fire immediately following this incident. Both sides used the opportunity to dig in and build up their forces. The uneasy truce lasted less than two months before the Tsimshian attacked again. Though neither side has engaged in a massive mobilization, raids, missile strikes, spirit strikes and strategic bombings are becoming a daily routine. It's only a matter of time before the Council decides that the Tsimshian bastards won't back down and need to be put down.

• Oh, there will be an end all right. The Tsimshian lackeys and their corporate masters will taste our fury soon enough. And when we attack, we will not stop until their country is reduced to ashes.
• Pride

• I don't want Cap to stick me in Shadowcell so I won't advertise, but I will point out that there's a slew of hiring calls going up on the merc boards. Both sides are already feeling the sting of this war and are hiring "advisors" to fill gaps left by the latest round of fighting. There's a lot of mountains and forest to cover, so both sides are interested in people with unconventional warfare experience.
• Moneysign

Within the SSC, there is a lot of frustration building among the tribes. Where is the vaunted Sovereign Tribal Council? Where were our supposed allies when the Tsimshian invaded our lands, killed our people, destroyed our towns? Why have the other NAN nations not joined us to drive the aggressors back north? Though the Tsimshian is not a NAN nation, the STC has proven recalcitrant to support even a resolution of condemnation. In the meantime, the Salish fights alone. Many, especially the tribes in the northwest who have faced the brunt of the attacks, are calling for a secession from the NAN if no aide is forthcoming. After all, if the STC cannot aid the Salish now, when *can* they be relied on?

• I wouldn't count on the STC doing anything constructive. They seem willing to let things "work themselves out."
• Mk I Eyeball

"Seeing is believing."

• The fireworks at the next STC summit should be impressive. Salish Councilor Lona Xáwulets is making a lot of vague threats about what will happen if the STC doesn't stand behind the Salish-Shidhe Council. A lot of pro-war groups are also planning demonstrations and actions.
• N30ist

• News flash! SSC paratroopers just landed in the town of Williams Lake, engaging Tsimshian troops in heavy house-to-house fighting. This may be the first sign of a new Salish offensive!
• Warhawk

THE SALISH MILITARY

Traditionally, the Salish Rangers served as a militarized police force, handling both civil police duties and military affairs (the separate Border and Coast Patrols handle regular border crossings, customs and patrols). In response to the military needs of the Tsimshian border conflict, the SSC recently created the Self-Defense Force (SDF) to specifically tackle military operations. SDF personnel were drawn from the Rangers, including any with previous experience.

• Behind the scenes, the creation of the SDF was a specific ploy by the Makah and Kootenai tribes, to put themselves in charge of the war. Traditionally, the Ranger leadership has been almost exclusively of the Salish tribe, despite the Makah composing a large percentage of the Rangers and holding jurisdiction over most military bases. The Makah were eager to get in the saddle, and the Kootenai simply wanted revenge.
• Jasper Red Ribbon

• The SDF is also an attempt to centralize military operations even more. At the start of the border war, many Ranger units were directly tied to specific geographic regions and tribes, and able to be called back into "regional militia" service in an emergency. Many of the northern tribes such as the Nootka withdrew their units to conduct their own private war with the Tsimshian. The SDF is attempting to unify the regional branches into a single arm under their direct control. This has had mixed success, since many of the tribes are loathe to give up their control.
• Vic

• There's talk of instituting a draft if the conflict becomes a full-blown war, though a lot of the tribes are already rebuking such an idea.
• Magnificent Edward

• It's not a well-known fact, but many Rangers are members of exclusive warrior lodges that provide additional training and support for members. In some respects these lodges are similar to the Aztlan practice of initiating military personnel into warrior orders.
• Chrome Coyote

CORPORATE DOGPILE

by Murray

Back on the home front, the machinations of daily corporate struggle go on. The SSC has traditionally kept a very firm stance towards allowing extraterritorial megacorps in. The problem isn't the government itself, it's finding a tribe that's willing to surrender some of its land. Even if they're willing to accept the nuyen, most of the tribes enforce strict environmental and safety standards and practices that most megacorps simply aren't willing to abide by. As a result, only a few of the Big Ten megacorps have a presence in the SSC—Aztechnology, Saeder-Krupp and Wuxing—and in most cases they operate through subsidiaries.

• Aztechnology's Olympia offices have been pared down to bare bones. They've got pressing concerns in other places, I hear. That doesn't mean there isn't any paydata left in those offices, it just means it isn't guarded as well.
• Pyramid Watcher

• A few of the AA-megacorps have also set up shop. Proteus has an aquacology just off the Pacific coast, and a bunch of the PPG corps have gotten a good word from Universal Omnitech to help get them situated.
• Snow Tiger

With most of the bullies not on the playground, the SSC has become ripe ground for homegrown megacorps. Some of them you've heard of, such as Gaeatronics and Universal Omnitech. But there are a few new ones to watch out for: Kyusei Medical, Pacific Cybernetics Inc. and Eibisu Biomechanics.

All of these local corps have been responsible for boosting the economy and greatly increasing the standards of living throughout the nation. Most of the recent economic development has been in the west and south of the nation, however, largely leaving the eastern tribes out of the economic boom.

• The Council is disgracefully giving these corps a free hand to rape the land that rightfully belongs to my people. The tribal government makes the exact same foolish decisions the old US government did. I can't believe those blind old fools believe we will allow anyone, even those claiming to be our brothers, to despoil our land and heritage. We will fight if necessary.
• Jasper Red Ribbon

• Jasper doesn't speak for the majority of the tribes in the east. They have gotten the short end of the economic stick in recent years, and many are demanding the Council do something about the imbalance.
• Eagle Eye

• They may be too late. The entire area has seen a massive drain of young people heading west and south in search of better jobs. What used to be the traditionalist heart of the country is now quickly losing an entire generation to high paying jobs in Boise, Spokane and Vancouver.
• Lollypop Bandit

EIBISU BIOMECHANICS

CEO: Petra Wapato
Headquarters: Boise

Eibisu makes a killing specializing in custom cybernetics and bioware (blame these guys for developing the digitigrade



cyberlegs a decade or so back). They are cutting edge in the science of crystal growth and organic polymer research, and have rented a lot of space and time on the Spindle orbital habitat for zero-grav R&D. Eibisu biosculptors regularly get front-page coverage on the biotech journals. Naturally, they might as well be painting a target on their offices for shadowrunners. Several out-of-country megacorps are trying to snap them up before they get any bigger, but Eibisu is responding with a flurry of their own runs to keep ahead of the game.

- Some of the projects they are supposedly preparing to market include a new type of wired reflexes, orbital-grown crystal sheathes for cyberlimbs and tailored hormone treatments. Hot stuff.
- The Smiling Bandit
  "Striking Again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

GAEATRONICS
CEO: David Gray Bear
Headquarters: Olympia

The power behind the Salish, Gaeatronics has a stranglehold on all energy production in the SSC and even serious pull on Seattle. They primarily specialize in fusion power and eco-friendly energy sources (geothermal taps, windmills, solar collector arrays, etc.), with power plants and facilities all over the SSC. They also pursue heavily funded research into advanced construction processes, alternative power sources (notably microwave power), geology and meteorology—all of which produces high-value data sold at top-rate prices. They maintain four expansive research parks in Missoula, Moscow, Vancouver and Spokane.

- Gaeatronics also runs the Vancouver and Boise LTGs through their Omni Electronics subsidiary. Omni is heavy into artificial intelligence research, so you can expect the knowbots they use as system administrators on their LTG to be smarter then average.
- Google

KYUUSEI MEDICAL
CEO: Aruji Densetsu
Headquarters: Spokane

Kyuusei is a world leader in pharmaceutical manufacturing. They have developed several important cures and tailored retroviruses to fight emerging Awakened diseases. They are infamous for their occasional flagrant disregard for environmental and safety regulations, and their facilities have been condemned by the CDC as some of the most dangerous on the continent to work in.

- Kyuusei is a young corporation and led by some real corporate raiders. The CEO is even rumored to be a shark shaman, and I wouldn't doubt it. This company is utterly ruthless, and will employ the most low-down strategies to complete their business plans. If you think you've seen dirty fight-

ing from the megacorps, wait until you see what the real scrappers of the corporate pool are willing to do.
• Bull

"The best ork decker you've never met!"

• More than a few Kyuusei products have trickled down the smuggler grapevine onto the black market. It must be part of the contract they've signed with the Red Lotus.
• Chrome Coyote

• The corp is keenly interested in getting live otaku "specimens" for research. They'll pay big bucks, so leave your morals at the door and start hunting.
• Imbris

PACIFIC CYBERNETICS INCORPORATED
CEO: Herbert Lali
Headquarters: Vancouver
Tribal Jurisdiction: Cascade Crow

PacCyber carved out a name for itself by selling cheap cybernetics overseas—notably knockoffs of name brand models (and the occasional bootleg model on the side). Unlike other imitation bands, their copycat designs are often superior to the original (probably because they often are working from the original design specs themselves—"borrowed," of course). They recently secured an exclusive contract with the SDF for military cyberware, notably smartlinks and tactical computers.

• That military contract makes PCI a prime target for Tsimshian and MCT-sponsored espionage runs. It has also made them a potential item on Damien Knight's lunch menu.
• Night Owl

UNIVERSAL OMNITECH
CEO: Hamilton Grimes
Headquarters: Vancouver
Tribal Jurisdiction: Salish

If it has to do with biotech—gene splicing, synthetic flesh, biocomputers, agricultural chimera, you name it—Universal Omnitech (UO) is playing god with it somewhere. The corp has outpaced Gaeatronics, becoming the biggest corporation in the SSC.

• The problem-plagued UO gengineering facility outside of Spokane has recently doubled its research staff. Whatever they're working on must be pretty big.
• Magnificent Edward

• A buddy at Thundercloud SAFB (the old Fairchild AFB) said that the UO research bubba's have been testing those "bloat" jellyfish again.
• Hostmask

• Bloats? Is that some new Awakened critter?
• Lollypop Bandit

• Bloats are large, gengineered critters somewhat resembling flying jellyfish. They were supposed to revolutionize heavy lift transport by being far cheaper to maintain then conventional heavy-lift helicopters and LTA craft. The project faded into obscurity after 2055—seems they had some real problems with them just as they were supposed to be unveiled. They suffered from rapid cellular aging and became useless after only a few months.
• The Smiling Bandit

"Striking Again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

• UO is actually working on a whole series of "war-forms"—genetically engineered critters loaded with bioware control components and a bad attitude. Expect to see them in next year's Desert Wars along with all the other neat corporate toys.
• Kzeentch

Though part of the Pacific Prosperity Group, portions of UO are also owned by elements within Aztechnology. The two corporations have traditionally had a close relationship. This has placed the corp in an unenviable position between two rivals, and the subsequent maneuvering is starting to curtail UO profits.

• UO's subsidiary DeBeers-Omnitech scored big during the initial Orichalcum Rush, raking in loads of nuyen thanks to a partnership with Wuxing. But DeBeers-Omnitech overextended itself trying to gobble up all of the orichalcum deposits it could find, then was left in a lurch when all of the deposits rapidly dried up. They're now in a shaky financial situation and undergoing rapid downsizing—which also hurts UO. Even a few smaller corporations have begun to make moves on DeBeers while it is comparatively weak.
• Snow Tiger

• UO has been working long and hard to work out some of the "kinks" with the Leonization process. Combined with surging demand for bioware from every market segment (chrome is so 2050s you know), UO may rebound pretty quickly.
• The Chromed Accountant

"It's all about dollars and sense."

A SMUGGLER'S GUIDE TO THE SALISH

by Tak777

When it comes to making a living in the Salish, smuggling is the way to go. You get to be your own boss, make your own hours and travel a lot—not to mention the sheer terror and thrills when you nearly get caught or the satisfaction of a profitable deal. The SSC links together a few key smuggler routes, such as Seattle to Vladivostok, but it's also the gateway for many black markets in the NAN—and onward to Denver, the UCAS, CAS and elsewhere.

GETTING IN AND OUT

Crossing the SSC border without permission is like crossing a sprawl without GridGuide—you never know if it'll be stop or go. The borders with the Sioux, AMC and Ute are technically "open," meaning incoming traffic gets a routine inspection. If you have the proper ID and licenses, you can enter without any special visas or passports. Checkpoints and patrols are few and far between, though, so take to the countryside for smooth sailing.

The Seattle, Tir and Tsimshian borders are far more restrictive. Outgoing traffic will only get a cursory visual scan and license check. Incoming traffic from the Tir and Seattle is always inspected, and one out of four vehicles can expect to be pulled over for a comprehensive examination by chem sniffers and on-duty shamans.

The northern borders are on an active state of alert. All traffic from Tsimshian and the Athabaskan Council is heavily restricted and controlled by the Border Patrol, with Ranger or SDF backup. There are a lot of military units prowling around up there these days, with a shoot first and burn the bodies later policy in effect for any traffic not moving over carefully monitored flight paths and roads.

• This border dispute has seriously jacked with the Seattle-Russia import/export business. Prices for some suddenly hard-to-get goods are shooting through the roof. The impact is being felt from Seattle to St. Louis, and all the way back down the line to Asia. of course, this just means extra profits for the smugglers willing to run the increased risks.
• Ridge Runner

VANCOUVER: GATEWAY TO THE SALISH

Ah, the peculiar smell of burnt hydrocarbons and smog that makes each city feel homey. Remove the Renraku Arcology and Space Needle and tone down the acid rain and anyone familiar with Seattle will be right at home in Vancouver. Sure, it's not the runner capital of North America, but business is pretty good these days. It's also the cultural center of the SSC and the biggest economic hub in the country aside from Boise.

• Thanks to the low megacorp presence, most of the runs in this town are smaller, more vicious jobs between micro corps. The stakes are high, as one or two successful shadowruns can mean life or death in this extremely competitive market.
• Jurian

As a major trade port and a stopover point on the prime smugger route between Seattle and Vladivostok, Vancouver has naturally attracted all sorts of organized crime syndicates hoping to take advantage of the import/export traffic. Since neither the Mafia nor Yaks ever sunk roots in here, the black market has remained in the hands of gangs, independent smuggler rings and the Triads.

• Earlier this year, a jammer named Loop organized a Smuggler's Guild, sort of a union of indie small-timers to share contacts and resources and protect each other from the syndicates. The project was going great until it was revealed that Loop was a ringer for the Vory v Zakone, who were using the smugglers to establish their own base within Vancouver.
• Negative Burn

• Buildrek. Loop's non-partisan. The Red Lotus smeared his rep because they didn't like the idea of organized opposition.
• Iki-no-same

Richmond Rubble

Vancouver has its own unique charm, as the city is carefully designed and sculpted to integrate urban structures with nature. Massive parks, fountains, trees and greenery abound. The city suffers from one massive eyesore, though: the rubble of Richmond.

In December of 2059, a sudden earthquake shook the city, completely leveling the suburb of Richmond and creating a blaze that took days to put out. Thousands died in the holocaust, many of which are still buried in the charred wreckage. The Cascade Crow haven't gotten together the funds to level the area and rebuild yet (especially now that a war is on), so they simply cleaned out the areas they could. They conducted a massive ceremony to honor the dead, but the area has been left to the devil rats and the ghosts. And, of course, the smugglers who need a safe, private place to stash.

• Frag that. I wouldn't enter Richmond unless I absolutely had to. The place is infested with shedim—most with a seriously bad attitude after digging themselves out of the wreckage. They'd be spilling out into the city if a few gangs didn't make a regular sport of zombie hunting at night, splattering them by the score. Every so often, a ganger doesn't make it out, but his friends will see him walking again the next night.
• Lorain

The Red Lotus Triad

Not a lot of goods make their way through Vancouver without the Red Lotus getting something out of it. They operate a bunch of warehouses and docking services and are constantly trying to stay on top of supply and demand. They're also infamous for running protection rackets on small smuggler outfits, applying a "security tax" to all the product they move.

• Though they aren't a go-gang, Lotus members have a fondness for archaic motorcycles. No self-respecting Red Lotus member would be caught dead riding a bike built after 2010.
• Lambretta

The only trade the Lotus takes a direct hand in is drug smuggling. A lot of "old-fashioned" drugs like heroin, bliss, novacoke and marijuana aren't illegal under most SSC tribal laws, so the Lotus profit by moving it elsewhere. They don't seem to actually produce or manufacture any of it themselves, which suggests that they're fronting for someone else.

• You don't need to look any farther then Kyuusei Biomedical for their backers. Most of the drugs are manufactured at their facilities perfectly legally, but sold illegally outside the Salish.
• Vision

• Forget mundane drugs. The real buzz is the trade in various Awakened plants with narcotic properties. I hear the popular items among the go-gangs are Immortal Flower, Deepweed, and Rock Lizard Blood. These substances provide pain resistance and allow the gangers to perform death-defying feats. Some of the gangs have been staging "crash parties"—jumping off buildings, running blindfolded on the highway, riding their bikes through armored glass into yuppie cafes—and competing with as much style and finesse as possible. Some local trid pirates have caught a few on tape. Exciting stuff, if messy.
• Green Thumb

• Get real. You know how hard it is to get drugs like that? No way in hell could go-gangers afford that. Someone's flooded the streets with regular dope and a lot of hype.
• Google

THE CASCADES: SMUGGLER STOPOVER

The Cascade mountain range is a smuggler's highway, and the territory of the Cascade Ork tribe is the pit stop. The Cascade Orks support the smuggling routes with fuel depots, patrol schedules, IFF transponder frequencies, repair facilities and anything else required by the intrepid smuggler. In return, the Orks receive much needed cash that they use to support their anemic economy. The relationship is hardly parasitic—it's the Orks who hold most of the power in the relationship; simply withdrawing their support means that several of the major smuggling routes will become far too costly to be profitable.

Though the tribe's ties to smugglers and gangs is a public secret, the Cascade Orks have been careful to make the smuggling indispensable for other tribes, and even the SSC government as a whole. The Orks are happy to provide just enough discounted necessities, data and other kickbacks to keep the SSC from censuring the tribe. Everyone's happy, and the Orks mean to keep it that way.

• The border conflict has also drawn attention away from the smuggling, a trend the Cascade Orks quickly saw advantage in. The tribe is now passively interfering with the war effort, hoping to draw the conflict out as much as possible. The heightened tensions also mean higher profits for them, so they'd be glad to see the war drag out for years.
• Prime Runner

• That's a dangerous game for the Cascade Orks to play. If they interfere too directly, they'll come under suspicion for "un-Salish" behavior. That will be a major blow to their already-tenuous position in the long run.
• Vic

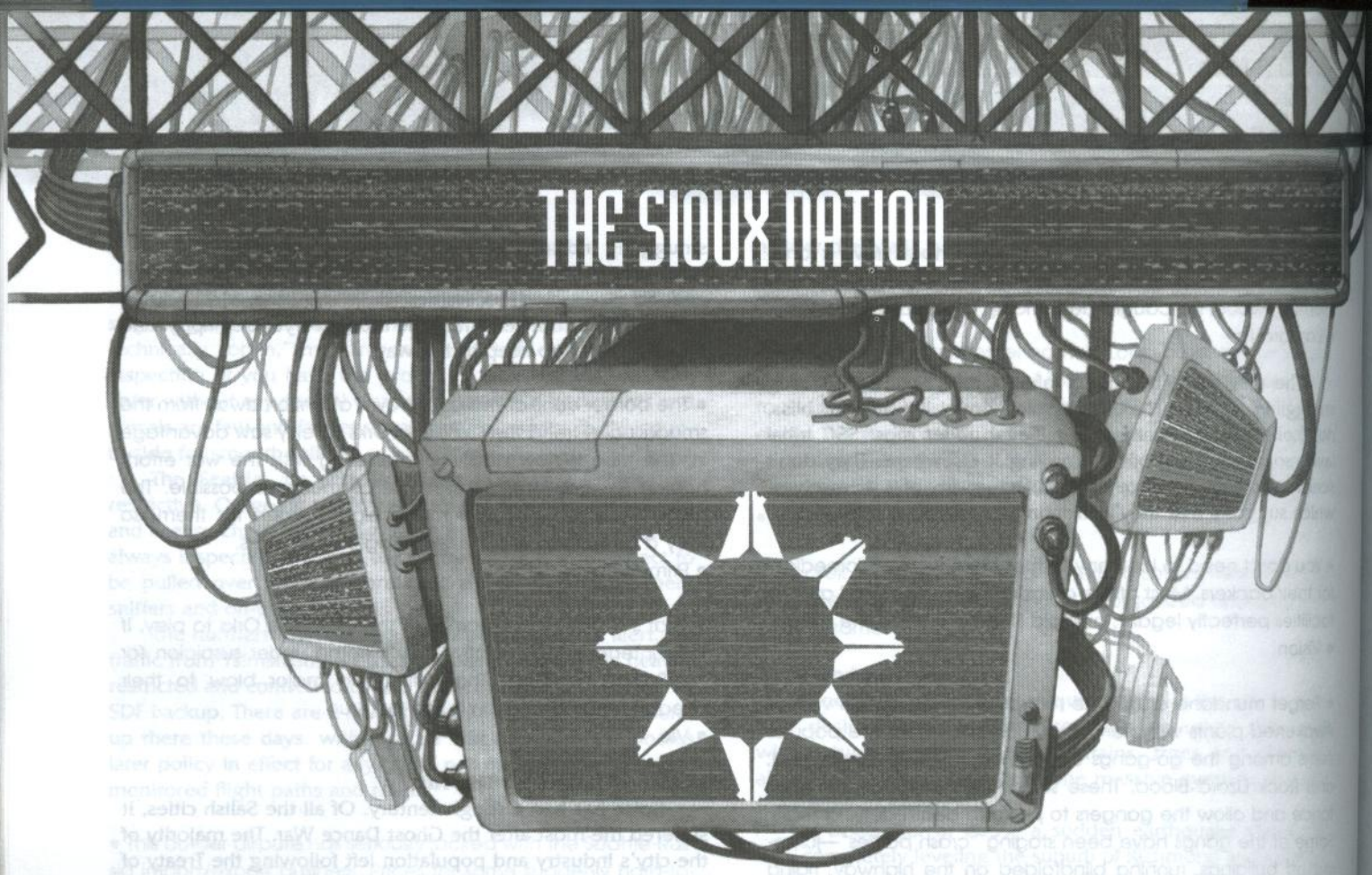
BOISE: GATEWAY TO THE TIR

Boise has had a rough century. Of all the Salish cities, it suffered the most after the Ghost Dance War. The majority of the city's industry and population left following the Treaty of Denver, leaving the city a virtual shell. It was further crippled by the secession of Tir Tairngire. Originally the Cénesté claimed the city, but after a short fight with Salish loyalists they were forced out. Today the southwest corner of the city is technically in Tir hands—but this is more a polite fiction used to justify a large tax and duty free merchant zone.

Over the years, Boise has developed into the prime smuggler route in and out of the Tir. The city's proximity to the Sioux and Ute are also important, as smugglers don't need to get far. The border checkpoints are less than stringent, and there are plenty of other ways to quickly sneak across within the city's boundaries. The Tir's recent policy changes have relaxed the border even further. More than a few Tir residents, unhappy with the current situation, have fled the country. Boise's ear population grows pointier on a daily basis.

• Boise really is becoming a smuggler hub. There's a lot of demand for runners in the Tir these days, and most teams get in through connections in Boise. Several black market "smuggling shops" have opened up in what used to be Cambridge, Council and New Meadows on the Tir side of the border to supply both runners and free traders.
• Magnificent Edward

THE SIOUX NATION



The Sioux Nation is full of surprises. A lot of runners write it off as a big, boring chunk of land that you try to get through as quickly as possible without being blown to smithereens by Sioux Wildcats. Try again. There's more to this land than smuggler routes and deadly commandos. I've asked a few Sioux natives to fill us in and here's what they had to say, biases included.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 17:25:08 (PST)

by Stanley Left Hand

The Sioux Nation takes pride in its heritage. Our land has historically been a land of great leaders and great struggles. It has also been a land of conflict between Native Americans and Anglo oppression. It is the land where Crazy Horse was killed escaping an Anglo prison and where Custer met his end at the Battle of Little Big Horn. It is the land where Sitting Bull was assassinated for starting the Great Ghost Dance and where US cavalry massacred 300 of my tribe at Wounded Knee before they could finish it. Our people fought for their sovereignty at Wounded Knee in the 1970s, with the Sovereign American Indian Movement against the resource-grabbing corporations, and with Howling Coyote in the Ghost Dance War that won our independence. Today the Sioux Nation, alone among the NAN states, stands vigilant against outside attempts to once again steal our land and destroy our heritage.

• Lefty ain't kidding. The Sioux is very concerned about foreign attempts to take back the gains they've made. They are particularly suspicious of the UCAS—no wonder, considering the anti-NAN agitators within the UCAS that rant about "taking America back." They've placed spies in all of the countries neighboring NAN states, and constantly conduct intel gathering, surveillance ops and even sabotage against potential threats.

• Two-Fists

• The Sioux Nation takes this role even further, acting as the self-designated "NAN cop," much like the US used to play "world cop." The Sioux are always sending in "observers" and

making offers to "help" whenever something serious goes down in another NAN country. For example, when the Salish-Shidhe got a little nervous about the UCAS dropped extra troops into Seattle to handle the arcology situation, Sioux advisors were on the Salish-Seattle border within the hour, taking notes and making tactical suggestions. Sioux military personnel have also been keeping an eye on the brewing AMC civil war, making sure the Manitou aren't acting on the behalf of outside interests. If their NAN brethren don't want the Sioux poking around, they simply send in undercover teams, or hire deniable shadowrunners.

• Steel Lynx

• What about Tsimshian? Sure, the Sioux Nation sticks its nose where it's not wanted, trying to play big brother. But where were the Sioux when Tsimshian invaded the Salish-Shidhe? Where are they when war threatens the Salish people?

• Jasper Red Ribbon

• Are you kidding? The Sioux knew about the Tsimshian attack before the Salish did. They've been paying very close attention, even sending in teams to acquire "samples" after that alleged biowarfare attack. Though they're keeping quiet about it, the Sioux Council is in full support of the SSC and has been funneling arms and resources on the sly for months now. When it comes to attacks on a NAN country, count on the Sioux to have that country's back.

• Milton Sharp Stone

INSIDE THE SIOUX

The Sioux people pay so much attention to the rest of the NAN that it is easy to miss what's happening within our own country. As fortune has it, we have not been stricken by disaster or sundered by civil war. On the surface, the Sioux Nation is coasting on a wave of quiet economic growth and consolidation. But things are never as good as they appear, neh?

THE TRIBES

The Sioux Nation counts more distinct tribal groupings in its population than any other NAN. Some feel that during the nation's foundation it was made into a dumping ground for tribes that were very small in numbers or displaced from their traditional homelands. The Tsalagi (or Cherokee, as Anglos called them) and Sioux are clearly the largest tribes, with the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Blackfoot having less than half their numbers. Many smaller tribes are also represented, including the Arapaho, Crow, Seminole, Cree, and Cheyenne. The population also includes fragments of tribes that are also represented in other NAN countries (such as the Ojibwa, Mohawk, Apache and Navajo).

• The "Sioux tribe" is actually a fabrication, as the term was originally used by Anglos to refer to three separate tribes (the Dakota, Lakota and Nakota). These tribes united shortly after the Ghost Dance War, pulling in remnants from many smaller tribes that had been decimated by relocation and war (such as the Hidatsa, Lumbee and Potawatomi). This swelled the Sioux ranks, making them more of a force to be reckoned with. Fractures are starting to appear, however, as dissenting voices are trying to reclaim their distinctive tribal identities. Some Dakota street samurai I know, for example, take strong offense to being called Sioux.

• Cree Dog

Unlike other NAN states, no single tribe dominates the nation, or even any one sector of society, be it the military, police or a government bureau. This is a remarked change from ten years ago, when branches of the civil sector were clearly dominated by specific tribes. A decade of affirmative action and growth-inspired changes has largely eliminated this problem.

• Not true—Stanley's biases are showing. The tribal monopolies may be reduced, but you still have large tribal-affiliated pockets within most businesses and government agencies. What this amounts to is an underlying social stratification based on your tribal origin. For example, Sioux tribals have a much higher percentage of government jobs, compared to their percentage of the country's population. Despite being the largest tribe, Tsalagi (Cherokee) are almost not to be found in government offices and they face consistent bias in other civil sector jobs. Tribal nepotism still thrives, and the tribals look out for their own.

• Spotlight Sally

• For shadowrunners, this means that if you make the right connections, a single contact can open up a warehouse of "friends of friends" to call on. Likewise, if you make the wrong enemies ...

• T-Bone

Most of the historical animosities, such as that between the Crow and Sioux, no longer exist, though some new ones have taken their place, like the current grudge between the Sioux and the "Five Civilized Tribes" (Tsalagi, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole). This friction has little impact on national affairs, as the Sioux Council of Chiefs is committed to showing a united front in the face of foreign agencies, particularly the UCAS. This is probably the single greatest factor keeping the Sioux Council intact and speaking with a singular voice.

• Fraggin apologist. Stanley's a Sioux, so he doesn't have any direct experience of how Sioux-influenced government policies impact tribes that aren't "in favor." A simple look at who's tilling the fields (Tsalagi), who's living in slums (Cheyenne) and who's getting high-tech degrees (Blackfoot) or cushy corp jobs (Sioux) reveals the real story.

• Cheyenne Pepper

• Tribal grudges do filter down to street level, where it is painfully evident that this unity is a sham. Just take a look at the street gangs. You'll find humans, orks, dwarfs and so on intermingling, but you'll be hard pressed to find a mixed-tribe gang.
• Socio Pat

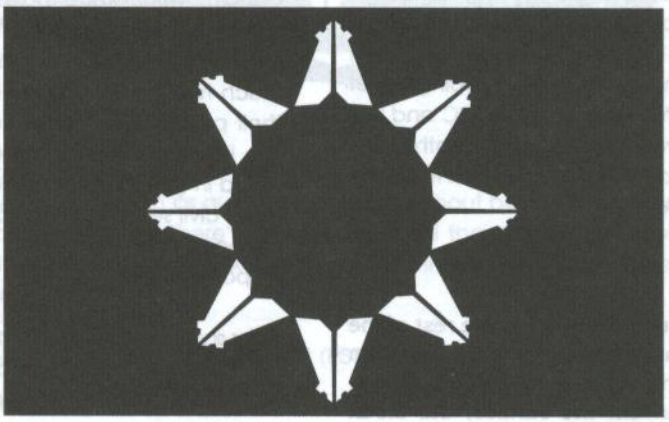
The Sioux still has a lot of Anglos, mostly dispersed throughout the rural areas. They are a silent tribe, participating little in the nation's politics.

• Anglos still face a fair bit of social prejudice, and spirits help them if they publicly profess any good will towards the UCAS.
• Paleface

• The Sioux still has dozens of Anglo reserves, more than any other NAN, though the police keep a close eye on them.
• Cyclone

THE SIOUX COUNCIL

The Council of Chiefs rules the Sioux Nation, comprised of twenty members (one from each official tribe). The Chiefs are appointed for five-year terms by a Council of Elders (also comprised of one elder from each of the twenty tribes, but serving for life). This gives the smallest tribes a voice equal to the largest.



• Which is why the larger tribes monopolize certain segments of society, or try to. It's also why the Sioux tribe may eventually break apart into its three components, and thus gain more votes.
• Socio Pat

The Council of Chiefs appoints the leaders of the various government bureaus (such as Justice, High Technology, Health and Welfare, and National Security), mandates state policy and passes legislation. All decisions need to be passed by a two-thirds majority (14 votes). In the past this was quite an accomplishment, though in recent years the Chiefs have been united in the face of world upheavals.

• That unity is a façade, especially when you see how often the smaller tribes fight amongst themselves, rather than forming a bloc against the larger tribes. The larger tribes like it that way, and actively encourage dissent on the side—with help from the shadows.
• Friction

• The decision made to concede to Ghostwalker's demands in Denver was not viewed favorably by the Chiefs. Lucinda Gray Arrow, the Sioux Sector administrator, made the call on her own and she's taking a lot of flak for it. Two members of the Council lost relatives in Ghostwalker's attacks and were not pleased with her analysis and reasoning. There was a struggle to recall Gray Arrow, but it barely failed to pass majority.
• Priest

• End result: Gray Arrow earned two powerful enemies, but she also earned a very powerful ally with the dragon. The political clout garnered not only for her but the Sioux Nation will obviously be very important.
• Lara

UCAS BORDER TENSION

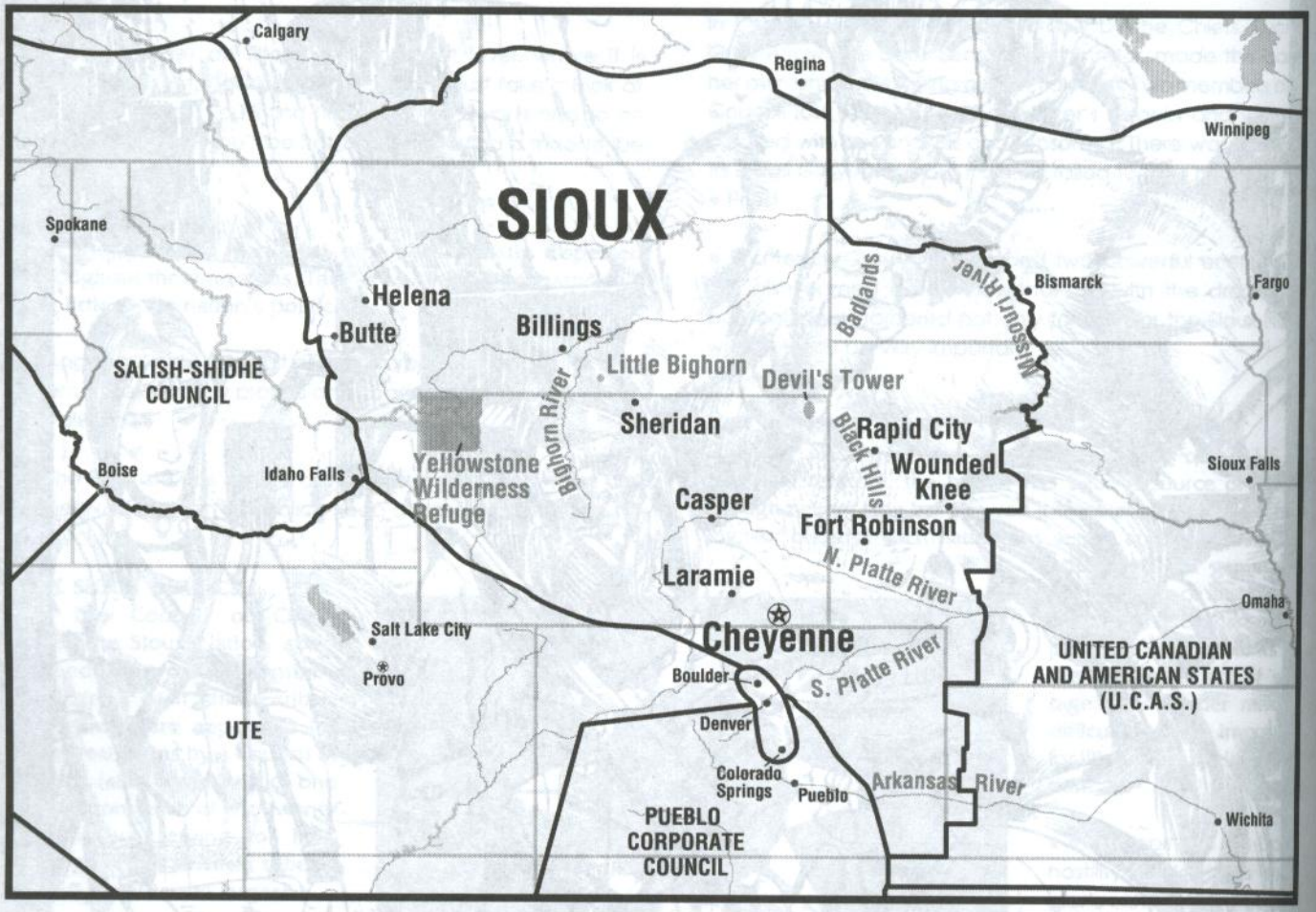
Ever since the Sioux Nation was carved out of US and Canadian territory, the border has been a source of tension. Though neither side has allowed it to escalate into open shooting, for decades each nation has tested and antagonized the other with war games, border surveillance and listening posts, traveler harassment, provocative statements and the occasional act of sabotage. This border makes it difficult (but not impossible) for illicit travel in either direction.

• In my opinion, this border hostility works to a smuggler's advantage. The Sioux focuses so much attention on the UCAS that their other borders are virtually wide open. Both sides are more focused on military operations, so small-time smuggling ops get less attention. Both sides are also jumpy, so noisy distractions work wonders. A mad panzer dash will get you shot down, but a smuggler who blends in can slip across with the rest of the tourist and trade traffic.
• Bear Tail

• I know two runner teams, one on either side of the border, that make a living playing border games. One month the Sioux runners will "fix" an expensive new radar array on the UCAS side. The next month the UCAS runners will use mind control magic on a Sioux Defense Force pilot so that he "aggressively" flies into UCAS air space, gets shot down and creates an incident that gets some Sioux officer canned. The teams know each other and have a friendly rivalry going to one-up each other. Good fun and good pay.
• Prime Runner

There was a brief glimmer of hope that a new era of





peaceful coexistence would dawn with the election of Dunkelzahn as President. Insider sources have revealed that Dunkelzahn had two secret meetings with the Council of Chiefs between his election and taking office, outlining an agenda to lessen tensions between the two nations. These hopes were destroyed along with the Presidential limo on August 9, 2057. President Haeffner originally tried to pick up this agenda, but after the assassination and riots, the use of biowarfare agents to clean up the bugs in Chicago and the arcology fiasco in Seattle, the Chiefs are skeptical of Haeffner's ability to maintain stability.

A MILITARIZED SOCIETY

by Milton Sharp Stone

The Sioux Nation isn't a police state, but it is a far more militarized society than any other North American country. A year of service with the Sioux Defense Force (SDF) is mandatory for all citizens at age eighteen, male and female, followed by four years of reserve duty. The SINless escape this fate, as do some pacifists who choose two years of social work instead. The push towards service starts young, as most Sioux children are enrolled in Scout programs and encouraged with scholarships and other benefits to take longer tours of duty. Shamans and adepts are given free rides.

• Minor criminal punishments often include extended military service instead of probation. This whole setup helps to keep unemployment down and keep the criminal population in line. Sioux prisons are also contracted out to Shiawase, who uses them as slave labor camps for miltech assembly lines.
• Four Feathers

As a result, the SDF is the largest military in the NAN. SDF troop training is based almost entirely on UCAS invasion scenarios, focusing heavily on concepts of unconventional warfare, SOTA weapon systems and shamanic magic. SDF troops patrol the country's borders, airports and custom stations.

• Keep this in mind. Your average Sioux adult spent at least a year learning to shoot, survive in the wilderness and defend himself or herself with the Wildcat martial arts style. It can really spoil your day when your hostage/victim suddenly takes you down with a thumb lock, arm bar and neck strike.
• Catnipped



The Council of Chiefs does not allow privatized police agencies. Instead, the Sioux National Police (SNP, or "snipes" in gutter slang) have jurisdiction throughout the cities and countryside. The SNP trains and coordinates with the SDF and their gear and vehicles are similar, though the SNP focuses more on civil control measures.

• The Sioux military is highly regard by other NAN countries who often send some of their own troops over to train with Sioux instructors.
• Four Feathers

OFFICE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

The Office of Military Intelligence (OMI) is responsible for gathering intelligence on all potential enemies of the Sioux, foreign or internal. Though the OMI has traditionally focused its efforts on the UCAS and CAS, the OMI is known to have seeded agents throughout other NAN states. The OMI also watches megacorps involved in Sioux affairs, particularly UCAS-based corps like Ares and Novatech.

The OMI was exposed to a series of embarrassing public disclosures in the mid-2050s, revealing a crass and inept organization that failed to counter corporate and UCAS espionage teams and engaged in petty one-upmanship battles with the Wildcats. The Chiefs ordered a purge, and the OMI underwent a massive re-organization and re-orientation under the leadership of a new director, known by her code name of Sinopa (Blackfoot for "fox").

Sinopa argued that better coordination was needed to prevent foreign powers, terrorist groups and international criminal syndicates from slipping in under the radar. No longer content with external spy duties, she has successfully transformed the OMI into the Sioux Nation's lead counter-intelligence and internal security agency. The OMI now conducts sweeping surveillance measures on the Sioux Nation's population in the name of national security.

• In other words, the OMI has amassed a massive quantity of dirt on the Sioux Nation's power players and underworld. The question is: what are they doing with it? No one but Sinopa seems to know.
• Cree Dog

• This is true. The OMI has informants everywhere. They have up-to-date knowledge of smuggling operations and syndicate deals, they have in-depth files on most shadowrunners that have operated within the Sioux and they have some juicy blackmail in reserve for more than a few Chiefs and CEOs. Sinopa is very selective on when and how such data gets used. Either she's playing it real safe, or she is following an agenda with meticulous detail.
• Notch

SIOUX SPECIAL FORCES (WILDCATS)

Every shadowrunner has heard about the Sioux Special Forces, nicknamed the Wildcats. These are the guys and gals who cut their teeth on UCAS Green Berets and eat Renraku Red Samurai for lunch. They're generally acknowledged as one of the best—if not *the* best—special forces units in the world.

Many runners are stunned to find out that your typical Wildcat is not heavily cybered (except for the riggers). Military budget constraints just don't allow for these people to be stuffed full of delta grade cyber. What the Wildcats lack in cyberware they make up for in training, professionalism and fire support.

SIOUX AT A GLANCE

Population: 6,306,000
- Human: 68%
- Elf: 5%
- Dwarf: 4%
- Ork: 18%
- Troll: 5%
- Other: 0%

Tribal Affiliation: 63% of total population
- Cherokee (Tsalagi): 35%
- Sioux: 21%
- Choctaw: 9%
- Creek: 5%
- Chickasaw: 5%
- Blackfoot: 5%
- Other Tribes: 20%

Per Capita Income: 22,500 ¥
Estimated SINless: 15%
Below Poverty Level: 21%
Corporate Affiliation: 33%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 8%
- High School Equivalency: 55%
- College Degrees: 27%
- Advanced Degrees: 10%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 90%
- Dakota: 14%
- Lakota: 11%
- Cherokee (Tsalagi): 10%

Currency: Nuyen
DocWagon Coverage: 100%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 10 minutes (urban areas)/30 minutes (rural areas)

SIOUX TIMELINE

2026: The Sioux Bureau of High Technology ruled that only Sioux-based corporations could license technology from the University of Cheyenne.
2054: The Office Military Intelligence (OMI) undergoes a series of embarrassing scandals, followed by an internal purge. A new director is appointed, codenamed Sinopa.
2055: A high number of insect spirit hives are uncovered and destroyed in Sioux territory. Accidental shootings based on bug paranoia skyrocket.
2057: The Council of Chiefs holds two secret meetings with UCAS President-elect Dunkelzahn before he is assassinated.
2057: Wind River Corporation completes the first underground hydroponics complex, called the Shoshoni Hydroponics Farm.
September 2061: Changeling riots wrack Cheyenne, martial law is temporarily declared.
September 2061: Devil's Tower undergoes a mysterious, undetected growth. Magical disturbances in the area become common.
June 2062: The participants of the Sun Dance ritual at Devil's Tower experience unusually strong visions. Some mysteriously disappear.

The Wildcats see a lot of action for a country that's not at war with anyone. In addition to reconnaissance, counter-terrorism, and interdiction operations, the Wildcats are effectively used for covert surgical strikes on antagonistic foreign powers (the UCAS) and corps. They have also been used to contain or eliminate particularly troublesome criminal elements, such as shadowrunners.

• Sometimes the Wildcats are sent out after shadowrunners or smugglers just for practice. They call these operations "live fire exercises."
• Four Feathers

All Wildcats are jumpmaster certified, trained to operate an impressive variety of enemy (i.e. UCAS) weapons and vehicles and skilled in the Wildcat martial arts, throwing and projectile weapons. Survival skills are honed in a variety of different terrain: arctic (in the AMC), desert (in the PCC), mountains and especially urban environments. Language skills are also stressed, and the Wildcats make heavy use of Sioux sign language for radio silence operations.

• Each Wildcat team includes at least one shaman, and all Wildcats are versed in magical theory and dealing with magical or spirit attacks.
• Bear Tail

• A lot of Wildcat operations are called for and planned out by the OMI. The two have a history of rivalry, and the Wildcats love to gripe that the OMI is feeding them bad intel or setting them up. In some cases, they may be right.
• Notch

• There's at least one team of Wildcats running ops in Tsimshian at the moment, on behalf of the Salish-Shidhe. I'd be willing to be that other teams are standing by in Los Angeles and Denver.
• Magnificent Edward

MATRIX WARBAND

The Matrix Warband is the SDF's secret elite decker and computer intelligence unit. The Warband is most often at the beck and call of the OMI, conducting extensive espionage operations against UCAS systems and other prime targets. The Warband pays close attention to the Sioux Nation's technology industry, watching out for potential tech-thieves and otherwise protective the nation's high-tech interests. They also conduct random security drills on Sioux Matrix systems, testing for vulnerabilities and reprimanding lax sysadmins.

• Some of those drills require on-site penetration. In order to reduce the risk of injuring their own personnel, the Warband usually hires shadowrunners for these ops and requires them to use non-lethal weaponry.
• Notch

• I used to deck with the Warband, and one of our secondary tasks was to consistently spread misinformation on Sioux affairs

far and wide through the 'trix. Don't trust anything you dig up on Sioux targets. More than being wrong, it may get you killed.
• Zip

• Why do I suspect that post of being pure misinformation? Ah, paranoia ...
• Mirial

PLACES TO GO

by White Horse

I'm a traveler. I've been back and forth across the Sioux by any means I could find: freight hopping, hog ridin', panzer blastin' or just plain walking. It pains me to hear city-rat shadowrunners complain that there's nothing to see in the Sioux, like it's simply a land of cornfields, dirty hills and aggro injuns. Jam that noise. There's more to the Sioux than most people think, from city shadows to beautiful badlands. Sit back while I give you the tour.

CHEYENNE

Stop numero uno is Cheyenne, the Sioux capital and the focal point of wealth, power and high-tech toys. Cheyenne is packed full of software corps and electronics manufacturing plants, but the city still has a rustic air to it. Even the slums are kinda homey.

Cheyenne was hit pretty strongly by SURGE hysteria, and when City Chief Billy Stillwater expressed in the middle of a press conference, the city exploded in riots. The snipes clamped down pretty quick, and the city still has that edgy police state feel to it. It's not uncommon for the snipes to park APCs on a corner and start running random stop-and-searches. Security is especially tight near the halls for the Sioux Council of Chiefs and Council of Elders.

The University of Cheyenne

The University of Cheyenne is the shining star that the Sioux's high-tech economy orbits around. The Sioux government floods the UC's research and development labs with nuyen, so for decades they've made consistent advances in expert systems, Matrix operating systems and other hi-tech Matrix drek. According to Sioux law, these advances can only be licensed to Sioux corps. There used to be almost a hundred small corps clustered around the UC, turning tech into profits, then some got bigger and a feeding frenzy began. Corporate attrition has reduced that number to about twenty survivors.

Attracted by the smell of nuyen, the jabbing towers and sprawling research parks of foreign-based software and electronics corps have sprouted up around the UC. The entire city is a playground for their new gadgets and games. Most corps hope to feed off of the UC's advances through legit deals if possible, but they'll settle for sneaky business. Shadow biz is easy to find, especially Matrix intrusions. Since the UC also breeds some of the best software engineers on the planet, a lot of corps prowl about campus, hoping to gobble up young coding gurus.

• Each year, right around graduation, about a dozen extractions take place as the best and brightest students find new corporate homes, whether they want them or not.
• Cheyenne Pepper

• A lot of corps have learned their lesson after being burned by shadow ops here. Now they keep their prime brains, research and so on in other Sioux towns, such as Laramie or Casper.
• Snipe Hunter

STC HQ

When Howling Coyote breathed the NAN into life, Cheyenne drew the short straw and got stuck with the home base of the Sovereign Tribal Council (STC). The weekly meetings at the Council Lodge, out near the old ICBM command center at Warren AFB, are a regular fireworks display. Fun to watch, but don't let the snipes in security armor catch you and note that any alarms bring SDF troops from the base next door.

None of the NAN reps to the STC like to stick around Cheyenne if they don't have to, but they do maintain secure housing in the city. In most cases, however, they zip in for a meeting under heavy guard and fly out again as soon as possible.

The STC maintains a complex of offices next to the Lodge for all of the NAN agencies: The Native American Environment Agency, the Native American Space Agency, the Bureau of Non-Tribal Peoples, the Native American National Reserve Bank (NANRB), the NAN Cultural Affairs office and so on.

• These pan-NAN agencies are rife with inter-NAN squabbling and politicking, which means they play a predominate role in NAN shadowrunning—as both target and sponsor. Each agency has sub-offices scattered throughout the NAN countries, with lower security and a subsequently higher ratio of "security incidents."
• Firelight

DEVIL'S TOWER

Devil's Tower is a sight to take your breath away. A sheer column of volcanic rock jutting above the surrounding hills, the tower is also called Bear's Lodge (among other names). The tower is a mystical and sacred site and was set aside for ritual use by the Sioux (Lakota) tribe when the nation was created. The Sun Dance takes place here every Summer Solstice, and sweat lodges are available for tribal shamans who wish to undertake vision quests, make prayer offerings or practice other rites.

Over the past year, some spooky things have been going down near the tower. Right after Halley's Comet buzzed us, the tower underwent an unobserved increase in height—from 262 meters to 356! No seismic activity was recorded, but shamans report that the mana level in the area is strong enough to make them dizzy and inspires visions. When the

Sun Dance was held over a week-long period in June, something even stranger went down that the officials have tried to cover up. No one I've talked to knows the full story, but I heard that a lot of the Sioux who participated in the ritual—a symbolic cycle of regeneration and rebirth through fasting and bloodletting—got the ride of the lives. Not all of them came back alive, and some have yet to come back at all.

• I can confirm this. Two shamans are still MIA: Mary Whitewater and David Red Hand. Many of the ritual's participants had visions, even the mundanes. No two visions were alike.
• Brightsong

• There are some interesting tribal legends regarding Bear's Lodge that may be relevant here. One Lakota legend tells of a Lakota band that were attacked by the Crow while camped in the forest at the foot of the tower. With the supernatural assistance of a huge bear, the Lakota won the fight. The Crow tell a different story. In their version, two Crow girls were playing in the rocks near Bear's House (their name for it) when a bear tried to eat them. The girls climbed the tower to escape the bear, but the bear kept trying to jump up and catch them, his claws scratching the rock as he fell to the ground (marks still seen today). It is said that the two girls are still up there.
• Bear Tail

• Another legend holds that White Buffalo Calf Woman, a powerful spirit, hid away the White Buffalo Calf Pipe in a secret cave on the north side of Bear's Lodge. This pipe is the single most sacred object of the Lakota, and each year many young braves and shamans go looking for it.
• Tall Feather

THE BLACK HILLS, YELLOWSTONE AND BADLANDS

The Sioux country has fantastic wild lands, prized for their natural beauty and sanctity to Amerind spiritual beliefs. Both talisleggers and tourists are drawn to places like the Badlands, Yellowstone and the Black Hills like flies. Most of the talisleggers are small-time operators—there's enough profit to encourage some folks to risk their lives, but not enough to draw large-scale organized crime in. You simply can't crank out telesma like you can BTLs or drugs.

The talisleggers mostly spend their time searching for unspoiled, rare natural materials. There's all sorts of bones and fossils just laying around the Badlands waiting to be picked up—sometimes very interesting fossils that groups like the Atlantean Foundation pay top cred for. The geysers, hot springs, fumaroles and mudpots of Yellowstone are also prime collecting areas, though many prospectors have found that this area seems to "protect itself" with some rather scorching natural features.

There's also a growing demand for Amerindian artifacts, such as bones and items from sacred burial sites. Battlefields from the Indian Wars of the 1800s are getting dug up left and right. Grave robbing is looked upon with distaste—go figure—and talisleggers caught in these sacred areas are normally shot on sight.

• Do this at your own risk. The Sioux are very touchy about Anglos trampling across areas that hold a great deal of historical and religious significance to them.
• Claymore

• Well, that was the case. Since the dead have started roaming about, the issue of burial grounds has gotten a whole lot more complicated. For the time being, the Council has ordered that all corpses be cremated—a ruling that is very unpopular and often ignored.
• Brightsong

In some sacred areas, Amerindians will leave prayer offerings in the form of colorful pouches and tobacco ties hanging from the trees. Mostly they're ignored, but I've heard that some talisleggers claim to have found some with latent magical potency, making them useful for talismongering purposes. Bison herds are also targeted, and the body parts of the white buffalo are believed to hold special significance. All of these activities will get you hurt bad if the wrong people find out about them.

• Watch out for the weird weather in these areas. Some meteorologists have been arguing that the Ghost Dance had some unusual effects. A flash flood or head-crushing hailstorm can really spoil your outing.
• Cyclone

• Frag the weather, watch out for the bugs! There's a lot of cave systems in Sioux territory, and some hives found them much cozier than sprawl hideouts after Ares starting hunting them all down. Some of the creepies have dug entire labyrinths into the soil and rock, underground cities hidden from sight. Uninvited guests end up becoming permanent fixtures.
• Raid Array

GHOST TOWNS

The white flight that occurred in the decade after the Ghost War left dozens of ghost towns scattered across the land. Some of these have been bulldozed, but most were left to rot. After some were discovered to hold bug hives in the mid 2050s, most Sioux citizens developed a healthy fear of them and now steer clear. Today they're used by squatters, smugglers, gogangers and others desiring an out of the way location from which to operate. Some are now crashpads for paranormal critters. But the best are fixed up as waystations, where smugglers and runners can hole up and get what they need, while still fronting as abandoned, empty, forgotten buildings.

• One ghost town that you might want to check out is Potter, just off of I-80. The place is home to this rather eccentric



Amerind, Billy Tall Horse. He is the only living soul in the entire town, but he runs this old bar called the Golden Mug. If you handle yourself right, ole Billy can put you in touch with another fella who is the end-all be-all of guns. This guy does the sweetest custom work you will ever run across. He's got an entire arsenal stored away, so he can call up some hard to find stuff pretty quick, from peashooters to LMGs. You need some added punch? No problemo. He also has APDS and EX-EX. Just be sure to bring along your nuyen.
• Laughing Coyote

• Sounds like a sting operation to me, folks!
• Claymore

• There's a small ghost town called Flatwillow that used to be a crash space for a petty go-gang called the Skidmarks. A few months back, most of the gang disappeared, but no one really noticed. One of the younger members has since turned up, and he claims the gang was ambushed by shedim. He sez they crawled out of Flatwillow Cemetery and set up shop in the old town, like it was a zombie resort. Keep that in mind next time you roll into a town that seems to be "dead."
• Romero

SIOUX MATRIX

Okay, this isn't really a place, at least geographic-wise, but it's something you're likely to visit at some point or another. The Sioux grids are sculpted to capture the feel of the land itself: big sky, dark rolling hills, muddy badlands, monolithic rocks, that sort of thing. In order to keep the sense of vast empty space, all of the SAN icons are filtered out of view until you're right on top of them, then they appear as a smoky outline or a cave entrance until you pay them some attention. It's nice to have a grid that feels uncluttered, even if it isn't.

Cheyenne LTG

The one exception to this style is the Cheyenne LTG. The high density of software geeks obviously has had an impact on the sculpting. The grid appears as a digital dreamcatcher, with gridlines spun by electric spiders. Data transmissions are represented as dreams, so that each second thousands of experiences and sensations flit by you.

• All of the software development and tech research in Cheyenne means that hacker activity—and system security—are amped to the max. At least one fixer in town, name of Din Fiv, uses a stable of hired deckers to comb these systems for paydata and virtual merchandise. High risk, high-pay work.
• Notch

• The University of Cheyenne has a thriving decker subculture. A lot of students get into it to improve their skills, and a few have even run hacks simply to impress prospective employers. Fertile ground for blackmail material.
• Glitch

STC Grid

While the STC maintains public access Matrix systems in Cheyenne (and, indeed, most NAN grids), the STC also maintains its own PLTG for internal business. While access to this grid is easy to deck, the systems themselves have a tiered access structure that gets progressively more difficult and dangerous. Most of the security is imported straight from Pueblo workstations, so expect serious party IC.

• There's one big database on this grid that everyone should know about: The NAN SIN Registry. That's right, the complete database of each and every legally registered NAN citizen is in here, safely stored behind nasty chokepoints and virtual machines. Unless your head needs a little vacation called brain death, I recommend simply buying an ID from the Koshari or Lakota Mafia—they've already got system backdoors in place.
• Priest

BUSINESS UNDER THE BIG SKY

by Milton Sharp Stone

Our economy is built around two areas: agriculture and high technology. Thanks to strict environmental standards, many megacorps simply don't find doing business in the Sioux to be worth their while. Those that do stick to the Cheyenne-Laramie-Casper region. As a result, smaller & local corps tend to thrive. A few Sioux corps, both local and big-time, deserve special mention.

ARES

The average Sioux citizen views Ares with suspicion, as the corp is widely known to back the UCAS military. But the higher-ups within the Sioux have a different outlook. Ares Arms is the second-rank provider of small arms and military hardware to the SDF, right after Shiawase Armaments. Apparently the SDF doesn't trust Ares to be their primary weapons source, but they also prefer to have access to and train with the same gear that the UCAS military uses.

• All Sioux military contracts are up for renewal in 2063, so competition is flaring. Mesametric already has the vehicle contract wrapped up, leaving Ares, Shiawase and a few underdogs scrapping over the ordnance contracts.
• Four Feathers

• Ares has been lobbying long and hard trying to get the NAN states to standardize their weapon systems, so that, in the event of war, logistics would be much simpler. Of course, the UCAS does not like this one little bit, and they've taken some flak for it over the border. Not that the NANs trust Ares enough to commit to the idea anyway. But maybe another corp could fit the bill ...
• Claymore

Knight Errant

Knight Errant holds the most contracts of any private security provider in the Sioux, primarily due to confidence in Sioux-born Executive Veep Roger Soaring Owl. The SNP has received training from Knight Errant advisors, and Soaring Owl has a lot of friends throughout the Sioux tribe, the SDF and the Council of Chiefs—enough to raise alarms in the UCAS that Ares has been compromised by a foreign power.

• It's just the traditional Ares game—playing both sides of the fence, profiting from the fears of both—except on a national scale.
• Rubik

• Yeah? Then how come so many OMI datastores seem to be a direct mirror of KE intelligence files?
• Glitch

DOCWAGON

DocWagon deserves mention simply because the Sioux Nation was the first NAN to allow DocWagon service. Since then, in an effort to sell themselves to the other NAN countries, DocWagon has arranged for complete coverage of Sioux territory, urban or rural. The Sioux is speckled with DocWagon emergency air stations. The guaranteed reaction times vary of course, but no matter how remote your location is, you can count on DocWagon arriving within 30 minutes.

• You don't even get coverage like that in the UCAS!
• Chronic

GAEATRONICS

The Salish-owned energy corp plays a major role in the Sioux, especially now that it has a government contract to complete six geothermal plants. The first of these, the Pahaska Geothermal Power Plant, is already complete, with the other five planned to be online by 2066. The Pahaska plant, located on the eastern edge of the Yellowstone Wilderness Refuge, underwent a rigorous four-year testing and analysis period, despite SOTA technology, to ensure that it satisfied the Sioux Nation's environmental standards. It now provides over half of the Sioux's electricity needs. Once the other plants are completed, the Gaeatronics/Sioux partnership will be poised to deliver discount electricity to its NAN neighbors, potentially creating an energy monopoly in this part of North America.

• Shiawase Envirotech is up in arms about this. Count on them to dole out some cred to make sure that the Pahaska plant doesn't live up to its next few rigorous enviro-safety tests. If Pahaska closes down, the entire project will be in jeopardy.
• Metropolis

HIGH PLAINS CODING

HQ: Cheyenne
CEO: Andrew Boyce

FTL Technologies was the first Cheyenne computer corp to make it big, but Fuchi swallowed them up. Now the leader of the pack is High Plains Coding (HPC), an A-rated corp that's expanding as fast as the technology curve. HPC produces killer low-end apps, from pocket secretary utilities to kitchenware to automated drone routines. But they're really breaking ground with expert system nano-programming, a field that makes them a juicy target from many sectors.

• Aside from the dozens of local corps HPC has gobbled up, they've successfully fought off attempted takeovers by Shiawase, Novatech and even the PCC. Now the company is even stronger than ever, well on its way to megacorp status.
• Rubik

• HPC had some help beating off those attacks. A lot of runners were deployed, as well as some serious financial backing. That's because Boyce struck a "white knight" deal with CATCo. In return for the investment, HPC is slipping Cross some "sneak previews" to get around Sioux licensing laws.
• Errant Knight

• Wrong. HPC has survived with the help of Sinopa, the OMI head, who has gone the extra mile for the corp. That's because the HPC is producing some custom trojan horses and stealth surveillance programs on the OMI's behalf.
• Morning Mist

• Does everything have to be a conspiracy with you people? Why can't HPC be a smart corp that out plays the megas at their own game?
• Claymore

MESAMETRIC

HQ: Casper
CEO: Vern Montileaux

Mesametric has taken the lead in North American construction vehicle sales. Just as impressive, it may soon be the exclusive contractor of military vehicles for both the Sioux Nation and PCC. Mesametric's new APC and panzer releases have filled important niches for command/surveillance posts and low-cost light armor support. Its newest release is a self-propelled gun drone (SPGD).

• Ares is really bent that Mesametric beat them to the market with this one. Not only did runners steal the design from Ares Arms without them being the wiser, but Mesametric improved the range and performance of the 155mm main gun. Maybe Knight should extract their designers.
• Claymore

• Mesametric has been pulling a record number of runs on overseas military contractors—corps that don't view a rinky-dink outfit like Mesametric as a prime competitor, especially with misleading "evidence" left behind pointing at another corp. They're playing musical fixers to cover their tracks, but I know one or two regulars they use that pay well if anyone's interested.
• Tall Feather

NATIVE AMERICAN BROADCASTING SERVICE

HQ: Cheyenne
CEO: Whope Fat Crow

The Native American Broadcasting Service (NABS) used to be the voice of the STC—and it was as dull and straight-laced as a public-access bureaucrat-run media outfit could be. In 2056, however, Sioux media strategist Whope Fat Crow took charge and convinced the STC that it was in the NAN's best interest to privatize the operation and let her run with it. In the six years since, Fat Crow has turned the NABS into a hip, modern and competitive network. NABS reporters still have a reputation for ground-breaking investigative journalism, and Fat Crow still sticks to hard documentation and fact standards for controversial stories.

• Since the NABS went private and no longer had to placate the STC, it has turned a detailed eye on tribal affairs and internal STC politics. The sudden spotlight has forced many bureaucrats to keep their noses clean—or at least to carefully erase any evidence.
• Sioux Stringer

• The NABS has a popular Matrix service provider subsidiary called NativeNet, with grid access offered in each NAN country. NativeNet offers excellent tribal culture resources, exclusive NABS broadcasts, and probably has one of the best public shamanic lore collections outside of MagickNet. Security is Green-Average.
• Info Junkie

SHIAWASE

Shiawase used to be the most entrenched megacorp in the Sioux Nation, but they are now the most contentious. Gaeatronics new geothermal plants threaten the energy profits produced by Shiawase Atomics plants; Ares and Mesametric threaten the military goods contract held by Shiawase Armaments and Shiawase's attempts to buy out High Plains Coding were foiled.

The corps' real notoriety in the Sioux, however, comes from none other than Mary Cat Dancing. The Sioux Nation's representative to the Council of Denver prior to Lucinda Gray Arrow, Mary was suddenly recalled by the Council of Chiefs in late 2060. The recall notice had a tone that implied Mary was looking forward to permanent retirement—or worse. Mary never returned to Cheyenne to face her fate, she simply disappeared. Then, four months later, she held a press con-

ference in Casper, where she announced her new status as a citizen of Shiawase and the megacorp's new Senior Diplomatic Director to the Sioux Nation.

• Talk about shockers, nobody saw this one coming. The shadow talk was that the OMI had dug up enough evidence to label her a traitor, and that she fell victim to a fatal case of kinetic poisoning. For years rumors had called her a puppet of MCT—looks like they had the wrong corp.
• Notch

• Something else weird is going on with Mary. People used to remark about her premature aging—for a middle-aged woman, she looked older than God. So you can imagine the shock when a much healthier and youthful-looking Mary arrived at a recent reception being thrown by the Sioux Diplomatic Corps. You could have heard a pin drop when she waltzed in.
• Electric Elk

WIND RIVER CORPORATION

HQ: Laramie
CEO: Ron Mull

Wind River Corp is notable because they are undertaking a massive underground agriculture project called the Shoshoni Hydroponics Farm. Located near the Boysen Reservoir, the farm covers an area of 20,000 square kilometers (over several levels) and is the largest subterranean complex ever built. Over a thousand drones tend the farm, requiring less than twenty personnel to run the entire operation.

Unlike conventional farming, the complex is free from insects, diseases and adverse weather conditions. Wind River is able to produce ten harvests annually of a variety of hybrid crops and crops which were historically limited to certain growing regions, such as pineapples and saffron. Construction is well underway on four more farms. Once completed (in late 2068), the Sioux Nation's agricultural production will be multiplied by a factor of eight, making the Sioux Nation the largest agricultural producer in North America.

• I can hear the chorus of "So What?" out there, so let me explain why this is important to criminals like us. First, this project makes Wind River some major enemies, such as Aztechnology and Shiawase and other nations and farmers whose agri-profits are threatened. Second, these underground farms provide a controlled environment that is perfect for genetic agri-research—they may be growing tires on trees down there, for all we know.
• The Smiling Bandit
"Striking Again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

• The farms are a major slitch to get into. The entrances have airlocks and visitors go through de-con to keep out unwanted biological and environmental contaminants. Plus, it's underground, making it difficult to surveil or access at all, or even astrally scout.
• Rubik

SIOUX SHADOWS

by Siouxzi

Running in the Sioux is a major difference from running in the Seattle sprawl. Before you drop in and make some mistake that gets you scalped, scan these notes on the major shadow players.

THE LAKOTA MAFIA

The Lakota Mafia is the dominant underworld force in the Sioux Nation. This criminal empire is run by William Whiteclay out of Cheyenne. They focus on smuggling, hijacking automated freight trucks, extortion and protection rackets. Illegal gambling, prostitution and info brokerage round out their operations.

• I met Whiteclay, and he was not what I expected for a leader of a major criminal syndicate. Maybe I've seen too many western vids of the angry Indian, but this guy is the most personable guy I have ever met. Smart, well educated (law degree) and big enough to give a troll a moment's pause.
• Tess

• Not all of Whiteclay's soldiers are Lakota; in fact, most aren't, except for the leadership. All of the high-ranks make a point of calling themselves Lakota and not Sioux, and there's a subtle bias against other Sioux tribals within the ranks. The Lakota language is used for operations and business deals, so it pays to speak it if you work the shadows here.
• Claymore

• Any connections with the spaghetti eaters?
• Demonl

• If you're referring to La Cosa Nostra, you insensitive cur, the answer is no. The Mafia steers clear of the Sioux, as do the Yaks and Triads. But the Lakota Nostra (as I like to call them) makes a lot of deals with out-of-state parties, so who knows who's at the other end of the smuggling run.
• 9-Fingered Steve

• The Koshari (Pueblo mob) and Lakota Mafia butt heads periodically, usually with spectacularly gory results. They each try and keep on their side of the border, but crossing paths is inevitable in their line of work.
• Horse Head

Whiteclay spends a great deal of time and energy trying to monopolize the hundreds of small smuggling operations that run through the country. Most of these operations are small enough to not attract the attention of the legal authorities but Whiteclay's network of informants is much more adept. Most independent smugglers either pay a small percentage of their take for running through Lakota Mafia country or end up as road kill.

• Don't the Lakota Mafia deal BTLs? That's a major market right there!
• Rhino

• Not in the Sioux it isn't. The Midewiwin secret society made sure of that. The Midewiwin are equivalent to shamanic vigilantes intent on "curing" the Sioux nation of its collective social sicknesses. One of their particular targets are BTLs. The first few BTL labs in the Sioux went up in smoke. In response, a few Midewiwin turned up dead. Then for about a year Whiteclay's operations suffered major harassment from unidentified magical sources. Finally, Whiteclay decided that BTLs weren't profitable and backed off.
• Brain Freeze

• Whiteclay is in bed with Sinopa, the head of the OMI. He uses his network of informants to keep her advised of underworld events, and in return she ensures that Whiteclay's smuggling ops remain untouched and his competitors get nailed. As long as Whiteclay doesn't make a public mess and refrains from peddling BTLs in the SN, she (and with her all law enforcement) looks the other way.
• Morning Mist

• Whiteclay's representatives sometimes act as Johnson on Sinopa's behalf, whenever she needs plausible deniability. Richard Broken Tree and John Lame Horse are two fences who normally take on this role.
• Tess

GANGS

With all of the open road in the Sioux, there are at least three dozen go-gangs that love to cruise it. About a third of these are on Whiteclay's payroll. Along with motorcycle rallies, loitering at greasy diners and heavy partying, these gangs are occasionally organized enough to commit highway robberies, escort smugglers or do a little smuggling of their own. At least one gang, the Thunder Boys, is a shamanic wizzer gang and also engages in talislegging.

One popular pastime of the gangs is racing up and down the interstate and "counting coup" on passenger vehicles or truckers. Different gangs use different methods: simple touch, sinking a knife in, carrying off a bit of the vehicle or causing it to crash.

• Locals refer to the stretch of I-80 between Ogallala and Evanston as the Coup Trail. Normally this is a non-lethal event, though it certainly scares the living hell out of anyone not familiar with the ritual.
• Sixth Gear

Concrete Sidewinders

This is the largest go-gang in the country, controlling I-80 from just west of Ogallala to the east side of Cheyenne. It isn't your typical gang—most of the members tour the NAN motorcycle racing circuit and even win a lot of the time. These slags are speed freaks more than anything. They love anything that's high tech and moves faster than is legally allowed.

Unlike other gangs whose members tend to come from the same tribe, the Sidewinders don't care what tribe you're from as long as you can ride and you know the difference between a four stroke and a two stroke. Their total membership is over a hundred, counting men, women, metahumans, Amerinds and Anglos among their ranks.

• The Sidewinders also count coup, but they do it with paintball pistols. They're very adept at redecorating your ride at 200 kph!
• SpecD

HENEQUEN

This guy deserves special mention. A shaman of the Rain Forest totem—whatever that is—Henequen used to run a profitable import/export business called Henequen Enterprises out of the Denver Sioux sector. Talk in the shadows suggested that he was in exile from Aztlan, and that he was in fact the leader of La Venta, an organization dedicated to overthrowing the Aztlan government as well as Aztechnology. But after the arrival of Ghostwalker, Henequen suddenly relocated to Cheyenne.

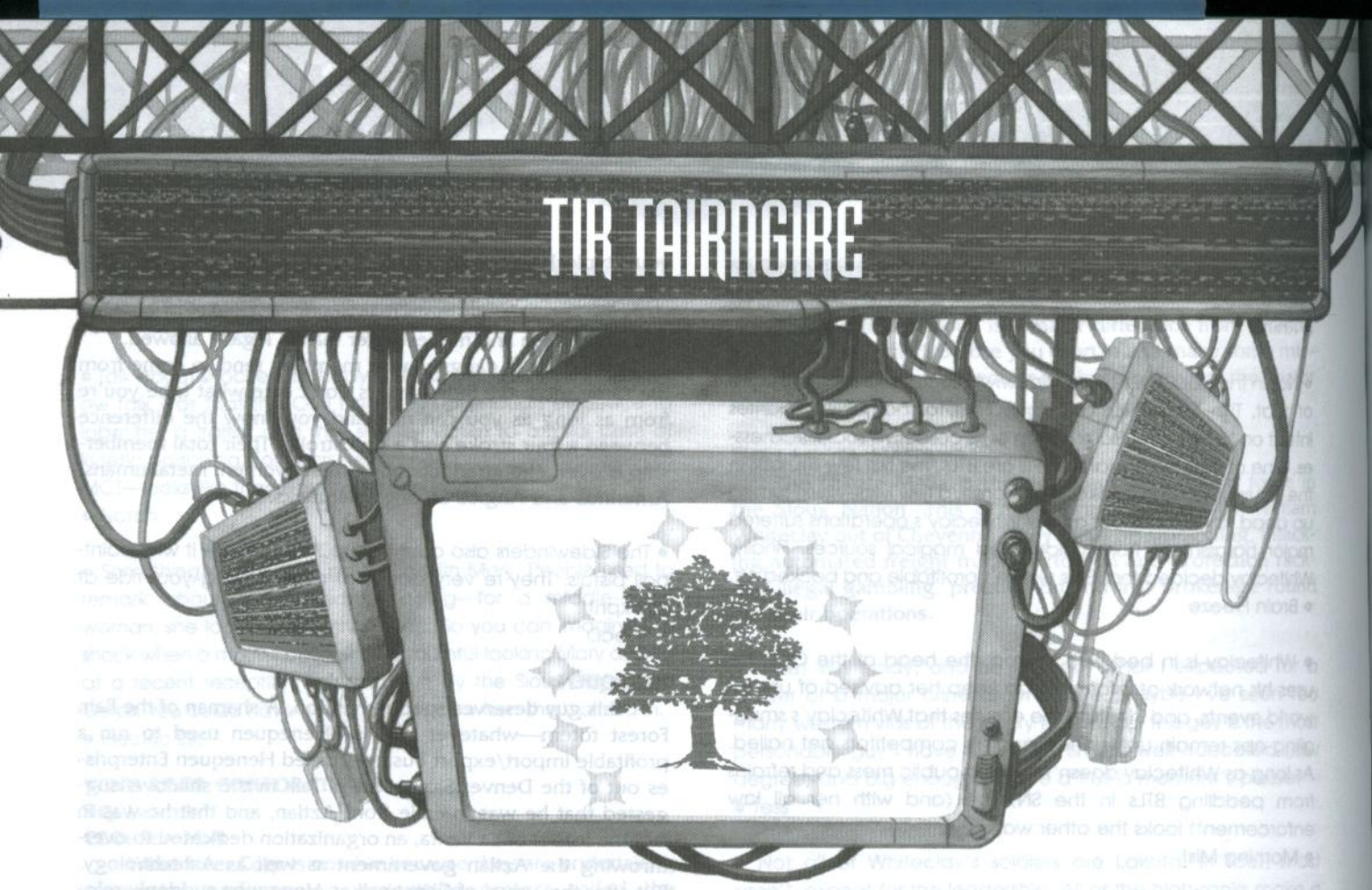
In the months since, Henequen has taken an active role in the Cheyenne shadows. He still seems to be up to his usual tricks—mainly, providing a steady supply of weapons and ammo to the zapatistas down in Aztlan. But he's also digging his fingers into a lot of other pies—including areas considered off-limits by the Lakota Mafia. Whiteclay's already sent a couple of warning shots off Henequen's bow, but he doesn't show any signs of stopping.

• The OMI has kept Henequen under a microscope since he first set up shop in Denver. Not once has he even been implicated in any improprieties, even after numerous surprise inspections!
• Rubik

• Of course not. Where do you think Henequen's getting his arms from? The Sioux consider Aztlan a threat to the NAN's stability, but they prefer to work through a third party to keep their hands clean.
• Morning Mist

• Are you all blind? Henequen split from Denver because he's a friggin' feathered serpent, and a bigger wyrm moved in and told him to scoot. Now he's scrambling to set up a new power base, with Sinopa's help (and won't Whiteclay be pissed when he finds out!).
• Firelight

TIR TAIRNGIRE



Since the elves closed their borders following the assassination of Dunkelzahn, only a trickle of news has made it past the censors and into the outside world. From all accounts, things have gotten ugly fast in the Tir. First, a joint-UCAS/Salish trade embargo burst their bubble economy. Facing severe recession, the Tir's self-appointed Princes did the typical thing and scrambled to sacrifice everything they could to keep their posh little luxuries. When their unruly subjects decided it was time for a change, they slapped them down with liberal doses of imprisonment and automatic weapons. And did I mention that Hestaby, one of the most hated Tir enemies, is now sitting on the Council of Princes?

So to give the shadow community a rundown on the recent troubles in the Land of Promise I've pulled our old friend Spes from that little den of inequity he likes to call home. If there's a better authority on the Tir's back-alley machinations and power politics, I don't know him.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 17:37:53 (PST)

by Spes

Tir Tairngire is a nation built on appearances. It presents an image of an efficient, well-ordered and successful society. Its citizens are educated, classy and willful examples of elven perfection. Its princely leaders are infallible, judicious and oozing with sex appeal. Its cities are safe, wealthy and clean. Its style of government, titles of authority and language are crafted to give an appearance of age—and thus credibility and respectability. Tir Tairngire tries hard to prove that elven society is simply better—and that *their* elven society exceeds *other* elven societies, such as Tir na nOg, Pomorya and the Zulu Nation.

Pride was both the motivation and the prize in this game. The Land of Promise was offering a dream to elvenkind that no other place or power could satisfy. For years, this world-class spin doctoring put a shine on even the most horrific crimes and mistakes. But now this pride may be Tir Tairngire's downfall, as haughty princes refuse to give ground no matter how bad the situation turns. Unable to admit mistakes and unable to lose face on the world stage, the princes now play a bizarre game of one-upmanship that transforms the Tir into a Land of Broken Dreams.

ECONOMIC LESSONS

Tir Tairngire is not self sufficient, contrary to claims by the princes. It cannot exist without trade and the good will of our neighbors. We need to import food, metals and other raw materials, and we need open routes to move our manufactured goods to the global market. Ignoring this simple reality was the first and most devastating mistake.

When the princes ordered a border crackdown in 2057, trade slowed to a trickle. The immediate effect was damaging, but not devastating. The most important effect was that our trading partners suffered as well. Shipping companies took losses, as did the economies of the Salish-Shidhe and the Seattle Metroplex. These partners applied their own pressures to bring Tir Tairngire back on track, imposing high tariffs and trade restrictions of their own. An economic tug-of-war resulted, and Tir border policies continued to fluctuate over the next few years in response to these pressures, the corporate war, and other world events.

• With legitimate trade stymied, the black market thrived. Those years were good ones for smugglers in and around the Tir. I know a lot of nautical types who made big runs shipping precious metals and chemicals into the country. Stuff like thorium (ceramic compounds), thallium (superconductors), flourspar (steelmaking) and bauxite (chemicals). Materials that the Tir needed to avoid reverting back to throwing rocks and spears.
• The Keynesian Kid

• Political antagonism played a role here as well. The Tir and UCAS have been slotting each other off since the Scaly Prez bit it. I think the Tir wasn't pleased with how the UCAS handled the bugs in Chicago or the arcology mess in Seattle. The Tir princes also seem to hold a grudge against Nadja Daviar, though what for, I can't say. I guess being an elf in power only gets you so far if you're not a member of the secret clubhouse.
• Greta

The final blow came in 2060 when the UCAS and SSC issued an ultimatum: ratify a new series of trade pacts or Tir Tairngire would lose access to the Seattle shipping port. Backed against the wall and facing increasing internal unrest, Tir Tairngire has slowly opened its borders. The princes put on a brave face of not giving in to any demands while trying to forestall complete economic collapse due to desperately low stocks of critical industrial supplies.

SQUEEZING BLOOD FROM A STONE

The princes were, of course, unwilling to bear the burden for their own financial mismanagement. Their solution to the crisis was to impose higher taxes and new fees on everything from direct income to various financial transactions. As inflation and unemployment soared, taxes rose to consume almost 60 percent of the average citizen's income.

Though the situation is changing, the repairs may be too little, too late. Already large numbers of downtrodden non-elves have been forced into abject poverty. Even thousands of once privileged elves have felt the crunch, slipping down the economic ladder at lightning speed. With no social programs to ease the burden, once pristine Tir streets are now cluttered with the homeless and dispossessed. Bloated military and government programs eat up the fiscal pie. Meanwhile, crime reaches epidemic levels, drug and BTL-abuse soar and the prison population explodes. Dissention and civil unrest spread like a prairie fire, fueled by shattered dreams and illusions.

• The princes and their families themselves are the biggest drains on the economy. Though they do not directly receive public funds, these leeches receive an amazing array of perks, including free schooling, zero interest business loans, massive tax breaks, free travel via the national airline—and that's just the beginning. Add in anyone else of royal rank, plus all of their wives, sisters, brothers, second cousins, friends, sycophants, etc., and you've got a massive nuyen sink.
• Audun

The princes have announced that the next Rite of Progression has been scheduled for May 2063, but the disgruntled masses are not satisfied by the tossed bone. The government has so far publicly suppressed the poor shape the country is in, but the people of the Tir know the truth and the smell of revolution is in the air.

• What's this "Rite of Progression" business?
• Maelwys

• Never been to the Tir, eh? Here's the qwik-scan. The people living in the Tir aren't citizens, they're subjects—it's an autocracy, remember. They don't have rights, they have privileges—which can be modified or revoked at any time. Every Tir subject has an official social rank that affects what privileges you have. It affects access to housing, education, jobs, travel permits, taxes and a whole lot more.

Social ranks start at Gentry for the masses and move up through Chivalry, Nobles, drekcetera, to the Royal rank. Technically, the High Princes are the top rank. Oh, and don't forget the Irenis, or "classless," the growing ranks who—like me—feel that all of this social stratification is an outdated buildrek organizational standard used to keep a parasitic class in power over the rest of us.

You inherit your social rank from your parents, but if you want to advance up the ladder, you have to prove yourself in a Rite of Progression. These rites are a battery of physical and academic tests, plus political lobbying, and only occur every seven years (or at least they did until they were indefinitely postponed).

TIR SOCIAL RANK

Rank	Title
Irenis (classless)	none
Gentry	Squire
Chivalry	Sir or Demoiselle
Noble	Lord or Lady
Comital	Count or Countess
Ducal	Duke or Duchess
Royal	Prince or Princess

Now you can see why they're such a big deal, and why so many elves are slotted that they don't have the opportunity to advance and climb out of the drek they're in.

• Class Warrior

REBELS OF THE SPIRE

Public dissent in Tir Tairngire blossomed during this recent era of isolationism. As poverty claimed more and more victims, a social movement developed among the gentry and chivalry, making demands for economic reforms, open borders, public welfare and so on. These issues were ignored by those in power until massive protests and crippling strikes wracked the country in 2059. In sudden panic at this display of mass defiance, the princes ordered an immediate crackdown. Houses were raided, movement leaders were arrested, propaganda sources were shut down, martial law was declared in certain cities and hundreds were jailed.

• What? I never heard of any of this stuff happening. Those sorts of events make top news stories across the world.

• Reality Czech

• Of course you didn't, this is the Tir we're talking about. They monitor and censor all outgoing news sources they can get their manicured and powdered hands on. Some of it was reported on pirate feeds and underground news sources.

• Media Watcher

Taken off guard, the movement at first ran for cover. But fear was quickly overridden by outrage at the heavy-handed repression, and a new wave of protests hit the streets—quickly followed by riots and more strikes. This time, the princes took a more subtle approach. First, a series of minor concessions were made, placating the more privileged elements of the movement. Key movement leaders were co-opted when High Prince Surehand granted them increased rank "in observation of their commitment to their fellow Tir Tairngire citizens." Bought and paid for, these puppets obediently worked to pacify the rest of the movement. Meanwhile, the more radical elements—who didn't buy into the scam—were hit with a new wave of secret and unseen arrests, beatings, torture sessions and disappearances. Public support for the radicals was also undermined after they committed several bloody and horrific terrorist actions.

• These terrorist acts were the work of infiltrators and provocateurs, intentionally committed to discredit the more dangerous elements of the movement. Sadly, this tactic worked for awhile.

• Panther

All of the efforts to contain the movement were in vain, however, as the country's economic situation worsened. Licking their wounds, the radicals went underground, organizing into a cell structure to maximize security. From the shadows, new acts of resistance began to plague Tir Tairngire's government. A new name accompanies these actions: "Rinelle ke'Tesrae." Roughly translated from Sperethiel, it means "Rebels of the Spire" or "The Citadel's Exiles."

• Something about this name gave some of the princes absolute fits when they first heard it. It was banned almost immediately from the media. It seems to carry some special significance, beyond the metaphoric.

• Aegis

• What? No jests? No mocking prophecies of doom? No curiosity?

• Orange Queen

• No need. These events speak for themselves.

• The Laughing Man

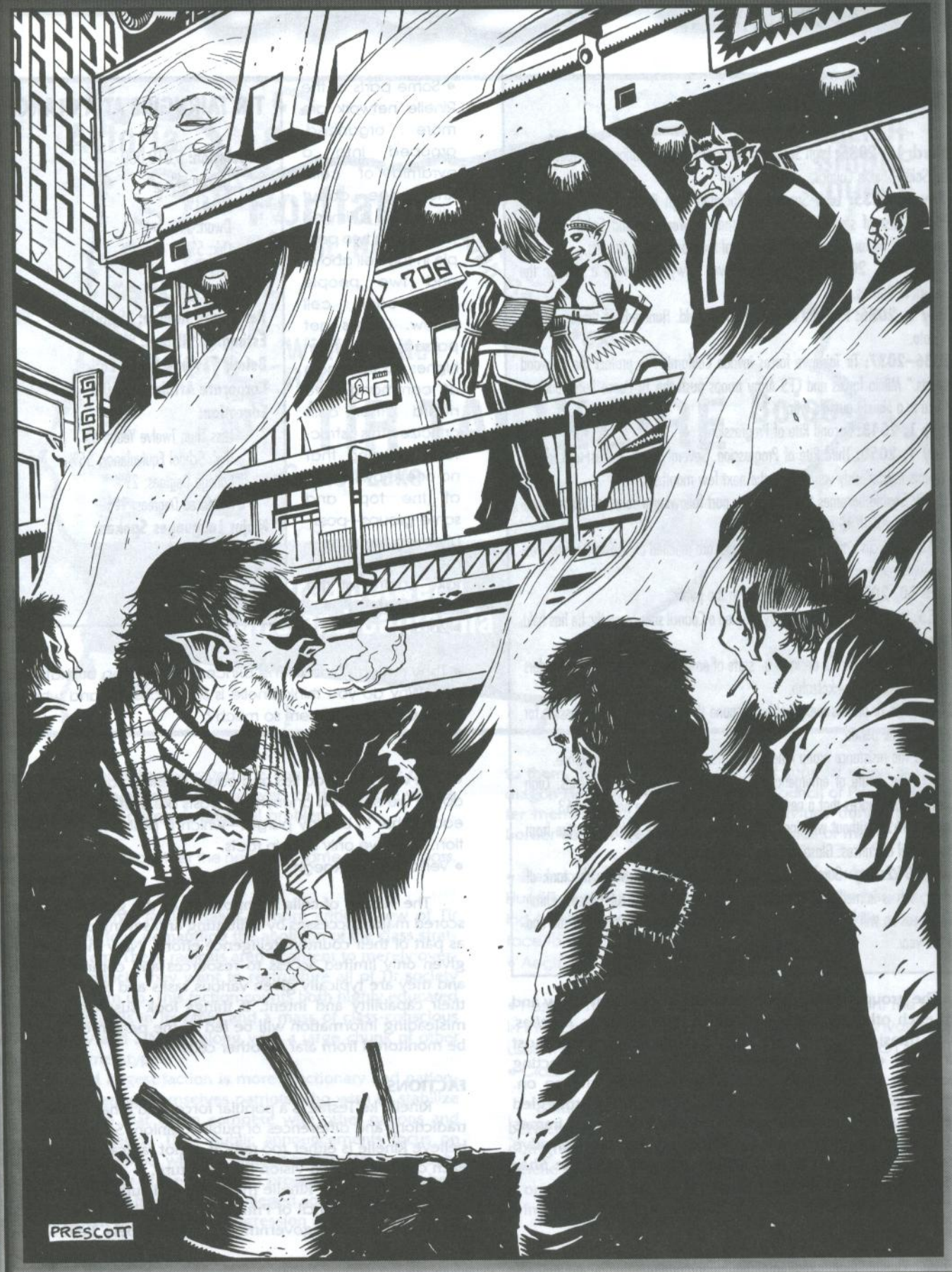
"Ha! Fraggin' Ha!"

ORGANIZATION

Rinelle ke'Tesrae still remains much more of a movement or network than an organization. All of those involved are dedicated to overthrowing the current regime, but beyond that their unity ends. Only a small segment of the movement is underground—the majority are regular subjects who support the cause and provide material aid, hideouts, medical care and information to active cells.

• This support network is especially strong in working class areas, slums and non-elf neighborhoods. Rinelle members can count on regular people they don't even know to hide them from cops, interfere with pursuit or find them a doctor and a getaway car. This frustrates the Peace Force, who've been known to make mass arrests or level entire blocks of "treasonous sympathizers."

• Fenian


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PRESCOTT

TIR TAIRNGIRE TIMELINE

March 11, 2035: Lugh Surehand announces the formation of Tir Tairngire to the Salish-Shidhe Council.
May 6, 2035: Lugh Surehand appointed High Prince by the Council of Princes. First of several border skirmishes between Tir and Salish forces is touched off by forced relocation of several thousand Salish citizens.
August 17, 2035: In a surprise move, Lofwyr is granted a seat on the Council of Princes.
May 1, 2036: First Rite of Progression is held. Hundreds of thousands participate.
2036–2037: Tir Tairngire forces invade California "to protect the redwood forests." Militia forces and CFS Army troops push the Tir Peace Force back to Yreka in a bloody guerilla war.
May 1, 2043: Second Rite of Progression.
May 1, 2050: Third Rite of Progression. Several of the highest-ranked participants mysteriously vanish over the next few months.
2052: Seattle becomes the Tir's major port following a series of trade agreements with the UCAS and SSC.
2053: Tir forces attack northern CFS. They are repelled at Shasta Dam by Hestaby with heavy casualties.
April 30, 2054: Crater Lake closed to the public.
2055: Ehran the Scribe is officially granted a Council seat (secretly, he has held the seat for years).
August 2057: The Tir declares a "state of emergency" and closes its borders after the death of Dunkelzahn.
2057: The Tir princes inexplicably postpone the fourth Rite of progression for an "indefinite period."
2058: The resistance group Rinelle ke'Tesrae makes its first appearance.
2061: The "state of emergency" in effect since 2057 officially ends. Lugh Surehand announces that a new Rite of Progression will be held in 2063.
June 2062: Without warning, both Lofwyr and Aithne Oakforest retire from the Council of Princes. Glasgian Oakforest goes missing.
July 2062: Lugh Surehand grants the great dragon Hestaby the rank of prince; she is immediately awarded a seat on the Council of Princes. Ehran announces he will be vacating his position on the Council of Princes at the end of the year.

TIR TAIRNGIRE AT A GLANCE

Population: 5,010,000
- Human: 4%
- Elf: 81%
- Dwarf: 7%
- Ork: 5%
- Troll: 1%
- Other: 2%

Per Capita Income: 25,000 ¥
Estimated SINless: 8%
Below Poverty Level: 26%
Corporate Affiliation: 10%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 6%
- High School Equivalency: 55%
- College Degrees: 29%
- Advanced Degrees: 10%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 85%
- Sperethiel: 55%

Currency: Nuyen

The group's cells are formed from people that know and trust each other, and are sometimes referred to as *ranelles*, which translates to "family" or "coworkers." For the most part, cells operate independently, occasionally contacting other cells to coordinate actions, get supplies and so on. Communication is managed over the Matrix, using smuggled satellite equipment. Messages are relayed using smart frames and agents loaded with heavily encrypted and time-sensitive data packets; this network is usually referred to as the *Shay ke'Sallah* ("forest of silence").

• Some parts of the Rinelle network are more organized, grouped into a pyramid of cells. Knowledge about other cells is limited to knowing two people in the cell above and two people from each cell below. Orders get passed down from higher up the chain of command. I've heard other cells criticize this structure, claiming that no one knows who's at the top, and some groups—possibly even the state—may be trying to take control of the movement.
• Zora

• They're right. One of the princes is at the top of that pyramid. Why do you think Rinelle is so successful, and why the other princes fear them so much?
• Autark

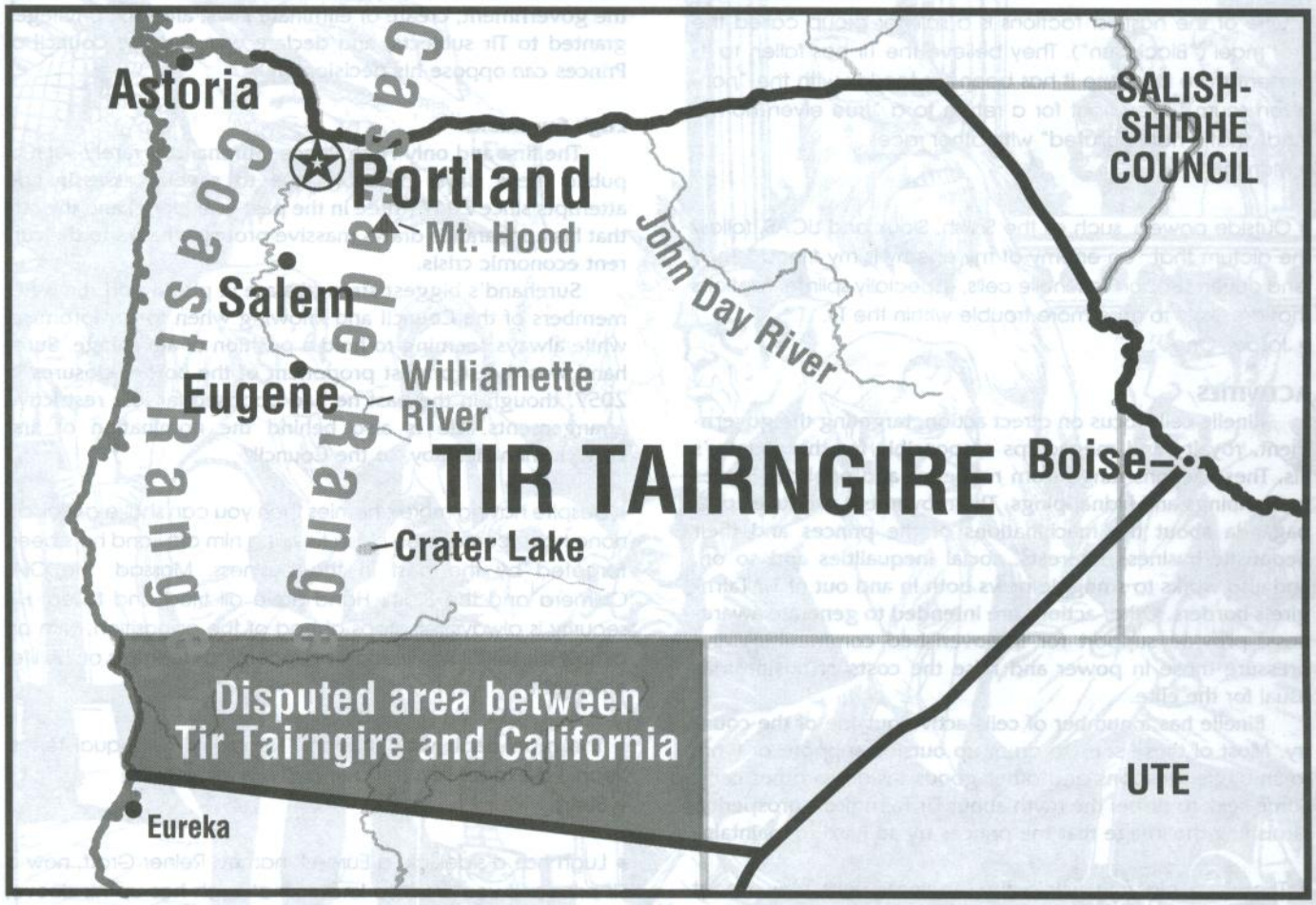
• Nice way to spread lies and cause division, you smarmy lapdog. If we believed anonymous posts like that, we'd be killing each other in bloody purges—which is probably your intention. Sorry, we only deal in facts.
• Versakhan ke'Raegh

The vetting of cells is important, as the government has scored major successes by infiltrating and setting up fake cells as part of their counterintelligence efforts. New members are given only limited access to resources and communication, and they are typically given various tasks and tests to assess their capability and intent. If things look suspicious, either misleading information will be fed to the person or they will be monitored from afar by other cells.

FACTIONS

Rinelle ke'Tesrae is a popular force, and it has all the contradictions and differences of public opinion. Some members believe Rinelle is either *too* radical or not radical *enough*, and each cell has its own vision for the future.

The majority of Rinelle members and supporters wish to overthrow the Council of Princes and establish a more modern representative government. These rebels believe the



Council of Princes has betrayed the country and that only a duly elected government that answers to the people will be able to solve the country's financial problems.

• Yeah, that will help. Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.
• Fawkes

Another large faction takes a more critical view of Tir society as a whole, demanding the abolition of the class stratification system. These radicals aren't content to merely overthrow the Council, they want to restructure all of Tir society from the bottom up. This faction counts both highly educated leftist intellectuals in its ranks and a mass of class-conscious elven gentry and SINless, along with a large chunk of other disgruntled metatypes.

The third largest faction is more reactionary and nationalistic, considering themselves patriots who wish to stabilize Tir Tairngire so that it can compete with other nations and megacorp influence. Their public announcements focus on the nation's *vereb'he*, which is difficult to translate but roughly means "destiny of the people to prosper." Many members of this faction are from more privileged social status, and the postponement of the Rite of Progression is the primary issue to them. They received an influx of support when the great dragon Hestaby took a seat on the Council of Princes. The bitter memories of her murderous activities during the 2053 border conflict are still fresh in the minds of many.

• Hestaby is a hated and feared enemy of the Tir people. Hundreds of families lost sons and daughters to her claws during the last border war. Her current position is a slap in the face to the Tir people.
• Aegis

• Hestaby may have blood on her claws, but point the blame in the right place: at the princes who ordered an invasion and used the gentry as cannon fodder in a war we didn't want.
• Class Warrior

Other, smaller factions also exist, and the differences between cells sometimes leads to serious difficulties, if not outright fighting. I suspect it is only a matter of time before Rinelle splinters into competing groups. It remains to be seen if one faction achieves an upper hand, or if they manage to bring the Council down first.

• One of the nastiest factions is a splinter group called the Brat'mael ("Black Sun"). They believe the Tir has fallen to its present state because it has been far too lax with the "non-elven scum." They fight for a return to a "true elven homeland" that is not "polluted" with other races.
• Monitor

• Outside powers, such as the Salish, Sioux and UCAS, follow the dictum that "an enemy of my enemy is my friend." They lend covert support to Rinelle cells, especially splinter factions that are likely to raise more trouble within the Tir.
• Jasper_One

ACTIVITIES

Rinelle cells focus on direct action, targeting the government, royalty and megacorps responsible for the country's ills. These actions range from robberies and publicity blitzes to bombings and kidnappings. The movement produces propaganda about the machinations of the princes and their nepotistic business interests, social inequalities and so on, and also works to smuggle news both in and out of Tir Tairngire's borders. Other actions are intended to generate awareness, provide support for impoverished communities and pressure those in power and raise the costs of business as usual for the elite.

Rinelle has a number of cells active outside of the country. Most of these seek to drum up outside support, or work to smuggle weapons and other goods inside to other cells. Some seek to dispel the myth about Tir Tairngire's prosperity, tarnishing the image that the princes try so hard to maintain.

• There's a big row within the Ancients right now about whether or not to support Rinelle. Some of the more impulsive members have already started doing so, but others simply don't want to have any connections to the Tir.
• Blood

THE POWER ELITE

To an outsider, Tir Tairngire's government is a confusing mess of feudalism, hereditary monarchy and just enough faux-democratic process to appease the masses. Outsiders come away with an impression of mystery and glamour. The very names of the branches and agents of the government are chosen to give an appearance of age, stability and culture. The use of Sperethiel and archaic titles such as High Prince, Council of Princes, Star Chamber and Paladins all confer a sense of borrowed respectability and grandeur; the entire organization of government is a propaganda campaign.

HIGH PRINCE ("SE'HAR MAERA")

The High Prince fills a role somewhere between head of state and dictator. He leads both the executive and legislative branches and is nominally the commander in chief of both the military and police force. Despite popular belief, the High Prince does not have the power of absolute rule, nor is his word necessarily law. He can issue orders to any section of the government, create or eliminate laws, alter the privileges granted to Tir subjects, and declare war. But the Council of Princes *can* oppose his decisions.

Lugh Surehand

The first and only High Prince, Surehand is rarely seen in public these days, probably due to several assassination attempts since 2047 (three in the past year alone) and the fact that his appearance draws massive protests thanks to the current economic crisis.

Surehand's biggest strengths are in playing off the other members of the Council and knowing when to compromise, while always seeming to hold a position of advantage. Surehand was the strongest proponent of the border closures in 2057, though in the past he had opposed far less restrictive arrangements. He is also behind the nomination of first Lofwyr, then Hestaby, to the Council.

• Despite having more enemies then you can shake a stick at, none have come even close to killing him off—and he's been targeted by the best in the business. Mossad, the CIA, Chimera and the Black Hand have all tried and failed. His security is always ten steps ahead of the opposition, with an almost prescient knowledge of upcoming attempts on his life.
• Arclight

• The man deals with dragons. Regularly. On equal terms. Yeah, I'd expect him to have god-like security.
• Bung

• Lugh has a sidekick, a Euro-elf named Reiner Graff, now a Tir prince. If you want to know what Lugh has up his sleeve, watch Graff—he handles all the dirty work.
• Banshee

• Graff used to be an item with Claudia Romanov, the Euro model who is now one of Lofwyr's personal pets.
• Felix

THE COUNCIL OF PRINCES ("ELE ARANDUR")

The highest governing body of the national government is the Council of Princes. The Council consists of thirteen princes (not including the High Prince), one of whom is a secret member. These thirteen are distinguished from the other two hundred or so princes of royalty rank by virtue of their place on the Council.

The Council recently underwent a shakeup of epic proportions, though the exact circumstances remain hidden. All that is publicly known is that both Aithne Oakforest and Lofwyr retired from the Council without explanation. A month later, the great dragon Hestaby was made a prince and granted Lofwyr's seat. This move created an uproar among subjects that viewed her as an enemy, despite the High Prince's reassurances pronouncements of a new era of cooperation with the nation's neighbors. The rioting subsided after a few days, but the ranks of Rinelle ke'Tesrae swelled.



• Wasn't that arrogant Oakforest slag a top dog in the Tir? What happened?
• Rose Red

• He was, but that just means his fall was harder. No one seems to know the scoop, but there is one interesting tidbit—his son, Glasgian Oakforest, is missing. The way I scan it, Glasgian and the Oakforests had some sort of "incident," and the fallout forced both Aithne and Lofwyr out. Aithne's still moping in his mansion on Royal Hill, and I wouldn't want to be an enemy of his when he comes out of that funk. His hot temper is legendary, and he's still a force to reckon with.
• Page

• Frag Oakforest, who the hell managed to trump Lofwyr? It takes major moxie to plot a dragon out of power, and I wouldn't want to see what the wyrm has in mind for revenge!
• Dragonslayer

• How do you know Lofwyr didn't choose to leave?
• Reality Czech

In the meantime, one Council seat remains unspoken for, and a quiet but deadly competition is afoot among the royal ranks. James Telestrian III is a clear choice in the minds of many, though he faces stiff competition.

Of the thirteen princes, four are what I consider to be the "Inner Council:" Sean Laverty, Ehran the Scribe, Jenna Ni'Fairra and Sósan Naerain. Along with Surehand, these are the true movers and shakers of Tir Tairngire; quite simply, they hold all of the cards.

The other three elves, Jonathan Reed, Dar Varien and Maria Cinebal, were originally placeholders and yes-men for Lugh Surehand. But after many years and many changes, these elves have tasted power and are hungry for more. As each day passes, they become more and more unpredictable, pursuing their own agendas more often than simply taking orders.

The others on the Council are a smattering of metahumans simply placed onboard as a nod that the Council is also sensitive to non-elven needs. I'm certain that each of these showpieces is well aware of their place in the scheme of things, but I suspect that some of them have been around long enough to have other notions. Their names seem to come up in conversations more often than in the past, but it remains to be seen if they hope to compete with the Machiavellian masters of the Inner Circle, or if they simply hope to play their private political games on the side.

• Hmm. Who better to secretly support Rinelle ke'Tesrae than one of these ignored non-elven princes?
• Conspir-I-See

Ehran the Scribe

Once the most pivotal member of the Council, Ehran will soon be leaving it, giving public notice that he is retiring from the Council sometime in late 2062. This announcement apparently came as a surprise to Lugh Surehand and the others, who have yet to make any official statements. Officially, Ehran is leaving to accept a full-time position with the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research. Unofficially, it is obvious he was extremely displeased with the events surrounding Lofwyr, Aithne and Hestaby. He has not renounced his citizenship, however, and he will undoubtedly remain a force in Tir Tairngire affairs for some time to come.

It has not yet been determined who will replace Ehran on the Council. Already the princely ranks are vying for the seat and plots are going into motion.

•The loss of Ehran means that the Council will become increasingly polarized. For all his faults, Ehran had enough popularity and charisma to sway the other princes onto a more even-handed path. He must have serious issues with the Council to abandon a nation he has sunk so much energy into.
• Aegis

• Ehran is a manipulative, deceitful, and egotistical maniac. But he sees the writing on the wall and is getting out while his public image is still positive. I would not be surprised if he comes back as the "hero" when one side or the other looks to have the decisive upper hand.
• Marker

• Groups like the Young Elven Technologists and the paladins of the Great Hunt have not taken Ehran's announcement well. Some are following their leader and abandoning ship, while others are dedicating themselves to "correcting" the Tir's problems—by whatever means necessary.
• Monitor

Sean Laverty

Sean Laverty is the most recognizable Prince outside of Tir Tairngire, aside from Ehran and Surehand. He is well known for his back-to-nature agenda and open opposition to the industrialization of the country. Has had an ongoing rivalry with Ehran for several years, based more on their differing interpretations of the nation's future plans then any real personal problems. He has no known family or romantic interests, but has a small cadre of followers both in and out of the Tir—typically among "traditionalist" elven groups.

• Laverty has something of an obsession with magical sites. Recently he's been crusading to send Tir research teams to "investigate" Mount Shasta, but Hestaby squashed the idea.
• Cork

Jenna Ni'Fairra

Far from the most public member of the council, Ni'Fairra is known for her eloquent and passionate speeches. Too bad she's openly racist, going so far as to refuse to brazenly walk out of Council meetings when non-elf princes are speaking.

• I don't know what Surehand is hanging over her head to get her to agree with allowing Hestaby onto the Council but it must be something very bad.
• Nemar

• Our fair Prince Ni'Fairra has been hard at work pushing her protégé Feana Sterling into position to claim Ehran's Council seat. Seems she is taking lessons from Surehand on how to stack the government with loyal cronies.
• Jurian

Sósan Naerain

Though her name never appears in public, Naerain is a key force on the Council and has been for some time. She is the only one I have ever heard of to verbally dress down Surehand in front of his peers and get away with it. It is hard to figure out exactly what interests she represents, as she never appears at *recorded* Council meetings and rarely votes on any issues. She does seem to have a close relationship to Ni'Fairra, as they unite forces on a regular basis, berate each other like siblings and even have similar features.

• Why the secrecy? She got an embarrassing history as a sim-sex star or something?
• Snoop

Jonathon Reed

Prince Reed is one of the "new breed" of Tir Princes—earning this designation because we can actually trace his history back to his birth. Prince Reed was originally born in Finland at the beginning of the Awakening. He moved to the Tir in 2034 and was appointed a prince just a year later. The exact reasons for his appointment remain shrouded in mystery.

Prince Reed is a firm supporter of Lugh Surehand, and has never voted against him on the Council. Currently, Reed is "Operations Director" of the shadowy Information Secretariat and reports directly to the High Prince on all internal security matters. He is unmarried and has no know relationships or activities aside from his official duties.

• I wouldn't quite say he doesn't have any interests aside from his work as chief headhunter for the Tir. It's just that they are of the type that requires burying bodies when he's done having fun.
• Magnificent Edward

Dar Varien

Born in Germany, Dar Varien is another stalwart Surehand supporter, though he remains independent from the High Prince's direct control. His face is a common sight on the Tir news as he is one of the few princes who regularly attends public events.

Dar Varien has not exercised many of his powers as prince, but is famous for being the only member of the Council to be directly involved with the Tir invasion of northern California (allegedly overseeing it on Surehand's behalf). During this campaign, a guerrilla bomb destroyed his command post—and his arm. A war hero, he now wears a cybernetic replacement with pride.

Dar Varien is extremely popular among military personnel and often makes unannounced visits to Peace Force garrisons throughout the country. He is very liberal regarding the rights of non-elves, and was successful in opening the military service to all Tir subjects in 2039.

• He's also quite popular with the ladies. Varien's got a rep for "loving them and leaving them," so to speak. I'm sure he has more then one illegitimate kid that he keeps under wraps.
• Maelwys

• Prince Varien is only interested in two things: a good fight and good publicity—preferably both at the same time. He often travels both inside and outside the country to participate in martial arts tournaments and shooting matches, where he does quite well.
• Magnificent Edward

Maria Cinebal

Public records place Prince Cinebal's birth in 1998, over a decade before the Awakening. This would qualify her as a "spike baby"—a person who underwent premature UGE—though this theory is still hotly contested in academic circles. Records indicate she was raised at the Xavier Institute (owned by one Sean Laverty) and became active in the Salish political arena in the late 2020's. She has been romantically linked to Prince Varien in the past, but the two are rarely seen in public together.

• She lost a brother in the fighting when the Tir invaded California the second time in 2053. You can see the hate radiate from her in waves whenever Hestaby is present or brought up in discussions.
• Page

Blake Ladner

Ladner was chosen to be a prince for two reasons: he's a dwarf and he's easily manipulated. Ladner truly believes that elves are the best fit to lead, and he has seen nothing to disprove that notion. Surehand keeps him carefully sheltered from the realities of the country, and in return Ladner is extremely loyal to Lugh Surehand.

• Ladner is a toady who owes everything to Surehand, and everybody knows it, including him. He gets absolutely no respect from the other princes, especially Zincan who considers him a traitorous bootlicker.
• Joe

• I don't buy it. I went to college with Ladner, and he was brilliant, not to mention a complete ham. I suspect he's just playing the part of dwarf lackey so that his pointy-eared opponents underestimate him. I bet he has all sorts of schemes cooked up—"in service to the Council," of course.
• Wormtongue

• Unless he's a master actor, such a ruse would not fool the Inner Circle for long. Perhaps they appreciate his acting talent and chutzpah enough to keep him around anyway. Who's to say?
• Aegis

Garth Stone

Prince Stone was the token dwarf placed on the council in 2035. For sixteen years he played the dutiful inferior metahuman role, consistently supporting any resolution backed by Surehand. But Jenna Ni'Fairra got to him somehow, and for the first time in late 2061 he cast a vote against the High Prince. For several months, Stone was caught in a tug of war between the two princes, until he took an extended leave of absence in April.

• Lil' Garthy ain't on no vacation, that's for sure. Surehand locked him away in a "private hospital" after he displayed some severe mental instability following a "car accident." Rumors are swirling that Surehand is having him reprogrammed to behave properly, that Ni'Fairra is arranging to spring him, and that Hestaby has taken a personal interest in the case. Crazy drek.
• Arkham

• If the competition for the empty Council seats really heats up, some faction may decide that it's necessary to free up a another seat on the Council—and Stone is a prime target. Any bets on how long he lasts?
• Negative Burn

• My friends in Salem tell me that Prince Ladner is desperately looking to bring in some bodyguards from outside the Tir. Seems none of the local talent wants the unenviable task of guarding this walking target. Big bucks if you're a glutton for punishment.
• Arclight

Larry Zincan

Larry Zincan is the only ork prince and one of the few non-elf princes that has actively attempted to use his powers.

Zincan has voiced opposition to the isolationist economic policies from the beginning, and made some critical comments regarding the crackdown on the public outrage. He used his powers to pardon many of the activists involved in the first wave of arrests, but the other princes were quick to reprimand him. He also actively calmed the public when SURGE hit, and was in fact the only prince besides Ehran to publicly comment on and support changelings.

• Zincan single-handedly saved Salem from burning to the ground when SURGE hit. Rumors spread that it was a biowarfare attack by North Crescent terrorists and the city exploded. Zincan was on the tridfeeds and in the streets, calming people with a voice of tolerance, reason and authority. He helped out a lot of elf changelings who suddenly found out what it was like to be discriminated against by those in power.
• Asymettric

In compensation for his outspokenness, Zincan was nominated by Surehand to be the Tir Special Envoy to the UCAS. These duties keep Zincan occupied in Seattle and DeeCee, which has effectively become a form of exile.

• Zincan was somehow involved in the whole clusterfrag with Lofwyr, Hestaby and Aithne. Guess he made the wrong people very angry.
• Redleaf

"Rex"

Prince "Rex" is the only Sasquatch to serve as a high ranking political official on the entire planet. "Rex" is simply his verbal identifier; his real name is unpronounceable and is in the form of a 20-second song. Rex is only involved in Council business when his presence is absolutely required; otherwise he disappears for months at a time into the southeast forests.

• Rex is the most popular of the princes, in large part because, well ... let's be honest, he's cute as a button. He's the only prince to have his own dolls—the "Huggable Lovable Rex" line is amazingly popular both in the Tir and Salish-Shidhe. And his furry face shows up on everything from environmental awareness posters to keychains.
• Kzeentch

• If anyone could rally everyone's support, from the lowest gutterpunk to the nobles, it's Rex. Too bad he has little interest in politics. More then a few nobles have been trying to get him to support their candidates for the Council, but I don't think the fuzzball knows what to make of the attention.
• Murian

Hestaby

Hestaby is the newest, and by far the most controversial, member of the Council of Princes, replacing Lofwyr as the only dragon on the Council. Though the Council of Princes approved the change (barely!) it is obvious that something else has happened behind the scenes. Combined with the retirement of Lofwyr and Oakforest without explanation or warning, many are wondering if her appointment was more an act of desperation than planning.

• There was a lot of panic on both sides of the border when Hestaby's new position was announced. A few Tir cities exploded with riots, while residents of the Northern Crescent dug in, expecting a Tir invasion. But the Tir hasn't mobilized to move into the south (though they are watching Saito closely), and Hestaby has made it clear to the Council that such a thing will never happen.
• Page

• Hestaby may be a prince now, but she's not going to hand her personal domain over to a bunch of shifty keebs. She's already working overtime to convince those folks in the Northern Crescent that she hasn't betrayed them to the elves.
• Arcadian

• Wow, what a coup for Hestaby! Lofwyr must be steamed that another dragon pushed him out and stole his spot! Can we expect to see any dragon dogfights soon?
• Twitch

• Actually, I'd say our Shasta Lady was the loser in this deal. She now has more responsibilities and the hassle of minding a pack of spoiled brats, while for once Golden Snout didn't bite off more than he can chew. Is that accurate, my dear?
• The Laughing Man

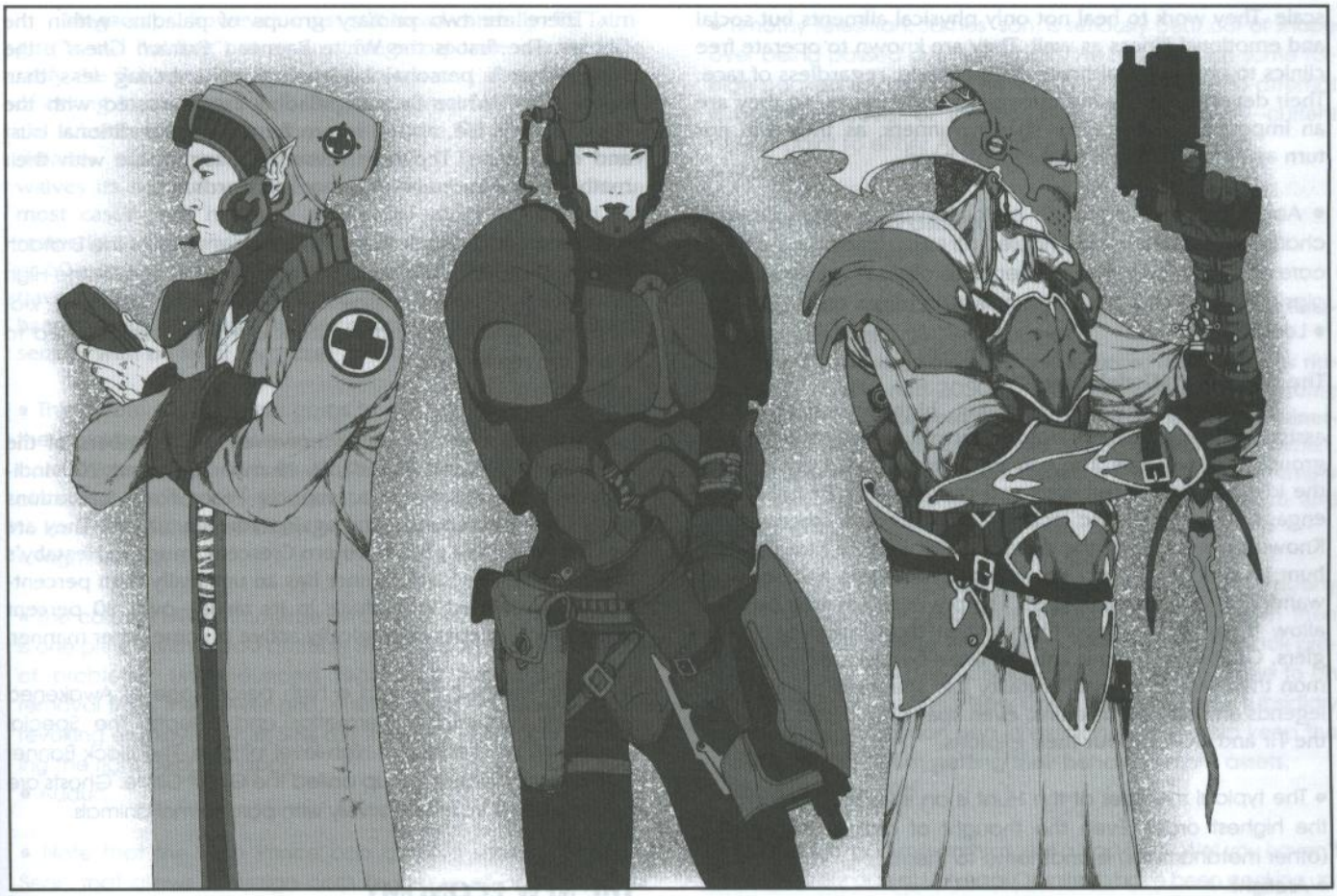
"Ha! Fraggin' Ha!"

• Quiet, my friend. Your morbid humor doesn't hide your jealousy.
• Orange Queen

STAR CHAMBER ("SE'RANSHAE ELENVA")

The Star Chamber was formed in 2043 as the "Chamber of Representatives" to meet a public demand for representation in the government. The trick has proven effective, as many subjects truly believe that their voice is being heard in the government, despite the fact that the Chamber cannot legally enforce any decisions and the Council never adequately fulfills their requirement to keep the Chamber as informed as they are.

It seems that the Chamber itself is nearing rebellion now, in light of recent events. Their proposals to change the economic situation have been ignored, as was their request for



an emergency session with the Council to discuss the Hestaby situation. In the past six months alone, a dozen representatives have resigned in disgust. Three were arrested and charged with treason (for "slandering the High Prince" and "aiding terrorists").

PALADINS

Technically, paladins are not a governmental body or organization. The concept of paladins relates to several different elements of Tir Tairngire society and security, however, and there has been enough confusion regarding them in the past that I hope to clarify it here.

In Tir Tairngire culture, paladins are one of two things: individuals who have devoted themselves to a specific cause, or those that pledge themselves to the service of a specific person. Both types are called The Passionate ("*Beletre*"), but the two are quite different.

The first case of paladin is a questor of a personal nature, given the honorary title of paladin for dedicating their life to a goal, such as curing a disease or helping the homeless. Paladins of this sort are patrons and activists, dedicating their time, energy and resources to furthering their specific cause. In this case, becoming a paladin is a matter of honor and responsibility that is not taken lightly and is often accompanied by press releases, announcements at major social events, and so on. Failure—or not committing fully to the cause—is a major disgrace that can lead to exile, demotion in social rank, suicide or worse. Most paladins of this sort come from the noble class.

- Some infamous members of Rinelle ke'Tesrae have become paladins for their cause, earning them props from other activists and a death warrant from the Council.
- Fenian

The second type of paladin swears lifelong fealty to an important person, taking on a specific set of duties and roles. Most of the Council princes have a number of paladins who have committed themselves to their liege's service, particularly Surehand, Ehran and Laverty. In a few specific cases, this servitude overlaps with official responsibilities, such as elite security agents that serve the High Prince.

A few examples of the wide range of paladins follows:

The Society of Healers ("Huro ke'Envar")

This society of doctors and researchers is dedicated to healing and preserving life. As paladins, they follow a set of principles similar to the Hippocratic Oath, but on a broader

scale. They work to heal not only physical ailments but social and emotional illness as well. They are known to operate free clinics to provide healthcare to the needy, regardless of race. Their devotion to healing outweighs legal issues, so they are an important resource for shadowrunners, as they will not turn away or endanger someone in need.

• About a month ago one of these doctors was arrested, charged with treason and hauled off to jail for providing medcare to Rinelle cells. The incident has caused an uproar and gigs of debate over the clash between ethics and legality.
• Leech

The Hunters ("Mistish Farad")

Ehran, who encouraged young, high-ranking nobles to assist the Peace Force in border patrols, initially formed this grouping of paladins. The concept is clever, as it encourages the idle and pampered sons and daughters of Tir nobility to engage in xenophobic activity and accredit themselves. Known as paladins of the Great Hunt ("*Bele se'Farad*"), they hunt invaders for sport, act as troubleshooters and serve as wandering wilderness rangers. The privileges of their position allow them to be bloodthirsty when they intercept smugglers, Californian militias and the like—bodies are more common than captives. Their brutality has spawned many of the legends and tales of paladins, even spawning trideo shows in the Tir and UCAS about their exploits.

• The typical member of the Hunt is an elven supremacist of the highest order. Even the thought of aiding the cele'nit (other metahumans) is anathema to them.
• Arclight

The Spirit Warriors ("Meraerth ke'Tolo")

As Tir Tairngire is an aristocracy, it is no surprise that the Special Forces units of the Peace Force have pledged themselves to serve the High Prince. Considered to be one of the best unconventional warfare groups in the world, the Special Forces are known as "Ghosts" and are favorably compared to the Tir na nOg *Reach Fuileach* and the Sioux Wildcats.

• In case you haven't figured it out yet, the Tir police and military are all rolled into one body, called the Peace Force. The Constabulary division handles civilian/criminal policing duties, and includes a Matrix law enforcement arm called NetWatch. These coppers carry medium armor, stun weapons, heavy pistols, biomonitors and decent quality tech toys, and they have a lot more leeway, especially if you're an outsider or of low social rank. The Military division handles standard military duties plus border patrols; the Special Forces fall under this part. Oh yeah, the Information Secretariat—the Tir secret police—is separate from the Peace Force, though they both share info and answer to the High Prince.
• Grim Fairy

There are two primary groups of paladins within the Ghosts. The first is the White Banner ("*Bratach Gheal*"), the High Prince's personal bodyguards. Numbering less than twenty, the White Banner paladins are entrusted with the High Prince's life, and in return have his unconditional trust and confidence. They are instantly recognizable with their matte-black armor and ceremonial swords.

• The so-called "Black Daggers" are members of the Bratach Gheal on detached duty to perform special tasks for the High Prince or the Council. Assassinations (even of Tir nobles), kidnappings, and even mass murder are the tasks assigned to these craven lapdogs.
• Wagner

The majority of Ghosts, however, are members of the Black Banner ("*Bratach Falan*"). Numbering about 200 individuals, their mission is to support Peace Force operations both within the country and against foreign targets. They are heavily engaged in the Northern Crescent (much to Hestaby's annoyance). The Black Banner has an unusually high percentage of Awakened individuals in its ranks—over 80 percent are physical adepts or magically active in some other manner.

• The Tir Peace Force has a high percentage of Awakened members, particularly hermetics and adepts. The Special Forces are packed full of high-level initiates. The Black Banner includes an initiatory group called the Ghost Circle. Ghosts are also known to train extensively with paranormal animals.
• Tigger

THE NEW ECONOMY

Tir Tairngire used to take great pride in the fact that a good chunk of the employed population either worked for themselves or in small cottage-industry "mom and pop" businesses. Government subsidies kept many of these businesses afloat, but when the economy hit recession those programs were the first on the chopping block.

During the isolationist period, foreign megacorps suffered even more restrictions than usual, but so did many Tir corps that relied on outside business. Now that the trade restrictions have been lifted, many Tir corps are too weak to take advantage of the fresh conditions. Meanwhile, foreign megacorp restrictions have been reduced, allowing them to move in, buy out failing companies and establish new footholds. A feeding frenzy is currently taking place as new corps rush in and attempt to establish ground before their competitors.

• The Tir has a lot of small outfits that specialize in intellectual property, crafting processes, methods, formulae, designs and even artwork that are then licensed out for a steady source of revenue. These offices have been the primary targets for the new sharks in the pool, each hoping to snatch up some lucrative patents and licenses and the smarties who created them. Extractions are at an all time high.
• The Keynesian Kid

Megacorps, however, must still tread carefully. Tir Tairngire is still holding out against megacorporate demands to ratify the Business Recognition Accords and shows no signs of caving in anytime soon. Megacorps must still create special subsidiaries to do business within the Tir, and these subsidiaries cannot have extraterritoriality. The Council now waives its requirement to own 5 percent of subsidiaries in most cases, and has also eliminated many legal and tax restrictions. Corporation work-forces must still be composed of 60 percent Tir subjects, and foreign employees face stiff travel restrictions. Corporations that flaunt Tir law can be banned from operating in the country and have their assets seized, with no legal recourse.

• This means it's easier for corps to get runners in and out of the country if they need to. Expect Johnsons to take extra care to keep their hands clean, though. If any dirty work gets pinned on the corp, they're toast and they know it. So expect to be in the dark more than usual.
• Night Runner

• The corps have an immense amount of sway, but all it takes is one prince with a bad attitude to bring down a whole world of problems. Unannounced regulatory inspections, fines, removal from the power grid, unexplained "accidents," and revoking employee work SINs are frequent results of not making the right people happy.
• Audun

• Note that the High Prince can grant a special "Prince's Seal" that allows a foreign corp to ignore all of the special restrictions. The last corp to hold one was Kokura Biotechnology, but they bailed when things got ugly (but not before losing a division or two to Telestrian). No new ones have been granted, though several applications have been made—including one by Saeder-Krupp Prime.
• The Chromed Accountant
"It's all about dollars and sense."

TELESTRIAN INDUSTRIES
CEO: Marie-Louise Telestrian
HQ: Telestrian Habitat, Portland
Subsidiaries: Telestrain Biotechnology, NeuroTech Computing, Lotus Eaters Entertainment, Aeon Pathways, GeneSec, Green Arrow Industries

The Telestrian conglomerate is the largest Tir-owned corp, involved in almost every high-tech field from genetics to military designs. Owned entirely by the Telestrian clan, the company experienced a real shakeup in leadership when James Telestrian III stepped down last month and declared his intention to "take" Ehran's soon-to-be-empty Council seat (as if it had already been offered to him). James handed control over to his younger sister, Marie-Louise Telestrian, who has already laid out a battle plan to expand the company's interests.

• Timothy Telestrian, James' son, is seriously bent out of shape over being passed over yet again. He has lined up some foreign backers and is hiring some big-league talent to attempt a hostile takeover of the company from his aunt—current rumors point to either Aztechnology or Saeder-Krupp.
• Marker

NEW DAWN CORPORATION
CEO: Gavin Thibault
HQ: Portland
Subsidiaries: New Dawn Medical Research, New Dawn Pharmaceuticals, Genome Technologies

New Dawn is a company under siege. Though it was riding high in the mid-2050s after buying out rival Genome Technologies, the buyout drained resources and left it vulnerable to the UCAS trade embargo. When the borders opened, New Dawn was nearly ripped apart by acquisition attempts and black operations by Universal Omnitech, Renraku and Saeder-Krupp.

• Universal Omnitech was trying to grab the whole company in one fell swoop but overextended itself. New Dawn then threatened to release information on some secret black program that UO has been cooking up. So they've come to an agreement: UO gets the New Dawn Biotechnology subsidiary without any opposition and in exchange they help keep the other predators from getting their hands on more assets.
• The Keynesian Kid

• You thought gamma-anthrax was a bad bug? Well you haven't seen what our pals at Universal Omnitech have been cooking up. New Dawn probably sniffed out their "Ebola Plus" program.
• The Smiling Bandit
"Striking Again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

WILLAMETTE COMPUSTAT CORPORATION
CEO: Darcy Dybhavn
HQ: Salem
Divisions: WC Data Processing, WC Consulting, Remote Technologies

Williamette excels at creating custom database, data processing and searchbot software, as well as handling a client's data-managing needs. It was bought out by Saeder-Krupp just hours after the wyrm quit the Council of Princes, S-K's first official acquisition in the country.

• Want to know why Lofwyr wanted this gem? Willamette had been contracted for all major data backups for the Tir government since 2052 or so, including Council records and some private royal systems. Supposedly the company didn't keep copies ... yeah, sure. The kicker is, it looks like someone beat Lofwyr to it. Before the ink on the sale was dry, someone held a fire sale and sold everything not nailed down in

Williamette's deep, dark basement offices. Heads rolled of course, but someone snatched away Lofwyr's prize. The question is: who?

•Ziplip

ANDALUSIAN LIGHT INDUSTRIES

CEO: Michael Demarco

HQ: Portland

It's an open secret that ALI is a holding company for various prince-owned businesses that they don't wish to have exposed. It has its fingers in virtually every major business within the country in one way or another. It also serves to conceal various foreign businesses that the princes run outside the country.

• ALI has been fronting serious nuyen to hire shadowrunners to track down and "neutralize" Rinelle cells outside the country that have messed with Andalusian assets. If you don't mind wetwork or other dirty jobs, sign on up. You won't be making friends in the shadows, but biz is biz.

• Synner

TOURISM, SHADOW STYLE

by Ventos

Remember the days when every shadowrunner shuddered with dread at the thought of running in the Tir? We've all heard the story about a team that tries to run the border, gets shot up by Paladins or whatnot, doped with *laes*, and dumped back in the SSC with no memories and a bad hangover. Those tales have become part of the cultural myth that the entire Tir is locked up tighter then a drum, with Pointy Eared Forest Ninjas under every rock and dragons around every corner. Those days are no more, my friends.

Thanks to the Tir's new open border policy, getting in is easier than ever before. Don't get me wrong—it's not going to be easy or fun and the Peace Force is as trigger-happy as ever, but if you like a challenge and you do a little prepwork and planning, you too can visit Elfland.

How so? First off, you can now obtain special "tourist" visas to visit Portland with only a cursory background check. The security checks at Portland's airports and border crossings are nothing special—the usual chemscan and maybe a physical search and you are on your way. To visit anywhere else in the Tir, you have to jump through a few more scans and hoops. Alternately, you can try to sneak out of Portland, but that usually involves getting past a gate checkpoint, though a few other options exist.

• If you want to go anywhere in the Tir outside of Portland, you better be an elf (or be able to look like one). Otherwise you need a stack of credentials, and even then your visit will be limited and you can expect regular Peace Force stops on the street to check your papers.

• Brick

• If you want to travel in style, arrange to get a special "Council Pass." Any elf that sees that will bend over backwards to help you out, tusks or not.

• Glitch

Customs personnel are doing their best to check incoming traffic, but until Portland's port facilities and other transportation centers are rebuilt, most cargo traffic has to go overland via contracted shipping companies from the Salish, UCAS and the Ute. There simply are not enough personnel or time allotted to search more then a few of the incoming and outgoing vehicles, meaning smuggling goods is easier than ever.

If you want to run the border, I recommend avoiding a northern-border crossing, as that boundary line is still locked up tight. The southern border is a gamble—it'll either be all clear, or you'll run afoul of a military patrol/ambush (Tir or CFS militia) or rowdy paracritters. There are lots of reports of strange magical phenomenon and animals down there, so keep your eyes open. The western border is water, so you just need to steer clear of infrequent coastal patrols and Northern Crescent pirates that like to kill every elf they get their hands on. Cargo transports aren't usually searched, but they must dock at special facilities away from inhabited areas and ship crews are not allowed ashore. The east is wide open except around Boise, where there are some large military stations. The Boise checkpoint guards on both sides are happy to take bribes, though. Just don't expect to "escape to safety" in the SSC if you're being chased by Tir cops—the two nations have a "gentleman's agreement" to cooperate if one side is pursuing a target trying to escape past the border.

Assuming you get in, here's a few places you can check out.

PORTLAND ("CARA'SIR")

For years the City of Rivers existed in a twilight zone. Despite housing the seat of government, the princes treated it as a dumping ground for Tir undesirables. It also became the crusted filter that anything foreign had to pass through before entering the country. The city's economy took a hit when Seattle was favored as the Tir's primary shipping port, and crime skyrocketed throughout the 2050s. Though the city is under a modified version of martial law with a military tribunal government, street violence even spread into the affluent neighborhoods when the recession hit.

The recent reopening of the borders may signal an improvement in the inhabitant's way of life, but any changes will take time and the poor residents of Portland are out of patience. Portland is the strongest base of Rinelle ke'Tesrae support and the city is decorated with their slogans, spray-painted on every surface.

• It used to be that the police never patrolled the non-elf 'hoods, but now there's a few elven areas that have let the police know they're no longer welcome (through some judicious applications of rocks, Molotov cocktails and small arms fire). This means there are even more areas for shadowrunners to hide out in.
• Class Warrior

• Large numbers of Peace Force personnel from the Constabulary Division have been reassigned to customs duty to help manage the influx of new trade. This means that Portland city patrols are critically undermanned. Combined with Peace Force budget cuts, it's amazing any crimes get solved at all.
• SPD

• The Council was talking about eliminating the military tribunal, but now they think they need it in order to keep Rinelle contained. The situation's gotten bad enough that they're talking about taking some severe measures to "pacify" and "clean out" rebellious neighborhoods.
• Taxi Rigger

The Wall

In case you didn't know, Portland's surrounded by a wall, built to keep all of the undesirables in the city from tainting the purity of the rest of Tir Tairngire. It used to be patrolled and loaded with high-tech security gadgets, making it tough for a spider to crawl it unnoticed. A dozen gates secured with tank traps, guards and sensor systems controlled traffic going in and out of the city. But when the economy went to drek, the budget to keep the wall in shape was reduced to nil. Without regular maintenance, a major chunk of the cameras, sensors and automated killing systems no longer work. Rinelle has blown more than a few major holes in the thing, and for safety reasons they had to demolish the section that runs along Lake Oswego. The Peace Force doesn't have enough manpower to patrol it regularly, though you can bet your smartlink that they'll respond to any sensor trips with major ordnance.

• Rinelle cells have developed a dozen routes through the wall that they use to smuggle people and gear. For the right fee or a few favors, they'll "open the road" for others. Be warned, though, they may require you to take the trip blindfolded, so make sure you trust your contacts.
• Cu Chi

Places To Go

There a few things worth noting about Portland. First, the dock areas along the Williamette and Columbia Rivers at the north end of the city are undergoing a revival. Nuyen is flowing in to build new facilities and warehouses, with plenty going to line the pockets of local "businessmen" who are overseeing the new "trade."

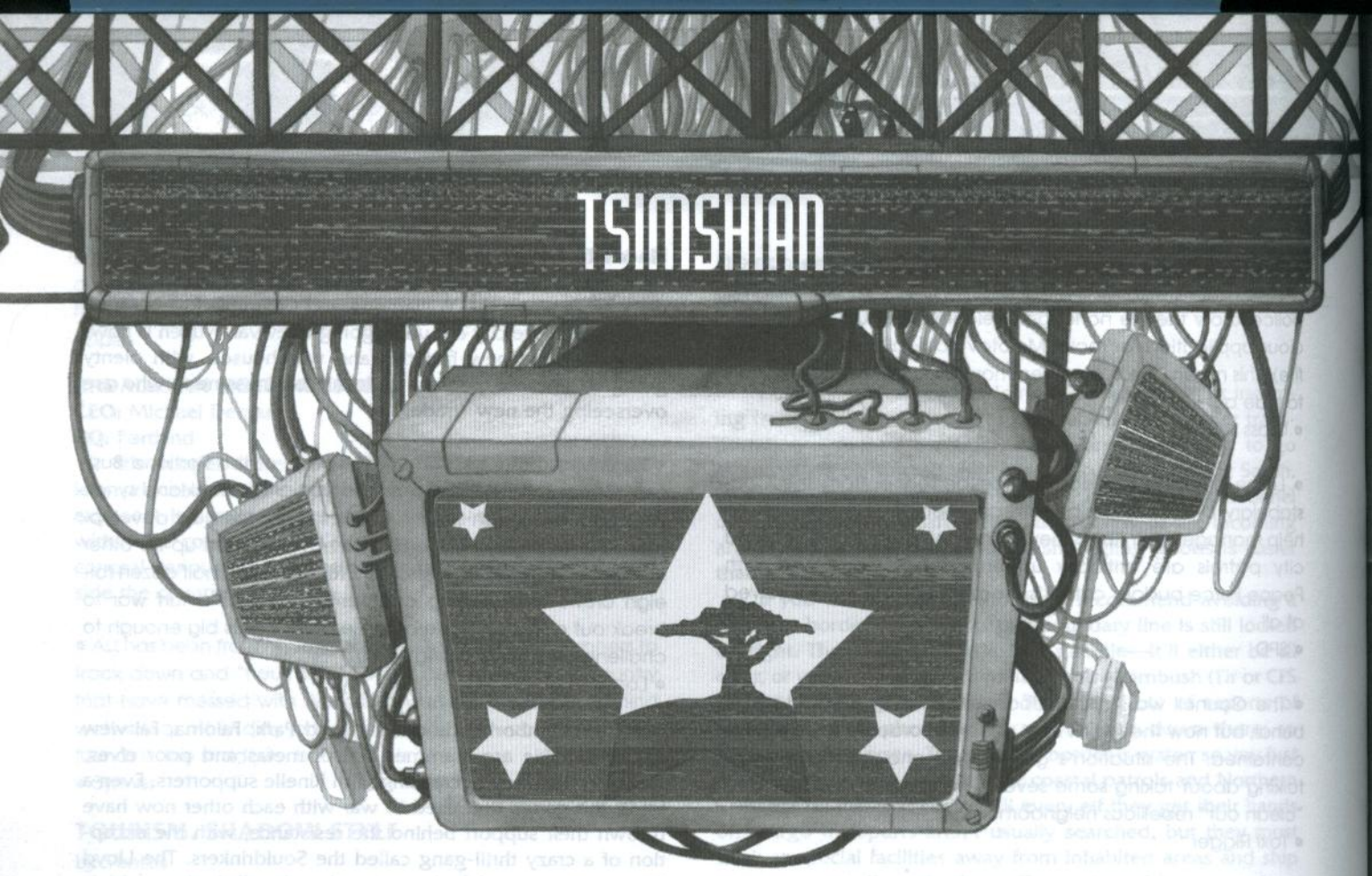
• Kate Mustaffah, aka "The Kat," head of the Portland Business Council, is still the top dog in Portland's dockland syndicate scene. Though she's raking it in with the new developments, a lot of fresh opportunities have opened up for other criminal enterprises. The Ancients, Rinelle and a half dozen foreign crews are creating competition. Expect a turf war to break out as soon as one of these party's gets big enough to challenge the Kat's stranglehold.
• Longshoreman

The neighborhoods of Maywood Park, Faloma, Fairview and Milwaukie are crammed full of metas and poor elves, meaning that they're crawling with Rinelle supporters. Even a lot of the gangs that used to war with each other now have thrown their support behind the resistance, with the exception of a crazy thrill-gang called the Souldrinkers. The Lloyd Center, once one of the largest enclosed malls in the world, is now an entirely squatted black-market bazaar. Most of the red-light meat racks and sex parlors have relocated here, after being gentrified away from the docks.

To the west of the city, outside the wall, is the area known as Royal Hill. If you can get past the Knight Errant security and the carefully sculpted countryside concealing numerous sensors and creative illusions, you'll find the massive private estates of the princes, members of the Council of Princes, and even Surehand's Royal Palace at the top of Royal Hill itself.

• Lofwyr had to give up his lair when he left the Council, much to his chagrin. I hear the land was then granted to Hestaby, but it's not clear if that was a gift or an insult. She hasn't moved in yet—maybe she's waiting for Lofwyr's wyrm-stink to clear out.
• Felix

TSIMSHIAN



Tsimshian is not exactly everyone's favorite vacation spot. In fact, I know a few steel-eyed hardcases whose stomachs turn at the thought of taking on a run there. But with civil unrest, megacorp squabbling and a border war in the works, the opportunities are too good to ignore. Perhaps no one knows this more than the local sources I tapped for info, each a runner or merc familiar with the Tsimshian situation.

• Captain Chaos
Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 18:02:03 (PST)

by Digital Samurai

When I first moved to Tsimshian, I thought I had entered Hell.

That was in 2053, when Tsimshian opened the doors to my employer—Mitsuhama. I was a Matrix engineer, part of the first wave of Mitsuhama "troops" coming to occupy the country. I knew little of Tsimshian at the time, only that it was a land in great need. I quickly learned why.

Tsimshian seceded from the NAN in 2037 after a series of disputes. Foremost among these were Tsimshian's strict immigration policies (banning even other Amerindians), its oppression of minority tribes and its desire to free itself of environmental regulations imposed by the STC. The country's autonomy allowed it to recklessly pursue the systematic exploitation of natural resources (logging and mining), propping up its sagging economy for almost two decades. Slowly but surely, however, Tsimshian staggered towards financial collapse.

• Aided in part by NAN boycotting, and a technological inability to take advantage of their available resources.
• Reciprocity Rik

Nearing bankruptcy and too proud to turn to the NAN for financial support, Tsimshian was finally forced to accept the deal Mitsuhama offered. Mitsuhama would assist Tsimshian in capitalizing on its remaining resources, relocate manufacturing plants and invest heavily—all to revitalize Tsimshian's economy. It also agreed to supplement the Tsimshian


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TSIMSHIAN TIMELINE

2018: As the Tsimshian nation forms, the New Haida Nation arises, petitions for inclusion in the NAN and is ruthlessly demolished by the Tsimshian military. Though facts continue to arise this act of aggression is never proven.
2037: Tsimshian secedes from the Native American Nations.
2041–2042: Activist John George forms the Haida National Front (HNF) to protest for Haida civil rights. They are brutally repressed and John George is imprisoned for life. The surviving members go underground and turn to more extreme methods.
2043: The first public executions of prisoners of the state begin at the yearly potlatch ceremonies.
2053: Tsimshian opens its borders to international corporations. MCT purchases exclusive mining rights, in exchange for aid, business and investments.
2060: Tsimshian border patrols capture a dozen Salish just inside the border. The Salish claim to be hikers, but Tsimshian tries them as spies and executes them.
May 2–4, 2062: Tsimshian troops invade the Salish-Shidhe. After heavy fighting, they are pushed back, and in some areas past, the border. Thousands of Salish-Shidhe soldiers and some Tsimshian troops are killed by what some believe to biowarfare agents, though Tsimshian denies responsibility.
May 5, 2062: The Salish-Shidhe Council signs a cease-fire with the Tsimshian government.
July 2062: The cease-fire is broken by a series of attacks by Salish militias.

military with state-of-the-art equipment and provide training. In exchange, Mitsuhama received exclusive access to critical resources, including a wealth of manganese deposits located in Tsimshian coastal waters. Tsimshian also exempted Mitsuhama from strict regulations, effectively opening the gates for corporate expansion and dropping all pretenses of environmental protection. The deal also opened Tsimshian up to other corporate interests, though MCT clearly received favored status.

Mitsuhama wasted no time, and overnight dozens of MCT subsidiaries landed upon Tsimshian soil, followed quickly by other corps. The first few years were turbulent for us foreign suits. Poverty and tribal discrimination were everywhere and the land was despoiled. Elements of Tsimshian's xenophobic populace disliked and opposed our presence.

As the economy improved, the benefits of our presence became clear, and attitudes changed. But Tsimshian had bargained with the devil, and there were negative effects as well. Tsimshian cannot exist without Mitsuhama, which puts the country under the megacorp's control. And Mitsuhama and the other corps slowly but surely strip the country clean, leaving devastation in their wake.

• Hey Digital Samurai—I take it you're no longer wearing an MCT collar around your neck. Why'd you give up the cushy life?
• Glitch
• I got fed up. I was asked to erase the records of a hit-and-run accident victim. The driver was an MCT exec, the victim was a Haida child. I had already "disappeared" hundreds of alleged Haida troublemakers and eco-terrorists by erasing their lives from public records. But that one got to me. So I disappeared myself instead.
• Digital Samurai

DOING THE DEVIL'S WORK

Tsimshian's government is securely in the hands of the dominant Tsimshian and Tlingit tribes. Though it pretends to be a representative democracy, the number of political offices held by anyone outside those tribes can be counted on one hand. Both tribes are also in bed with Mitsuhama, whose presence in Tsimshian is pervasive.

THE GREAT CHIEF AND PROGRESS PARTY

Great Chief Deborah Jim has ruled the country since 2038, consistently winning landslide victories. Despite a carefully designed trid image as a soft-hearted leader who cares deeply about each Tsimshian citizen, in reality she is a powerful, motivated and amoral achiever who doesn't let pesky things like laws and opponents get in her way. She is the driving force and main voice of the Progressive Party, which leads Tsimshian on a path of technological, military and magical advancement, damn the costs. She also spearheads the aggressive stance towards the Salish-Shidhe Council (SSC). With the knowledge that Mitsuhama backs her, the resources that could be taken from the SSC are increasingly tempting.

TSIMSHIAN AT A GLANCE

Population: 955,000
- Human: 85%
- Elf: 2%
- Dwarf: 2%
- Ork: 8%
- Troll: 3%
- Other: 0%

Tribal Affiliation: 78%
Major Tribes:
- Tsimshian: 55%
- Tlingit: 28%
- Haida: 13%
- Other Tribes: 4%

Per Capita Income: 15,500 ¥
Estimated SINless: 11%
Below Poverty Level: 29%
Corporate Affiliation: 13%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 23%
- High School Equivalency: 53%
- College Degrees: 22%
- Advanced Degrees: 2%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 85%
- Tsimshian: 22%
- Japanese: 15%

Currency: Nuyen
DocWagon Coverage: 20%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 15 Minutes

• That the Great Chief rigs the elections is no surprise. She is a ruthless and cunning woman whom, if I had a shred of respect for, I would call a worthy adversary. Since I do not, I will simply say that her day is coming soon.
• Shawnigan

• It was Dangerous Deborah who orchestrated the Mitsuhama deal, though I don't think she's fully pleased with the results. MCT is her main ally, which she can't afford to lose, but she can see that control of the country is slipping away from her and into their hands. If she's not careful, she'll soon be obsolete. I suspect she's looking for any leverage she can get on MCT, above and beyond her sway over Masakura.
• Kiti Kat

THE OPPOSITION PARTIES

Two other parties play a role in Tsimshian leadership, though until recently their opposition to the Progress Party has largely been a façade. Under new party leadership and in the face of MCT domination, these parties are no longer content to take their allotted piece of the pie and are starting to publicly disagree with Jim and create interference.



• It's a greed issue. Tsimshian makes tankers of cred from the corps, most of which goes directly into the pockets, checkbooks and offshore accounts of the Progress Party leaders. The rest of the two tribes got their kickbacks, but now there's a crunch on again and the payouts are leaner. The upstarts want their share of the wealth.
• Gringott

The Moderation Party takes a long-term view of Tsimshian's situation, and is voicing opposition to Mitsuhama's unrestrained resource exploitation. It seeks to limit Mitsuhama's powers and is pessimistic of Tsimshian's ability to carry out a prolonged conflict with the SSC. Their principal voice is that of National Council member Margaret Phillips.

• The Moderation Party is actively courting alliances with other megacorps that have interest in Tsimshian, hoping to employ them as a white knight and challenge Mitsuhama's stranglehold. Several corps are rising to the call, including Yakashima, Aztechnology, Eastern Tiger, DeBeers-Omnitech and Athabaskan Oil.
• Pistons

The smaller Potence Party is isolationist in outlook and seeks to rid Tsimshian of its corporate dependency. Their most vocal leader, Kitimat Council member Nathan Jance, goes so far as to openly call for the nationalization of Mitsuhama's corporate holdings and the deportation of their personnel. They also demand severe immigration restrictions and oppose the SSC border conflict, though they advocate a stiff defensive posture.

• The differences between these parties are heating up, and they're each hiring increasing amounts of shadowrunners to capture documents, secret files or just plain dirt.
• Shadowdancer

MCT: TSIMSHIAN

The Mitsuhama conglomerate maintains a dedicated branch that oversees all of the subsidiary business related to Tsimshian. At least a dozen MCT subsidiaries are active here, including Mitsuhama-Benguet Mining, Mitsuhama Industrial Technologies, Pentacle Distributing and Zen-Marsh Chemicals. Executive VP Junichiro Masakura heads MCT: Tsimshian, which for the first five years was the most efficient office outside of Japan. Other corps are out-competing MCT, however, and Masakura has come under fire for a recent drop-off on returns from MCT mining operations.

• If he allows MCT's grip on Tsimshian to slip and does not increase profits, his career isn't worth a plugged nickel.
• Daikoku

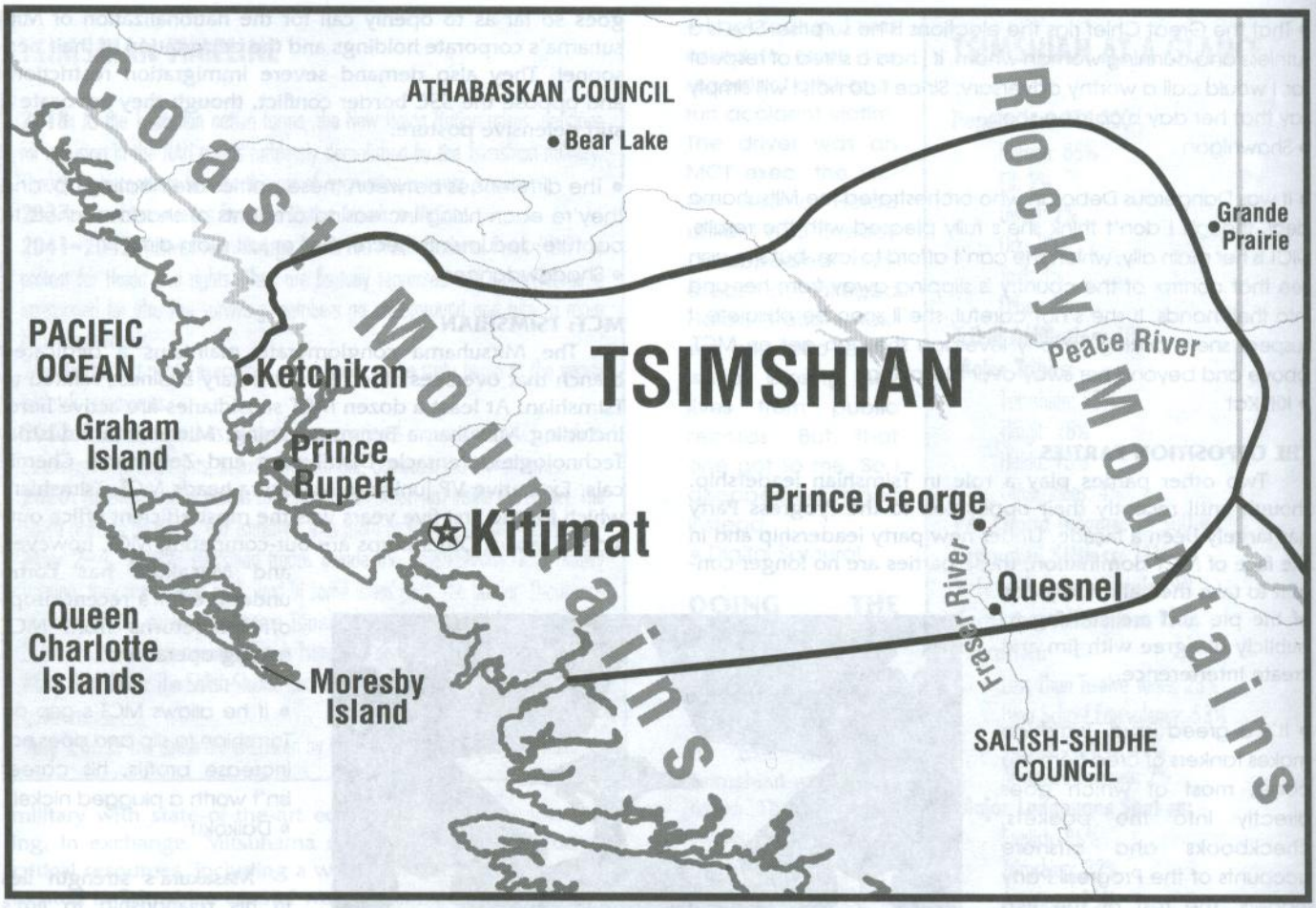
Masakura's strength lies in his relationship to Jim's Progress Party and the economic leverage MCT holds over the nation. A single word from Masakura can mean disaster for Tsimshian officials, communities or businesses—and they all know it. MCT also has the loyalty of the upper echelons of Tsimshian's military and security services, who count on MCT to retain their edge. Countless fields of stumps, polluted water tables and churning smokestacks—and the recent slaughter of a half-dozen overeager protestors at the Vanderhoof mine site—proves that MCT operates above and beyond the law in Tsimshian.

• For now. A structure so riddled with corruption is doomed to fall.
• Shawnigan

• Yeah. To be replaced by another just like it.
• Bung

LIFE IN HELL

Let me state it up front: Tsimshian is a police state. Security patrols are visible on the street and strict curfews are just the tip of the iceberg. Citizen identification and pacification has become the chief duty of the police, and it is one they



take seriously in light of many uprisings by disenfranchised and downtrodden people.

On the positive side, the high-tech toys and electronics that were once difficult and costly to obtain are now cheap and available. The Kitimat sprawl has one of the world's fastest and most modern Matrix grids, with security as tight as any in the world. Tsimshian citizens are constantly wired, wearing portable computers and connecting to the local net via wireless. Even the poor have prime electronics, though BTLs outnumber p-secs. Brainbenders are legal since they keep the poor occupied, creating an addiction crisis in some communities.

• Digital Samurai isn't kidding here at all. The Tsimshian Matrix is wiz-hot. It makes you wonder what they are hiding behind all those encrypted systems.
• Dybbuk

• What indeed? It occurred to me that with all that security and the government in their back pocket that Tsimshian would make a great place to conduct all those cybernetic experiments that we all know MCT loves. I'll bet there may be some paydata in this after all.
• MacBeth

A NATION DIVIDED

The Tsimshian and Tlingit tribes hold a monopoly on government, civil and military positions, and they throw their weight behind the political parties and megacorps. The Haida, Kwakiutl, Kitksan, Niska and other tribes have no representation and are treated as outright second class citizens. Bias and discrimination are blatant and institutionalized—they are barred from holding certain jobs, living in certain areas, and hold a more severely restricted set of civil liberties. As a rule, each is considered a potential terrorist, and treated accordingly by police and security.

As a result, these oppressed tribes suffer from chronic unemployment, poverty, addiction and even disease and starvation. Typical minority tribe communities are slums, deprived of healthcare, education and all but the most basic sanitation services. The corps freely spill toxins and pollutants into these areas. Crime runs rampant, but the police ignore it unless it threatens to spill outside.

While Tsimshian was strict in forcing out Anglos after the Ghost Dance War, the lifting of immigration restrictions has begun to change the ethnic non-diversity. The majority of immigrants have been megacorp-affiliated Japanese, though other ethnicities are also streaming in. With the exception of the Japanese, who were quickly afforded respect as appro-

priate to MCT's position, non-Amerindians encounter regular bias from Tsimshian and Tlingit tribals.

• Being an Anglo and walking down the streets of a Tsimshian city is not an enviable experience. The attitude is subtle at first, but then you start to pick up the clues. People stare, but won't look you in the eye. Conversations end abruptly as you draw near. Security surveillance follows you everywhere and any commercial service you receive is poor at best, rude at worst. I've rarely felt more like an outsider.
• People Watcher

Spirits help you if you're metahuman. Tribal solidarity went out the window as soon as folks started sporting pointy ears or tusks. Most metas got fed up a long time ago and relocated to the SSC, and the Tsimshian were glad to be rid of them. The rest have been pressured into slums alongside the minority tribes, where the shared experience of repression has created a rapport.

• All of this adds up to one difficult time for out-of-town runners, especially those that tend toward the Anglo or meta sides. But don't despair. Moving around publicly won't be easy, so stick to the Haida and meta areas where the cops don't go. The Tsimshian shadow community thrives in the slums, and you'll find a wealth of contacts and people willing to help out. If you do need to walk the streets, use a disguise to blend in. A troll can minimize harassment by wearing a power suit emblazoned with the Mitsuhama logo. Use your head; otherwise, expect vitriol and heavy attention.
• Brick

BOILING OVER

These conditions have sparked social unrest, typically manifesting as crime, riots or terrorist attacks. Police forces have responded with a strategy of containment and reprisal. Minority tribes are banned from public gatherings or protests, or carrying weapons of any sort—even those designated for self-defense. Police allow their communities to rot while harassing any minorities outside of them. Terrorist attacks or civil disturbances are answered with violent round-ups as likely to ensnare innocent bystanders as they are radicals.

Over the years, several groups have formed to combat these injustices. Foremost among them is the Haida National Front (HNF).

The Haida National Front

The HNF has come a long way, evolving from a small network of social justice activists who went underground to avoid arrest, torture and death to a resourceful guerrilla organization. Though HNF ranks remain small, their membership has grown more skilled and confident over time. In defense of the Haida people and other oppressed tribes, the HNF performs prison breaks, sabotage, structure hits and assassinations. Their targets are government officials, prominent Tsimshian and Tlingit tribals and resource-exploiting megacorps.

• The MO of these troublemakers has definitely improved. They've graduated from zip guns and weak homemade pipe bombs to accessorized assault rifles, Semtex and surface-to-air missiles. Someone's boosting them with training and gear, but when I ask around the usual suspects (Athabaska, Salish, Sioux), everyone shrugs and plays innocent.
• Steel Lynx

The HNF is an active presence in the shadows of the oppressed communities. They have established a clandestine network of supporters who funnel supplies and protect cells from police witch-hunts. Membership or support of the HNF is an automatic sedition charge complete with death penalty, though most suspected sympathizers are lucky to make it to the kangaroo court alive.

The HNF has suffered through several splits that have damaged the group. The splinter groups seek to escalate the hostilities, which usually means moving from armed rebellion to outright terrorism, with no qualms about innocent casualties or collateral damage. Other splinter groups, led by shamans, have cited an increased need to halt the ongoing environmental destruction. In addition to divisive rifts, these splinter groups have hurt the HNF's public image and support with their reckless actions. Thankfully, most such groups fracture and fall apart on their own before long, though in some cases open fighting has broken out between them and HNF cadre.

• Most splinter groups don't last long because they're led by crazies—shamans corrupted and turned to the Toxic Way. Surrounded by devastation as we are, it takes a strong spirit to resist the siren's call, to fend off the hate, loathing and despair that eats away our hearts.
• Far Seer

The Long House Brotherhood

According to the tales (no one can say for sure), the Brotherhood is a secret society of shamans from the Tsimshian tribe dedicated to protecting the land from abuse. The current group interprets this mission to mean eradicating the power of the megacorps in the nation, particularly MCT—and to do this they need to overthrow the Progress Party. You won't hear any word about the Brotherhood in the press—the government bans any talk of them to avoid building sympathy or support. But judging by the sweat that breaks out whenever the upper ranks talk about the group, the Brotherhood has put the Fear into their black hearts.

• The Brotherhood doesn't act often, but when they do the message is clear. They go after top ranking eco-criminals: Environmental Council officials, Mitsuhama operations managers, even Dangerous Deborah's Chief of Staff. Magic is used and the results are messy and gruesome to say the least. A spirit is left behind at the scene, to deliver a warning message to the poor slag that finds the remains.
• Grue

• And no astral signature has ever been found, in over a decade of attacks. That's a sophisticated operation.
• Vapor

• The Brotherhood are toxics. I know because several victims have died as a result of ritual cannibalism. No sane shaman would do that.
• Nibble

The government has investigated every registered shaman in Tsimshian looking for Brotherhood connections, to no avail. This leads top officials to believe that members of the Brotherhood hide their magical abilities.

• Which means they could be anywhere, even in the top levels of governments. If I were Deborah Jim, I'd be checking into members of the Moderation Party.
• Spook

MEDIA CONTROL

Within Tsimshian, all media programming is controlled and censored by the government's Information Department, chaired by a "former" Mitsuhama public relations expert, Tetsurou Amino. While every Tsimshian citizen has access to a veritable hoard of programming, none of it paints the government or MCT in anything but a positive light.

With MCT's support, the Information Department has done its best to isolate Tsimshian Matrix systems. Outside datafeeds are either banned or routed through ID-controlled filtering first. While there is little Tsimshian can do to restrict what data users access outside of Tsimshian grids, data transfers of all sorts (include calls and email) are logged, sniffed and monitored. Tsimshian citizens can be charged for accessing outlawed sites. MCT-trained deckers do their best to eliminate pro-Haida sites, and the government ignores any outcry this causes. Encryption is heavily restricted, unless used for business or national security reasons of course.

• Many other repressive regimes, from Tir na nOg to Aztlan, have been playing this Matrix censorship game for years. Despite their efforts, though, the material is still there for those brave enough or with the decking know-how to get it. Unfortunately, your average citizen won't bother—it's easier to accept the approved newsfeeds.
• Slipstream

The media puppets have played an important role in the Border War, whipping up jingoistic hysteria. Most Tsimshian citizens believe the Salish-Shidhe started the conflict in an attempt to annex Tsimshian resources and that they used illegal chemical warfare agents on Tsimshian troops. This has spurred on a rush in enlistment by young Tsimshian and Tlingit tribals eager to get revenge.

EXTREME PUNISHMENT

No surprise, just as Tsimshian laws are selectively enforced, legal punishments are also far from equitable or fair. The standard punishment for most crimes is indentured servitude—known in more enlightened countries as slavery. Criminals are fit with a "control device" and placed in the labor force to work in mines, plants, construction sites or the homes of wealthy politicians.

• In case you get your own personal lo-jack, here's the scoop on the control devices. Depending on your crime and work assignment, you'll either get a leg-jack, a collar, or an implant. The device is in constant communication with a transmitter, allowing the prisoner a small radius of free movement. If you go past that radius, you get zapped. Usually the pain is enough to stop you, but if you manage to keep going, you'll hit a second, outer radius. That's when the micro-charge goes off, either crippling your leg, decapitating you, or blowing your brains out.

Needless to say, these devices are psychologically intimidating. There have been more than a few cases where prisoners were accidentally or purposefully forced outside of the radius, or where the control transmitter was jammed or broken down. Some prisoners can't take the strain, so they take "the sprint" and get it all over with.

Oh yeah, the "bondsman" who's in charge of the prisoner has a pocket transmitter to activate the zapper or charge at whim. So don't get uppity.
• Logan

• The Tsimshian military has scooped up a lot of criminals for use in the border war effort. The slaves are used to build fortifications in high-threat areas or for other risky duties. They're careful to keep them out of reach of the weaponry of course.
• Fragged

• Some of the upper echelons of Tsimshian society have developed a sick taste for the slave business, privately trading them back and forth, taking liberties and using them for "unsanctioned" purposes. They've been known to keep hold of their favorites, even after the poor slags have done their time. A few are even being traded for favors or others goods to overseas buyers.
• Shawnigan

For severe crimes, capitol punishment is the penalty. These state executions take on an almost ritualistic flavor in Tsimshian. Each autumn, during the annual potlatch ceremonies, high-ranking Tsimshian and Tlingit families engage in a bidding war for the right to execute the most prisoners. These executions are televised, getting the highest ratings of the year.



• This barbaric practice is based on the ancient practice of the potlatch, which was essentially a contest between materialistic families over who could destroy the most wealth. Captured slaves from other tribes were a commodity, so they were disposed of as equally as boats, dwellings, tools and other tribal valuables. What this says about the Tsimshian, and how they view the other tribes within their nation, is left as an exercise to the reader.
• Holly

• Not all Tsimshian or Tlingit people support this abominable practice. Quite a few despise it, in fact. But to speak out against it is a crime that could put us before the firing squads.
• Moderate

• Silence is consent.
• N30ist

WAR FEVER

by Janet Running-Wolf

The Tsimshian military, though small, is well equipped, well trained and extremely nationalistic. Much to the chagrin of the Salish-Shidhe, they have proven to be a formidable fighting force.

I am a tactician, not a strategist, so I can not say for certain what Tsimshian hoped to gain by invading the SSC. I have heard many theories, from control of magic resources to economic conflicts or even simple spite. From my perspective, this war has proven a convenient distraction for Dangerous Deborah at a time when her MCT allies were growing displeased and even her tribal cronies were becoming restless.

Regardless, on 2 May 2062, Tsimshian troops attacked and drove deep into SSC territory. They failed to capitalize on their success, however, and within days the SSC had forced our troops back to the border or past it. Though Tsimshian does not admit it, SSC retaliatory air and missile attacks dealt devastating blows to the Tsimshian infrastructure. Primed for

war, the Tsimshian and Tlingit tribes crow for blood and revenge, goaded on by merciless media cheerleading. It is only a matter of time before hostilities once again break out.

• From some reports I've seen, Tsimshian also suffered some painful structure hits from "unknown commando units" during the three-day war. All signs point to Sioux Wildcats at work, backing up their SSC neighbors.
• Haida Hunter

In preparation for renewed hostilities, Great Chief Deborah Jim has appealed to Mitsuhama for wartime aid. MCT evaluated the situation and decided it was prudent to lend support "in defense of vital corporate assets." An influx of ordnance has bolstered the Tsimshian troops, and rumors fly of MCT troops in Tsimshian uniforms.

• The situation has caused a stir in the Corporate Court, and a zillion corporate spies have turned their eyes, ears and sensor feeds towards MCT's involvement. Some of the Big Ten think that MCT is pushing the line by getting directly involved and are already talking about sanctions to keep corp in check. The alleged use of biowarfare agents hasn't made anyone happy. MCT's pulling strings to get some slack, but they need to tread carefully. In their position, they may have more to lose than to gain.
• SINner

• If the Salish push forward and invade Tsimshian, they'll be in trouble. The borders are mined, the roads are guarded with robotic gun platforms, and the forests are laced with monowire snares. Tsimshian troops are willing to scorch the Earth to deny it to invaders. It won't be pretty.
• Russkie

POISONING THE LAND

by Drowned Rat

Tsimshian's economy revolves around her natural resources, which the corps are more than eager to exploit. In order to keep their faltering nation afloat, the Progress Party has dropped all effective environmental restrictions. Smelling the opportunity, the megacorps recklessly use and abuse processes and methods that are banned elsewhere. While the Progress Party and megacorps grow rich, Tsimshian's natural ecology dies.

Mining is the primary criminal industry as Tsimshian has abundant and still-untapped potential. Silver, lead, gold, platinum, molybdenum, copper, zinc, iron and asbestos all lie beneath the surface of Tsimshian's lands and waters. The mining consortiums use the cheapest, if most destructive, means to access this buried treasure. Hills and mountains are blasted apart to expose the resources underneath, and the rubble is used to fill valleys or create "spoil mountains." Chemicals used to extract certain elements leak into the groundwater and rivers; whole regions have been contaminated with cyanide-laced waste. Mine trailings fill the waterways, killing off wildlife and creating an exorbitant demand for drinking water—which the corps ship in and sell at a profit.

• Mining isn't the only source of devastation. Entire forests are clear-cut for expensive woods. The ocean floor is churned and ripped apart for molybdenum, or drilled for oil. Electronics factories and refineries spew out clouds of chemicals from smokestacks. Pentacle uses slave labor and does its best to make telesma-gathering into an assembly line. Asbestos particles escape the mines and coat our lungs. Once a place of pristine natural wonders, Tsimshian is becoming a land of stumps, sludge and smog.
• Green Piece

The rampant disregard for life and nature has wrought evil things on the astral plane. Static clouds and foul tastes linger in ravaged areas, blinding astral travelers and turning spirits against their friends and masters. Areas that once flowed with power have been stripped of it, or have instead taken on a dark aspect. Many shamans and kindred spirits have succumbed to the siren call, and through anger or disgust they now follow the toxic path. Other shamans and spirits have been forced to flee for their own safety and sanity, leaving our wilderness unprotected.

• Enough of this dark and evil toxic magic stuff. Come on, just because the place gets a little dirty and a few shamans freak out about it doesn't mean anything. A lot of those tree-huggers are a little unhinged to begin with, if you ask me. I'll admit that something needs to be done about the pollution, but this alarmism about toxic magic is going too far.
• Technocrat

• For an Amerind tribal culture, Tsimshian has a very low percentage of shamans in their population. Unlike the NAN countries, where shamans often hold government office, there are zero such shamans in Tsimshian. The few magicians in office are hermetics. Same goes for the Tsimshian military—only a few totem followers can be found there. The strange thing is, I don't think a lot the Tsimshian and Tlingit tribes' predisposition against shamans and for hermetics accounts for it all. From the records I've seen, they do produce shamans, but most of them leave the country for greener pastures, so to speak.

In my opinion, those shamans are being forced out. Partly through cultural bias and pressure, partly because they can't stand to be around a land that's being tortured. The few that remain are forced underground, like the Long House Brotherhood.
• People Watcher

• I've heard some interesting things from Mitsuhama. First off, some of the subsidiaries have bumped foreheads. It seems Pentacle views the excess pollution as damaging to its telesma operations and it has internally pushed for some restraints. Naturally, the other sub-corps told them to frag off. The situation's getting heated, and Pentacle might start throwing some support to eco-activists soon to get their way.

At the same time, Mitsuhama's Thaumaturgical Research has been looking into ways they can avoid the difficulties associated with casting magic in polluted zones. They've apparently developed some sort of method for filtering out the negative energy associated with background count. They're still testing it out, but if it works it will hit the market soon.
• Pistons

Rumors abound that after nine years of concentrated exploitation, the vast resources of Tsimshian are nearly depleted. If this is true it could spell disaster for the government, as corporate money is all that keeps the state afloat.

• This may be far more than a rumor. Profits from MCT's Tsimshian mines are down more than thirty percent across the board. Though I doubt that the corps would pull out of Tsimshian completely—they have too much play there—they certainly will stop lining the pockets of the politicians as much as they have been.
• Nuyen Nick

SHADOWY TSIMSHIAN

by Shadowdancer

With the strong corporate control and the terribly repressive government, most shadowrunners assume that shadow activity in Tsimshian is next to zero. Fortunately, that's not true. It just takes more talent and cunning to survive and hide out in the cracks the government hasn't shined their spotlight into yet. In a strange way, the Tsimshian situation has created a new breed of shadow denizens. We are stronger, faster, tight-knit and often far subtler than our brethren in freer lands.

• Shadowrunners are like rats. You can exterminate them by the score, but the ones that survive by natural selection are a stronger, faster and smarter breed. Heck, I've known some eco-activist organizations to use Tsimshian as a proving ground for new recruits. The process separates the slicers from the dicers and saves everyone a lot of trouble in the long run.
• Skaven

ORGANIZED CRIME

Massive crime cartels simply can't survive under the oppressive police state—unless they're part of it, that is. The government hates competition, but it likes having pawns to do its dirty work. The Yakuza that crawled in between MCT's legs are the only syndicate of any size, though even their operations are small and confined to Kitimat and Ketchikan. The Yaks are mostly concerned with the smuggling trade and providing illegal goods to megacorp suits. On occasion, Yak goons will take jobs from corp Johnsons, usually to clean house or dispose of meddlesome troublemakers like identified eco-cells.

• The Yaks also funnel brainbenders from corp factories directly into the Haida community. Hard to stir up trouble when you're zoned on Mental Ice, eh? The HNF rightly views this as an attempt to keep their people down, and strikes out as Yak dealers and depots whenever they can. The Yaks don't need to strike back—they just call in their corp or government friends, and another round of raids and crackdowns ensues.
• Kuwasi

Even the police state can't eliminate crime, and dozens of smaller organizations with little allegiance to any higher power keep Tsimshian's black market going. Many of these organizations are simply a group of tough street punks that have created a neighborhood protection racket or run an unsanctioned gambling establishment out of some warehouse or basement. Groups like the Totempole Society in Kitimat buy and sell human cargo, while the Kootenay Brotherhood in Ketchikan exclusively smuggles contraband electronics and communications equipment both into and out of Tsimshian.

• "Human cargo" can be fugitives or poor people trying to escape the country, runners and eco-cells trying to sneak in, or slaves being sold on the world market. A lot of these operations are scams, leaving the poor cargo adrift at sea in an overpacked boat or suffocating in an airtight container.
• Josie Cruise

The Haida and Kitksan, who often have no other options for survival, are often responsible for these criminal gangs. They tend to have a soft side for their fellow tribesmen and a general distaste for dealing with Tsimshian or foreigners.

• In other words, if you're Haida, you'll get a discount. If you're an Anglo, it's assumed you have cred so expect a mark-up.
• Traveler Jones

• These criminal trash are opportunists. Instead of assisting the struggle to elevate our people, they take advantage of their misery. Many of them are spies for the government and are not to be trusted.
• Haida Hunter

RUNNING THE SHADOWS

The first thing you'll need in the Tsimshian shadows is a friend. You need to know who to trust and who will look the other way for a bit of coin—there's too many spies and sell-outs to survive otherwise. If you're an outsider, you're going to have to do something to earn people's trust. They're not going to do jack for you if it means a life of slavery or their turn in front of the firing squads.

The second thing to know is that almost anyone with a bit of power in Tsimshian is bribable. The simple cost of living in Tsimshian is so high that bribery is almost an official practice. It's often easier to get want you want by spreading around some nuyen than by throwing lots of spells and bullets. It's also quieter and won't get you a death sentence.

The third thing is that guns are illegal in Tsimshian. An armed populace is a dangerous populace, and so the Tsimshian heavies come down hard on any rabble that's toting. This law covers all guns, from peashooters to sporting rifles. How are you supposed to defend yourself against that piasma on your nature hike? Gots me, the cops will say, use a stick. The state cracks down hard on gun-dealers, so just getting them can be quite difficult. As a result, a lot of Tsimshian runners are pretty creative when it comes to doing runs without guns. Spells, low-tech weapons, tasers, and good old-fashioned punching power are used more often.

Now, with all that said, there's a truism a truism to running the shadows: where money flows, there is work to be done. There's a lot of cred flowing in Tsimshian, though very little of it trickles down past the top layer of society. The corps invest a lot of money in their operations here, and they all have enemies that are willing to pay for information, sabotage or extractions.

• If you're interested in the opportunities but don't want to set foot in Tsimshian, there are a few corps that have fully operational underwater mining communities offshore. Yamatetsu built a massive underwater complex, Knox City, to mine the waters of Prince of Wales Island, west of Ketchikan. Proteus is represented by the Hecate Mining Consortium, a mobile platform that diligently searches the Hecate Straight for profitable mineral deposits.
• Riptide

THE QUICK SHADOW TOUR

Tsimshian is a nation of mountains, with settlements sheltered in the valleys or scattered on nearby islands. Many residents are born, grow up and die without leaving their small town. But don't despair, there's a few places of interest to shadowrunners.

Prince George

Once the largest Tsimshian city, Prince George didn't benefit from the corporate construction boom that other cities did. It is notable as the most ethnically diverse city in the nation, with the largest concentration of Haida. It is a major base for the HNF and so state spooks keep a close eye on it. Unusually, the town's mayor is an elected Haida, Randall Tslatch. He is a proclaimed patriot and member of the Progress Party, and generally considered a stooge for Chief Jim.

Kitimat

Kitimat is both a corporate enclave and the nation's capitol. Mitsuhama's presence dominates the city, its subsidiary logos emblazoning dozens of shining towers. The city government, run by Mayor Teil Kliksut, is the embodiment of graft and corruption. He serves Chief Jim, who also holds court here, and shares her self-serving politics. City streets are heavily patrolled with a strong police force.

• The HNF knows that if they increase their activity here, the bombings and sabotage will scare away new corps and put pressure on MCT to pull out while they're ahead. Expect more action in the near future.
• Kiti Kat

Ketchikan

Ketchikan is a city of islands strung together with a network of newly constructed bridges, many miles long. The Ketchikan naval air station on the southernmost island of the chain overshadows the city. Commander Kim Eyes-High turns a blind eye to smugglers for the right price, making it an excellent stopover along the Asia-Athabaska-Seattle route. As a result, the streets of Ketchikan are often full of criminals, rowdy sailors and airmen who are all but immune to civilian prosecution. Mayor Janice Chinulk of the Moderation Party hopes to clean up her city. She's trying to oust Eyes-High and is talking about contracting city security to a private corp to keep things straight. The struggle for dominance hasn't come to blows yet—if you discount common but minor incidents—but the situation is waiting for the proper spark.

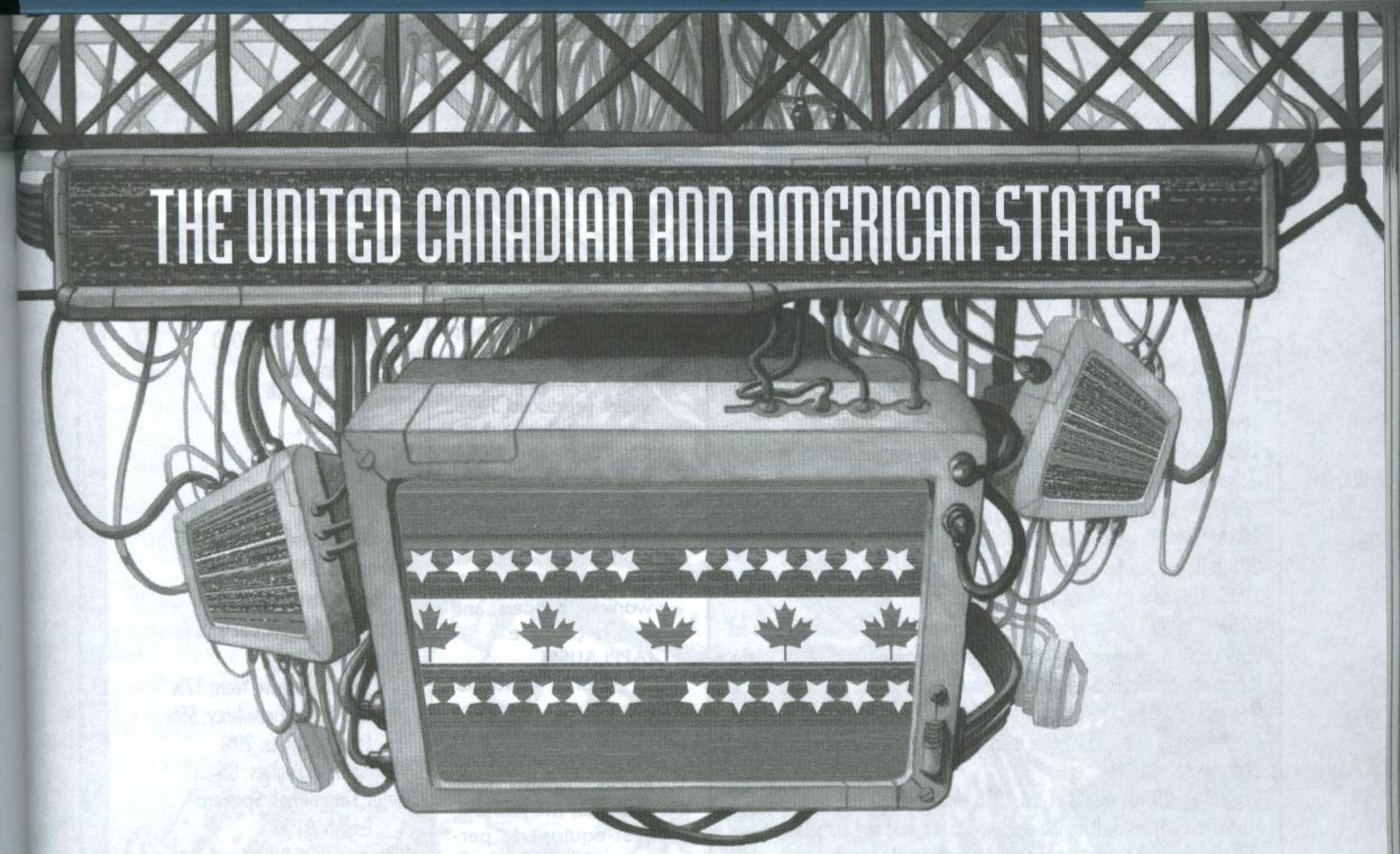
• Smugglers who have "preferred customer" status can even use the military base itself for stops and repairs.
• Slipstream

Quesnel

This small town has grown into a city to support the nearby military reservation, which is now the focal point of Tsimshian's border defense against the SSC. If you want to sneak a peek at the Tsimshian military plans, this is the nexus to watch. General Gerald Nikstak is in charge, though Mitsuhama liaison Amanda Kirsch keeps a close eye on things, and her "consultations" are usually treated like orders. Quesnel's been on high alert since someone dropped an explosive in the General's house—he wasn't home, but his wife was.

• Some officers are worried that while the General wastes time looking for the killer, the more serious plans of defense and/or invasion are being ignored. That's probably what the killer wanted.
• Bald Eagle

THE UNITED CANADIAN AND AMERICAN STATES



If any nation in North America has taken a beating over the past several years, it's the UCAS, the nation that just can't seem to catch a break. Now I know that you're all teary-eyed with sympathy out there, but don't feel too bad. After all, the siege mentality and paranoia in the UCAS create all kinds of employment opportunities for shadowrunners, as long as you know where to look for them. That's what this file is about, telling you what's what in the self-proclaimed carrier of "the torch of liberty," where to go and what you can do when you get there. I've gotten the latest for among our expert posters but, as always, feel free to post your insights. I opted not to cover Seattle—though it's part of the UCAS, we covered it in detail in the New Seattle files, so check there for the dirt. We start off with the news directly from the horse's mouth (so to speak), with some excerpts from UCAS President Kyle Haeffner's State of the Union address.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 18:05:33 (PST)

STATE OF THE UNION

My fellow citizens. Over the past few years, our nation has faced great trials, from the assassination of President Dunkelzahn to recent upheavals both at home and abroad. Despite these threats to peace and security, our Union has endured and will emerge stronger than ever before. I am here to tell the citizens of our great nation that the United Canadian and American States stand together, and we *will* succeed! [APPLAUSE]

First and foremost, I would like to thank the brave and tireless workers of our nation's emergency and medical services for their response in our time of need. With their help, and the aid of our corporate allies, we have weathered the storm of change that sudden recessive genetic expression spread across the land. [APPLAUSE]

I want to make clear the advice of the Surgeon General and the Canadian-American Medical Association by advising you to offer your respect and sympathy for people affected by this transformation. I further wish to assure the so-called "changelings" affected by this phenomenon that the UCAS holds true to those hallowed words, that in this nation, all men are created equal. [APPLAUSE]

Toward that end, my administration will continue the System Identification program begun during my first term in office. I'm pleased to report that, as of today, over 300,000 probation-

UCAS TIMELINE

October 15th, 2030: Union Day, when the remnants of the U.S. and Canada formed the UCAS.

2032: In response to the Euro-Wars, the UCAS withdraws the majority of its troops from Europe.

2034: The southern states secede from the UCAS, forming the CAS. The Treaty of Richmond is signed, settling the boundaries. At this point, the UCAS no longer has troops stationed outside of its borders.

2036: California secedes from the UCAS.

2038: Hawaii secedes from the UCAS.

2055: Chicago is taken over by bug spirits.

2056: The UCAS Congress recognizes the great dragon Dunkelzahn as a full UCAS citizen (making him the first dragon to become a citizen of the UCAS). Dunkelzahn establishes a residence on Prince Edward Island.

November 2056: President Thomas Steele and Vice President James Booth overwhelmingly re-elected to office in what is called "the dullest election of the 21st century."

December 2056: Results of the 2056 election invalidated by evidence of fraud. The Congress declares the election null and void and announces a new election with a short campaign season of less than eight months.

7 August 2057: Dunkelzahn elected President of the UCAS by a narrow margin.

9 August 2057: President Dunkelzahn and Vice President Kyle Haeffner sworn into office. That night, while leaving an inauguration party at the Watergate Hotel, President Dunkelzahn's limo is destroyed in a fiery explosion, the president believed dead. A rift in astral space appears above the site of the explosion.

10 August 2057: Kyle Haeffner sworn in as President of the UCAS. Two days later he nominates Dunkelzahn's former translator and aide, Nadja Daviar, for the position of Vice President.

November 2057: The Draco Foundation opens its headquarters in Washington FDC to administer the bequests of Dunkelzahn's will.

March 2058: The UCAS government partially lifts restrictions on areas of Chicago, following an Ares Macrotechnology-led cleanup of the insect spirits infesting that city.

15 October 2060: Preparations for Election Day are preceded by the nation's thirtieth celebration of Union Day.

November 2060: President Haeffner and Vice President Daviar are overwhelmingly re-elected to office.

January 2061: President Haeffner sworn in for his second term in office. Hype over the return of Halley's Comet begins.

24 December 2061: The great dragon Ghostwalker emerges from Dunkelzahn's Rift in Washington FDC. Vice President Daviar is instrumental in negotiations with Ghostwalker following his claim of the Denver Front Range Free Zone.

UCAS AT A GLANCE

Population: 172,016,000
- Human: 68%
- Elf: 11%
- Dwarf: 6%
- Ork: 7%
- Troll: 7%
- Other: 1%

Per Capita Income: 28,000¥
Estimated SINless: 30%
Below Poverty Level: 26%
Corporate Affiliation: 51%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 17%
- High School Equivalency: 55%
- College Degrees: 20%
- Advanced Degrees: 8%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 91%

Currency: UCAS Dollar (nuyen also accepted)
- Exchange Rate: 1$ = 0.25¥

DocWagon Coverage: 80%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 15 Minutes

Crashcart Coverage: Toronto only
- Guaranteed Response Time: 5 Minutes

Nightingale Coverage: Boston and New York only
- Guaranteed Response Time: 10 Minutes

ary citizens living in the UCAS have been made full citizens, with all rights and privileges, and we welcome them into our Union as productive members of society. [APPLAUSE]

We are creating new markets and new opportunities to show the world what UCAS industry and know-how are capable of. Our recent trade agreement with Britain, Quebec, and Tir Tairngire will help open up those nations to the goods and services produced here, and will bring new jobs and new money into the economy. We have also encouraged our corporate allies to work with us to prove that we are a nation of workers, builders, and achievers. [APPLAUSE]

Our national security remains strong. Enlistment is up among our armed forces, and they remain the finest, best-equipped personnel in the world, ready to deal with any threat to our peace at a moment's notice [APPLAUSE]. With our peace at home secure, it is our duty to extend the hand of friendship to other nations, to aid our allies in these difficult times. I have already spoken with Prime Minister Kazama and Emperor Yasuhito of Japan about how we can aid in relief and rebuilding efforts following the disasters that wracked that nation. Vice President Daviar assisted in negotiating an agreement with the dragon Ghostwalker in Denver, and we are prepared to offer our assistance in California and the Native American Nations to help ensure peace and understanding throughout North America. [APPLAUSE]

The dream of our nation has never died. It has survived war, and plague, and changes to the world our Founding Fathers could never have foreseen. Now it is time for us to take our cue from the spirit of our times. Now is the time for us to awaken, and to make our nation's dream a reality. Thank you and good night. [THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE]

• Needless to say, things are not quite so wizard in the UCAS as Heff makes them out to be. The East Coast is still one of the biggest, dirtiest, and nastiest stretches of sprawl in the world. Chicago is still a complete hellhole. Racial violence is on the rise and there's more weird drek going on than you can shake a stick at. Still, by comparison, the UCAS came through things in pretty

Djurdje Vojcl

good shape. The question is: what are they going to do next?
• Holly

• Haeffner's popularity ratings are huge these days, thanks to his image as a cool and confident leader in times of crisis. Pundits are saying he's a shoe-in for re-election in a few more years, provided he doesn't muck things up too much in the meanwhile. We may be looking at the first three-term prez of the UCAS, kids.
• Bowler

• Maybe even longer than that, chummer. Rumors are flying that Haeffner plans on holding on to the office as long as he can hang on to it before gracefully handing the reins over to Daviar. Provided their political enemies don't bring them down, they have the makings of a real dynasty that can direct the future of the UCAS for decades. You can bet that's something the established political parties in DeeCee are willing to do almost anything to prevent.
• DC Insider



• Note that a significant percentage (perhaps as much as 5 percent) of the new SINs the UCAS government is handing out end up on the black market. There's a booming biz in fake IDs and "virtual people" in the UCAS that makes things easier on 'runners looking to do biz there. That means the shadows of the UCAS are opening up like never before and practically welcoming us in.
• Prime Runner

• Actually, that reminds me of something that a chummer said to me. He grew up in Seattle before coming to the UCAS proper and he always said how Seattle was really out there on the fringe. It has had a sort of "frontier town" feel to it for a long time because it's so isolated from the rest of the UCAS. You always heard about how wizard and strange Seattle was, out in the midst of Native territory right near Elfland. When I first moved to Seattle from Boston I could see what they meant. The 'plex was certainly on the edge in social trends, fashion, music, drek like that, a real melting pot for all kinds of people. Since '57, the whole UCAS has become more and more like Seattle: wilder, more open, with more visible metahumans (and even non-humans) and more acceptance of magic and the Awakened. It's like it's finally letting go of the 20th century and moving into the 21st. Be interesting to see what that means, for the UCAS and the rest of the world.
• Talon

LAND OF THE FREE, HOME OF THE BRAVE

by Prof

It certainly appears that the UCAS is on the rise, in spite (or perhaps because of) recent events. This is a quick primer for those of you who hail from other nations or who didn't get a basic civics education (or didn't bother to pay attention back then). Welcome to the United Canadian and American States, hope you live to enjoy the experience.

THE UCAS GOVERNMENT

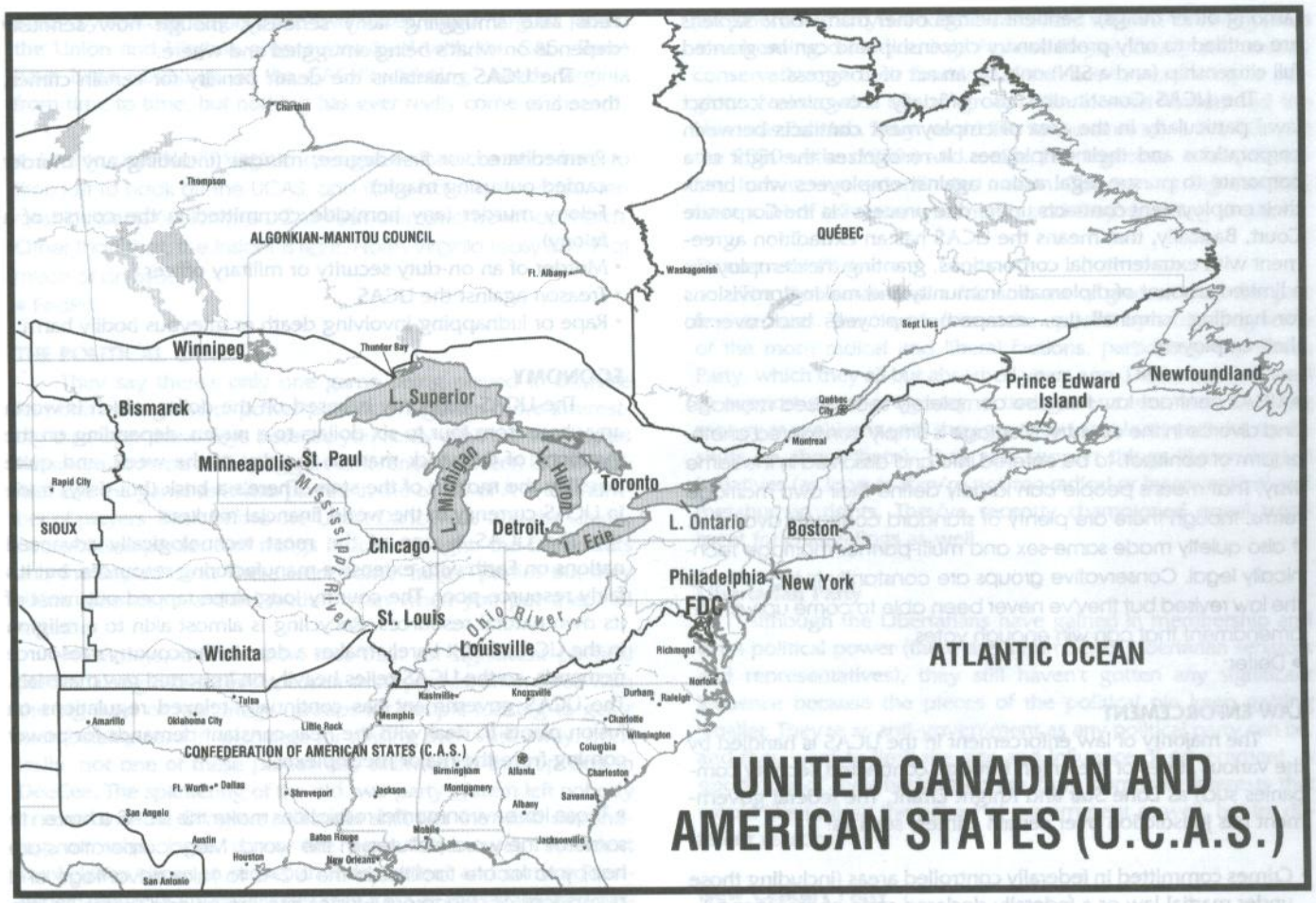
We, the people of the United States of America and the Dominion of Canada, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, restore domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and procure the blessings of liberty and security for ourselves and our posterity, in spite of all enemies foreign and domestic, and the travails of our two nations, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United Canadian and American States.

That's the preamble to the UCAS Constitution, the document that made the nation a reality and that governs it still. It was born out of the battered remnants of two once-great nations, brought low by a combination of Native American magic and corporate exploitation. It's little wonder that the UCAS Constitution and government differ in some important ways from those of the nations that came before it.

The UCAS Constitution is based on the Constitution of the United States of America. Most of the later amendments of the US Constitution were incorporated into the original UCAS document, with a Bill of Rights similar to the US Constitution. The UCAS Constitution determines the organization and function of the UCAS federal government.

The president and vice president are elected to four-year terms by a simple majority vote of the popular ballot (the UCAS has no electoral college). There is no limit to the number of terms a president may serve.

• Voting in the UCAS, as in most first-world countries, is handled electronically via the Matrix (the so-called "remote-vote" system). Originally touted as the ultimate expression of democracy, the remote-vote system has come into question several times over the past 30 or so years, most recently in the '56 election, where the voting results were proven to have been tampered with, resulting in the new election where Dunkelzahn became president. Since then, the federal government has supposedly added new safeguards and checking procedures to ensure that the vote remains unbiased.
• Brother Data



• Of course, there are plenty of other biases in the UCAS electoral system, not the least of which is that you have to have a SIN in order to vote. Votes can also be "bought" with clever political advertising or outright manipulation, like the scandal a few years ago that linked subliminal messages in a new simsense release to Senator Hammond's re-election campaign, or the use of "dead-ballots," votes registered under deactivated SINs. You can be sure that any new safeguards will only be effective for so long before someone finds a way around them.
• TomTom

The UCAS legislature is made up of a Senate and a House of Representatives much like the old United States. Each state in the Union (including Seattle) elects two senators to serve six-year terms. Representatives serve four years and are chosen by districts of approximately 500,000 citizens (reapportioned every 10 years according to the national census, and regularly gerrymandered to suit the needs of the government). There is no limit on the number of terms a senator or representative may serve.

The UCAS judiciary is virtually identical in structure to the old US Supreme Court, and US Supreme Court decisions are considered binding precedents in UCAS law. Supreme Court justices are appointed by the President and approved by the Congress. They serve for life or until they choose to retire (and with modern medicine those terms just keep getting longer and longer).

The UCAS Constitution allows the federal government to suspend any and all civil rights during times of war, insurrection, or national emergency (as determined by the executive and legislative branches). In the course of the nation's history, some areas (such as Chicago) have been in a "state of emergency" for years at a time.

• That means exactly what you think it means, folks. The UCAS government can suspend anyone's civil and legal rights pretty much at will, and they've been more than willing to do so when the need arises. The nation takes its security very seriously, and traitors and potential terrorists are often just lined up and shot. Guess what category shadowrunners tend to fall under?
• Legal Eagle

According to the UCAS Constitution, the Bill of Rights applies to all citizens of the nation. A citizen is defined as someone with a System Identification Number or SIN. Those without SINs are "probationary citizens," with very limited civil rights. Probationary citizens cannot vote, are not entitled to jury trials, and do not have access to government programs of any sort

(among other things). Sentient beings other than *Homo sapiens* are entitled to only probationary citizenship and can be granted full citizenship (and a SIN) only by an act of Congress.

The UCAS Constitution also officially recognizes "contract law," particularly in the area of employment contracts between corporations and their employees. It recognizes the right of a corporate to pursue legal action against employees who break their employment contracts under due process via the Corporate Court. Basically, that means the UCAS has an extradition agreement with extraterritorial corporations, granting their employees a limited amount of diplomatic immunity and making provisions for handing "criminal" (i.e., escaped) employees back over to their employers.

• UCAS contract law has also completely secularized marriage and divorce in the country. Marriage is simply considered another form of contract, to be entered into and dissolved in the same way. That means people can largely define their own marriage terms, though there are plenty of standard contracts available. It also quietly made same-sex and multi-partner marriage technically legal. Conservative groups are constantly trying to have the law revised but they've never been able to come up with an amendment that can win enough votes.
• Deiter

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The majority of law enforcement in the UCAS is handled by the various states of the union through contracted security companies such as Lone Star and Knight Errant. The federal government has jurisdiction over certain crimes, such as:

- Crimes committed in federally controlled areas (including those under martial law or a federally declared state of emergency).
- Crimes involving interstate conspiracy or flight across state lines or the jurisdiction of multiple security providers.
- Kidnapping
- Terrorism
- Matrix crimes
- Crimes involving foreign nationals (including employees of extraterritorial corporations)
- Crimes violating acts of Congress

The UCAS Department of Justice coordinates federal law enforcement efforts. Its primary law enforcement agency is the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), along with the Secret Service and the UCAS Marshals. Recent years have seen increases in the budget and training of both the FBI and the Secret Service.

• A lot of that was invested into adding more Awakened personnel to their ranks and providing top-line cyber- and bioware for the rest. FBI magicians are reputed to be particularly well-trained and skilled in forensic magic.
• Dominic

Another area the UCAS authorities take particular interest in is the transportation and sale of controlled materials (in other words, smuggling). Busting smugglers is the job of the FBI. The Feds take smuggling fairly seriously, though how seriously depends on what's being smuggled and where.

The UCAS maintains the death penalty for certain crimes, these are:

- Premeditated, or first-degree, murder (including any murder carried out using magic)
- Felony murder (any homicide committed in the course of a felony)
- Murder of an on-duty security or military officer
- Treason against the UCAS
- Rape or kidnapping involving death or grievous bodily harm.

ECONOMY

The UCAS economy is based on the dollar, which is worth anywhere from four to six dollars to a nuyen, depending on the gyrations of the stock market, the day of the week, and quite possibly the motion of the stars. There's a brisk (but risky) trade in UCAS currency in the world financial markets.

The UCAS is one of the most technologically advanced nations on Earth with extensive manufacturing resources, but it's fairly resource-poor. The country long since tapped out most of its own natural resources. Recycling is almost akin to a religion in the UCAS, but it barely makes a dent in the country's resource demands, so the UCAS relies heavily on imported raw materials. The UCAS government has continually relaxed regulations on fusion plants to deal with the near-constant demands for power coming from the major metroplexes.

• Those lax environmental restrictions make the UCAS a haven to some of the worst polluters in the world. Megacorporations are happy to locate facilities in the UCAS to take advantage and dump tons of dangerous wastes into the air and water. It's little wonder that such large stretches of the nation's metroplexes are poisoned and dying slowly, or that cancer, birth defects and other toxin-related disorders are on the rise. Part of the reason for the UCAS reputation as a fairly un-Awakened place is because the Awakened can't stand to live there.
• Jesse

THE FEDERAL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

by DC Insider

Washington, the Federal District of Columbia, alias the DeeCee Sprawl, is the seat of the UCAS government and the center of most of the dirty-dealings in the nation. UCAS politics is a real shark-tank, and UCAS politicians take pride in their ability to come out on top, no matter what it takes. Of late the political sharks have found the hunting pretty slim, which means a feeding frenzy could happen at any moment.

For those of you who don't know the area, DeeCee encompasses a sprawl in and around Maryland and North Virginia in the UCAS. It's centered on the Potomac River, where the heart of the sprawl is the capitol itself. North Virginia was ceded to the UCAS in the Treaty of Richmond, which defined the border with the Confederate American States. Naturally the UCAS wasn't crazy about the idea of having its capitol within spitting distance of a potentially hostile foreign power, so the treaty created a "buffer

zone" by splitting Virginia into two states. North Virginia joined the Union and Virginia proper remained with the CAS. There have been rumblings of the CAS "reclaiming" North Virginia from time to time, but nothing has ever really come of them.

• Atlanta uses North Virginia as a cause celébre from time to time just to hack off the UCAS, and there have been a few terrorist incidents (which the UCAS Feds clamped down on, hard). Other than that, the Insider is right, North Virginia really isn't that much of an issue.
• FedPol

THE POLITICAL GAME

They say there's only one game being played in DeeCee and that's the game of power politics. It's gotten more interesting than ever these days because you really can't tell the players without a scorecard. The biggest difference between UCAS politics and the game as it was played in the ol' US of A is the number of players. Back before the Ghost Dance War and the Union, two political parties had things locked up tight: the Democrats and the Republicans. There were some "fringe" parties but they didn't amount to a third faction even when you put them all together.

Nowadays, there are no less than six significant political parties, along with a couple dozen small parties, often allied with the big boys or just "fringe" groups for people looking to get a membership card in exchange for tossing their vote away. Ironically, not one of these parties can claim to be the top dog in DeeCee. The splintering of the old two-party system left nobody in control of the Congress; alliances shift like the wind depending on what issue is on the floor. Worse yet, President Dunkelzahn chose to run as an independent and current President Haeffner maintains his distance from all the established parties, claiming membership in none of them. He uses his status as an "outsider" to make it clear to the people that he's not entangled in the same political morass as the fat cats on Capitol Hill (even though he actually wallows in it up to his receding hairline).

• There's actually a growing faction of independent voters rallying around President Haeffner in what some wags have called "The Draco Party," referring to the deceased President Dunkelzahn and the Draco Foundation (which is run by VP Daviar and considered allied with the current administration). It remains to be seen how much this movement will grow and how many people it will pull away from the current parties.
• Cam

All this means that the politicos in DeeCee are hungry and always on the lookout for opportunities to get ahead, preferably by climbing over the bodies of their competitors. Who are the big players? Glad you asked.

Archconservative

Some people just can't catch a break. That's the Archconservatives for you. They're devoted to things like "traditional values," hard work, and the good ol' days when you didn't let people different from you move in next door without throwing them a welcoming cross-burning. At best they're fiscally and socially conservative, at their foaming-at-the-mouth worst they're religious zealots with ties to groups like Human Nation and the Humanis Policlub. They would like to see a return to the '50s (not the 2050s—the *1950s*) and a nice, homogenous, white, Christian, human, male-dominated nation. They're not big but they have a lot of influence and money and they're willing to use it.

Democratic Party

The Democrats lost a fair amount of ground over the past few decades. They've tried to make up for it by embracing some of the more radical and liberal factions, particularly the Green Party, which they all but absorbed years ago. Democrats still tend to support social programs, active government, and throwing money at problems until they go away (or at least until the media shuts up about them). They also support things like ecological initiatives (as long as they're not *too* radical or inconvenient) and metahuman rights. They've recently championed equal treatment for changelings as well.

Libertarian Party

Although the Libertarians have gained in membership and even political power (there are a number of Libertarian senators and representatives), they still haven't gotten any significant influence because the pieces of the political pie keep getting smaller. They're as anti-government as any political party can be, and they want to limit the size and influence of government. A good deal of their backing comes from corporate interests that would like to limit the power of government as well, but for different reasons.

New Century Party

The New Century Party rivals the Democrats for the title of "granola" party (the one with the most fruits, nuts, and flakes). It's also the youngest of the major parties, having gotten its start less than ten years ago when some disaffected Technocrats and Democrats joined up with some fringe groups. One of the driving influences of the New Century Party is the Illuminates of the New Dawn (IOND), a hermetic initiatory group based in DeeCee. Two-time presidential candidate Rozilyn Hernandez remains the party spokesperson and visionary.

Republican Party

The Republicans have mellowed somewhat since many of their more fanatical and zealous elements defected to form the Archconservative Party. The party's big focus is fiscal responsibility and kowtowing to corporate interests these days, although Republicans also like to run "Reunify North America!" up the flagpole from time to time to see who salutes. Party pundits would like nothing more than to see the UCAS reclaim all of the territory the United States and Canada lost over the past fifty years or so and put "upstarts" like the NAN, the CAS, and those uppity elves in their places. California is one of their favorite causes, especially since it looks like other nations have started to divvy up the Free State.



Technocrat Party

The Technocrats started out with a vision and wandered off the path shortly after they became a recognized party. Their platform has traditionally focused on "progress," usually through technological innovation and social engineering. More often than not it has been a thinly-disguised policy of corporate support, suggesting that megacorporations will help improve the world if only we give them whatever they want. Not surprisingly, the Technocratic party appeals to many corporate managers and execs and gets hefty donations from the corporate sector.

THE DEECEE SHADOWS

So, what's there for a shadowrunner to do in DeeCee? Plenty, as you might guess. The big biz in the FDC isn't corporate (at least, not directly), it's political. The most valuable coin around here is information. Everybody is spying on everybody else, trying to dig up the dirt they can use to leverage themselves a better position. The political parties spy on each other. The major politicians try to blackmail or ruin each other. Everybody wants a piece of the President and Vice President (who have thus far proven to have utterly bulletproof reputations). Then there are the foreign ambassadors gathering intelligence for the folks back home. There are the corps looking to make sure their interests are the ones heard on Capitol Hill, and organized crime families keeping the Feds out of their business in exchange for a piece of the action, or just withholding some incriminating vid-footage.

In fact, the hardest part about running the shadows in DeeCee is keeping track of it all and knowing who's willing to pay for what. I know more than a few runners who take the initiative and grab some data on their own, hoping to sell it to the highest bidder. Of course, security in DeeCee is at ultra-paranoid levels, simply because everyone has secrets to hide.

• The other biz you'll see in and around DeeCee includes smuggling (most of it coming through North Virginia) and various targeted jobs like extractions, kidnapping and the occasional assassination, though those are rare, and come with a very high price tag.
• Prime Runner

HOT SPOTS

There are plenty of places to see and be seen in DeeCee, far too many to go into here. There's also plenty to see and do if you're into history or sightseeing. Assuming you're in the 'plex to make some cred, however, there are some places you'll definitely want to keep in mind.

First are the various offices of government. My advice, stay the frag away unless you're getting paid a *lot* of cred. The Secret Service and the FBI take protecting places like Capitol Hill and the White House very seriously and they shoot first and study the corpses afterward. Security is ultra-top grade. If you've got a political target, don't mess with them at work.

The Illuminates of the New Dawn Grand Lodge is located in DeeCee, in Foggy Bottom not far from Georgetown University. Home of quite possibly the most powerful magical order in the UCAS (and maybe the world), rumors constantly fly about magical goings-on here.

The Draco Foundation also has its headquarters in DeeCee, in a modest looking office building. Don't let the looks fool you, their security is top of the line, and they may have even more magical goodies than the IOND in there. I know plenty of people in DeeCee who'd pay big for a look inside.

Near the Watergate hotel is the secure bunker built around what they call Dunkelzahn's Rift (or just the Rift), a kind of hole in astral space that appeared when the First Wyrm's limo exploded there. Since Ghostwalker showed up, the government mages have been studying the Rift round the clock. What have they found out? You're not the only one who wants to know.

THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR

by Talon

What they call the Northeast Corridor, or the Northeastern Metroplex Axis (NEMA), makes up the heart of UCAS technological and financial resources. It's also the oldest and most densely populated area of the UCAS, basically one giant sprawl stretching from Boston down to Philadelphia, which means that it has a big influence on the nation's politics. In other words, the Northeast is a happening place in the UCAS, especially if you're a shadowrunner.

BOSTON

Ah, Boston. What can I say about my hometown? Well, it's at least as fragged up as the rest of the UCAS, if not more so.

Boston is the center of the UCAS high-tech industry, especially cutting-edge stuff like cyberware, biotech and Matrix technology. There are more high-tech corps per square kilometer in Boston than anywhere else in the UCAS, and competition is fierce to get the latest and greatest gadgets to market faster than the other guy. This is also where a lot of corps compete for talent coming out of schools like MIT&T. You can find plenty of work doing extractions, datasteals, and other biz involving corp R&D.

Boston is also home to the East Coast Stock Exchange, the primary financial market of the UCAS. That means gigapulses of valuable data, insider trading, stock manipulation and attempts to recreate Damien Knight's Nanosecond Buyout of Ares Macrotech. The ECSE itself has the best security huge amounts of money can buy, but there are enough brokers and other suits working in the 'plex to present runners with thousands of valuable targets.

Then you've got schools like MIT&T, which is on the cutting edge of technology and thaumaturgy (that's what the Ts stand for after all). Security there got beefed up after a recent incident involving the disappearance of some materials from the Thaumaturgy Department, materials on loan from the Dunkelzahn Institute. The DIMR, or Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research, is the other big wheel in magical circles in the 'plex, sponsored by the Big D's will to do purely magical research and the envy of many a corp R&D division.

• The rest of the Boston area Awakened community is focused on Salem, on the northern outskirts of the 'plex. The area has a big neo-pagan and witch population and a rep for providing more "holistic" training in the Art than schools like MIT&T.
• Wanda



Boston weathered the passage of the comet pretty well, all things considered, with Knight Errant clamping down on some riots associated with SURGE and dealing with some zombies showing up here and there. Although the streets are a little stranger, and everyone's a shade more paranoid, life such as it is goes on in the Hub.

• One development Talon fails to mention is that a major figure in the Boston shadows, a fixer called "Mama," recently disappeared and left a power vacuum behind. Sounds like there's room for a lot of upward mobility for ambitious shadow-types in the area. I suspect competition will be fierce.
• Nightside

NEW YORK CITY

New York isn't quite what it used to be, but the Rotten Apple is still the playground of the megacorps. That means it's a place where a shadowrunner can always find work, provided that you're not too picky about what *kind* of work.

New York has never quite recovered from the gut punch it took in 2005 when a quake leveled most of the place, creating one of the biggest disaster areas in history. The U.S. government ended up getting a lot of help from the megacorps in rebuilding New York City, and the more the corps rebuilt, the more they took over. With the U.S. distracted by little things like the Awakening, the Ghost Dance War, and the dissolution of the country and the formation of the UCAS, the corps bought up New York City piece by piece until they owned it all. By then, there wasn't frag-all the UCAS government could do about it, either. New York was and is a corporate city, owned and operated.

The corps rebuilt Manhattan taller, stronger and uglier than ever, with huge skyrakers and arcologies blotting out the sun in the narrow ferrocrete canyons between them. They also beefed up security, since they didn't want anyone messing in their new sandbox. In addition to the SINs required of all UCAS citizens, anyone entering or leaving Manhattan needs to have a special pass-card issued by the metroplex and encoded with personal data. The cards come in a variety of color-codes, depending on whether you're a resident, worker, visitor, etc. There are even special black cards for convicted criminals and ex-cons (just so they can know who the "bad elements" are). Cards are cross-checked against a central databank upon entering and leaving, anytime you buy something, whenever you want to get into one or the more exclusive neighborhoods in the 'plex or when a cop asks you for your pass. As you might guess, fake passes are a big (and expensive) biz in the Big Apple.

• A vital business, too. Don't make the mistake of thinking you can slip into NYC and get around without a pass. If you think being without a SIN is bad, being without a pass not only automatically marks you as a criminal in NYC, but it basically gives the cops the right to dispose of you as they see fit, since you don't technically exist. It's like the whole city is a corporate zero-zone. If you don't belong there, then you're dead meat.
• Eddy

Though the city still has a mayor and a city council, the real people in charge are the members of the Manhattan, Inc. Consortium, a holding company owned by various megacorps. The Consortium keeps its exact membership quiet for security rea-

sons, but pretty much every big corp is rumored to be a member. All that's commonly known is that there are thirteen board seats and that one corp can be voted out by unanimous agreement of the other twelve. It's happened at least twice so far, once with Mitsuhama and more recently with Fuchi (replaced by Novatech).

• Battles over Consortium seats are usually ugly, but fortunately don't happen too often. I hear MCT is still gunning to get its seat on the board back and that Renraku is aiming for one, too. There's also a rumor going around that Aztechnology may get kicked off, but I've got no confirmation of it yet.
• Gopher

The New York shadows are long and deep, and with so many megacorps packed together in one place there's biz enough for everyone. Some of the more recent flack includes ongoing conflicts between Renraku and Novatech over old Fuchi resources and new developments in R&D (some of them based on drek Renraku salvaged from their Seattle arcology). Even the cops get in on the game. There's a long-standing rivalry between the three (yep, three) security contract holders in NYC: Knight Errant, Winter Systems, and NYPD, Inc. They compete for the favor of the Consortium and try to frag each other over as much as possible.

• Mainly because of a clause in their contracts that says the Consortium will remove one of the companies if presented with proof of wrongdoing. So the security corps are always trying to get dirt on each other, or simply frame each other, so the Consortium will bust them. Naturally, the corps just bring in a new third security company and it starts all over again. That means outside sec-corps also want to see one of the three get busted so they can get a shot. Right now, I hear Lone Star is gunning for Winter Systems' spot.
• Tin Star

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

What really put PEI (as it is sometimes known) on the map was when Dunkelzahn established a residence there so he could get UCAS citizenship, and eventually run for president. I'll leave it up to you to decide how far in advance the dragon worked his plans out. Sufficient to say that his former residence on Prince Edward Island drew some attention following his death in DeeCee.

Eventually the place ended up the home base of the Children of the Dragon, a somewhat flaky New Age cult that worships Dunkelzahn as an avatar of "the Great Dragon Spirit" they believe will lead humanity into a new Golden Age of understanding and enlightenment, or some such drek. The interesting thing about the Children, other than the fact that they've probably got some of the dragon's goodies in their PEI compound, is that they're reputed to be able to awaken magical gifts in people. Their leader, David Dragonson, claims he gained his magical abilities after meditating on the Dunkelzahn Rift in DeeCee and "communing with the Great Dragon Spirit." I don't know if it's true or not, but there are more than a few people who want to keep tabs on the Children and Dragonson in particular, so I know there's biz to be had in and around Prince Edward Island.

• The Children also hire shadowrunners from time to time, usually to obtain some "relic" of Dunkelzahn's that they can't get their hands on legally (or that they don't want anyone to know they're after, I suppose). Their cred is good and the runs are pretty simple, provided you don't have any problem with going after something that belonged to the Big D.
• Blossom

GREAT LAKES REGION

by DefCon5

Welcome to the Great Lakes Region, the Rust Belt. It's the manufacturing center of the UCAS and the biggest disaster area in the whole fragged-up country. There's a pretty diverse range of places around here, from the hell that is Chicago to Ares' corporate fiefdom in Detroit and the growing entertainment biz in Toronto.

CHICAGO

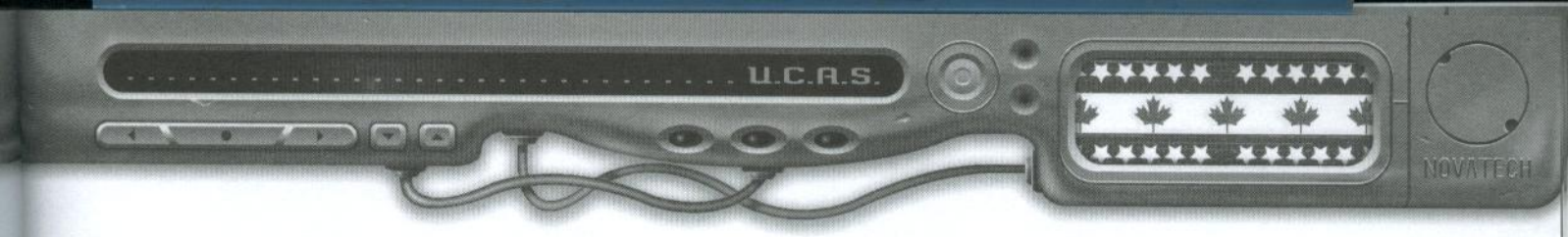
I spent enough time in Chicago to convince me of two things. First, there is a hell and Chicago can now be considered a major suburb. Second, never trust a megacorp when you have a problem and they say, "we'll handle it." In Chicago, the cure may have been worse than the disease, though the disease was pretty bad.

The heart of Chicago was taken over by insect spirits in 2055. The UCAS military, backed up by Ares Macrotechnology, quickly cordoned off the city, trapping thousands of people inside to so-called "Chicago Containment Zone." It was three years of Mexican standoff as troops tried to clear out the bugs and get people out of the CZ, but what do you do when the bugs can possess people and pass themselves off as normal? Worse yet, what do you do about the lunatics running the asylum? More and more people in the CZ either snapped completely or joined up with one of the various warlords or gangs. By 2058 things were only getting worse, so the UCAS gave Ares the go-ahead to spray the CZ with a new bacteria called Strain-III that attacks magical creatures. Then they declared the problem solved, packed up, and went home.

Strain-III killed a lot of the bugs, all right. It also wiped out ghouls and a lot of other things. Unfortunately, it didn't die off like Ares said it would. Instead it's still around and still eating anything magical that comes along. That means Chicago is almost magic-dead at this point. The UCAS government has made noises about rebuilding, but the truth is that after more than six years they've pretty much written the whole place off as a loss.

Today, Chicago is the biggest and most lawless urban wasteland in the UCAS. Outside the former containment zone UCAS law reigns (enforced by the occasional military patrol), but inside almost anything goes. Scavengers pick over the ruins while gangs and local warlords claim different areas of the city as their own.

About the only break Chicago has gotten is the fact that a lot recent events to have passed it by, probably because magic



is so rare in the city now. Still, there has been an effect. A lot of freakish changelings in the area were persecuted and attacked by mobs who feared more bugs or evil spirits. They fled into Chicago and have begun settling their own "Freaktown" there, which only angers the anti-magical, anti-metahuman survivalists camped out in the ruins. Caught between a rock and a hard place without much magic to back them up, it remains to be seen if Freaktown will survive a year.

• DefCon5 is right, Chicago is a true Hell on Earth. I've heard rumors that the UCAS government is considering the possibility of permanently walling the whole area off and turning it into some kind of self-contained prison or the like where they can put some of the criminals already straining the nation's jails to their limits. After all, there's pretty much nothing there for anyone to damage any more, and all the Strain-III still floating around would make it idea for holding Awakened prisoners. Chicago could become the Yomi of the UCAS with a little work.
• Connor

• I hear that more than a few corps are interested in studying the effects of Strain-III and the radiation from the Cermak blast on the astral plane and the local life-forms. That means hiring people to protect corporate research teams, or to just go in and gather samples for them (which may include the occasional flesh-form bug spirit or the like. Then there are always bug-hunts to collect the UCAS bounty on insect spirits and shamans. Still, there are better ways to make money, if you ask me.
• Prime Runner

DETROIT

Where Chicago has suffered, Detroit has mostly prospered, being the home of the headquarters of Ares Macrotechnology. Detroit is a controlled corporate 'plex for the most part, under the ever-watchful eyes of Ares and Knight Errant. The 'plex's population has leveled off since the influx of refugees from the Chicago area, and Ares makes sure things stay peaceful and orderly.

The main kinds of biz you're going to find in Motown are smuggling (from Minneapolis-St. Paul across the lakes, from Chicago, and down from Québec) and runs involving Ares in one way or another. Ares hires runners out of Detroit, and Ares rivals (especially Cross Applied Technologies) are often looking for local talent that knows the Detroit scene for runs against Ares.

• Ares influence in Detroit is pervasive at this point. Knight Errant handles the police and security work (natch), Ares products and logos are everywhere, the company holds contracts for construction, maintenance, public utilities and nearly everything else (either directly or through a subsidiary). For all intents and purposes, Ares owns Detroit.
• Errant Knight

• Ares latest project in Detroit is building a wall around the metroplex. I frag you not, an honest to Ghost actual wall. When completed, it will stand eight meters tall and enclose the outskirts of Detroit, with gates at the major points of entry and exit. Ares touts it as a "security measure" for the people of Detroit and they're swallowing it hook, line, and sinker. Corporate projections say the wall will be finished sometime in 2067 and there's talk of the idea of a bio-fabric dome to cover the whole thing once they're done.
• Miss Tick

TORONTO

The city of Toronto was voted "cleanest and safest city in the UCAS" two years running back in 2051-52 and they're still pretty proud of it. Toronto has a long-standing rep as a decent place to live. You'd think that would mean shadow biz is hard to come by, but you'd be wrong. Toronto just has a different kind of shadow community than you find in New York or DeeCee.

Toronto's main legitimate industries are finance, Matrix tech, and entertainment. The city is the third major financial center in the UCAS (after Boston and New York), home to a large number of corporate and foreign-owned banks and trading houses. It has its own stock exchange, which sees a brisk business each day, and you can bet there's no lack of insider trading and datasteals to go along with it.

• You got that one right, DefCon. The Toronto Stock Exchange is an easier nut to crack than the ECSE in Boston (although not by much, I'll grant). It's also a decent back door into the UCAS financial network, if you're feeling like juggling some numbers or covering your money trail with a few nanosecond loans and deposits to offshore accounts.
• Whisper

Toronto has a thriving computer hardware and software industry, mostly start-ups and "cottage" operations specializing in software or making better widgets for computers and decks. There are quite a few "virtual" companies that exist only on the Matrix, with their various partners and employees working remotely (oftentimes telecommuting from as far away as Hong Kong or Britain). Competition is fierce between these up-and-comers and the megacorps keeping an eye on their comings and goings.

• The Toronto Matrix is as nice-looking and well maintained as the rest of the city. There are certain standards for Matrix iconography and all "construction" has to be approved by the government. A lot of residents make use of the Matrix for interactive entertainment, and there are "gateways" into various virtual malls, games, sim-theatres, and so forth.
• Ice Skater

Toronto is also the entertainment capitol of the UCAS (such as it is). The city served as the "stunt double" for other city locations (particularly New York) for years. When the UCAS lost California and most of its major film and television industry, New York and Toronto tried to take up the slack. Toronto proved the better venue for most entertainment corps, which bought up land and set up facilities here. Some are just subsidiaries of Cal-



Free companies, giving them a presence in the UCAS, while others are independent or belong to one of the megacorps. VisionQuest, NBS, Mediaworks, Brilliant Genesis and others maintain studios here.

• The media corps offer plenty of work, some of it pretty pleasant by shadowrunner standards. There's babysitting various sim-stars or providing them with "good-X" (good experiences to record, according to the industry lingo). There are the usual datasteals and extractions between rival corps, and some are even hiring runners to get outfitted with sim-rigs for "tales of the street" type "reality" sims. A lot of the media corps in Toronto are also good for a paid trip to CalFree to frag with one of their competitors.
• Blinky

• I hear the media corps in Nashville are also very interested in what's happening in Toronto, which they perceive to be their closest rival. Of course, some corps have interests in both places, but it wouldn't be the first time there was in-fighting within a corporate division or subsidiary.
• Large Marge

• Toronto is also the major producer of BTL chips in the UCAS, which get smuggled back through Minneapolis (and then to points all across the UCAS) as well as up to Québec. There are a number of pirate studios turning out beetles, and more than a few legit studios got their seed money burning illegal chips (and still do it when they need a quick infusion of cash). Nice, clean Toronto has more than its share of chip-heads, too. They just try to keep them off the streets and out of the gutters.
• Spike

THE HEARTLAND

The so-called "heartland" of the UCAS is more like a rough frontier bordered by potentially hostile nations and crossed with smuggling routes. It can be a harsh place to live and to run, far from the crowded sprawls further east and west but home to some dangers and opportunities all its own.

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL

The MSP 'plex (as it is often known) is the biggest smuggling hub in the UCAS and rivals Denver for the biggest in North America. Overland smuggling from the Pacific Northwest, the Great Lakes, the Mississippi and points all over the map converges here.

• Actually, with the recent shake-up in Denver, a lot more traffic is going through MSP these days rather than risking the possibility that Ghostwalker is in a bad mood or that one of the sectors is feeling more paranoid than usual. That means the Minneapolis shadows are bustling with activity. The only problem is that it tends to attract the attention of the UCAS feds, who want to protect the country's new trade agreements by cracking down on smuggling. Interesting times, boys and girls.
• Wile E. Coyote

The whole 'plex has something of a "frontier town" feel to it. People in MSP don't ask a lot of questions, especially when it comes to where your goods came from. So long as you're in good standing with the local rigger and smuggler community, you're doing all right. Naturally, the major syndicates have a lot of pull with smugglers, particularly the Mafia. They've got MSP largely to themselves, since the Yakuza and other syndicates just don't make it this deep into the UCAS. Don Marco "Fat Cat" Catarone runs things in MSP and he's got a rep as an easy guy to get along with, so long as you don't hack him off. Then you end up floating face down in the river.

• Truth is Don Catarone is one lazy fragger. He's got a sweet business going on in MSP and he'll mess up anyone who frags with it, but he's not very ambitious beyond that. There are always young Mafia turks looking to take Fat Cat down and replace him, but none of them have managed it yet.
• Zippy

Most of the shadow work you're going to find in the MSP metroplex is connected with smuggling of one sort or another. There are goods coming and going all the time, and sometimes riggers hire some runners to ride shotgun, especially spell-slingers if they're expecting some magical trouble. Runners get hired to intercept and hijack shipments or to ensure their safe delivery. Plenty more are simply passing through on their way to somewhere else, under the UCAS radar. At any given time, MSP probably has one of the biggest shadow populations in the UCAS, but not many of them stay for more than a day or two.

• One hazard (and possible opportunity) around MSP is the local Awakened wildlife. Both the waterways and the wooded areas north of the 'plex are teeming with critters of all sorts. Most of them are no threat whatsoever to something like a T-bird or even a good-sized truck, but there are things like aardwolves, black annis, bogies, piasma and wyverns, and they'll attack almost anything if they're hungry or hacked off enough. The rivers feature devil jack diamonds, hellbinders, incubi and worse.
• Ranger

• How is that an "opportunity?"
• Macro

• One word, chummer: talismongering. A lot of those critter parts are useful for magical drek, so some people in MSP will pay decent cred for an intact carcass. Of course, hauling a dead wyvern into the 'plex poses problems of its own.
• T-Max

• A couple of things Ranger left out include roaming bands of dzoo-no-qua, lone wendigos and the occasional thunderbird. Once got my truck's electrical system fried by one of those fraggers. Luckily it didn't hang around for long once it figured out the truck wasn't edible.
• Mad Pete

ST. LOUIS

The city of St. Louis remains a "gateway city" only these days it's a gateway between the UCAS and the CAS, for both legit trade and tourism and for smugglers of all stripes. Biz is booming down around St. Louis and it's a key place for runners to get in and out of the CAS or UCAS.

St. Louis was somewhat in dispute when the CAS decided to split off from the UCAS. The CAS wanted the whole of Missouri, but the UCAS felt that compromised their border too much, but the CAS wasn't willing to budge about getting St. Louis, so the politicos took a lesson from old King Solomon, they solved the problem by cutting the city in half. The UCAS got one half and the CAS got the other, with the CAS border stretched out to include a "wedge" of old Missouri, with the point at St. Louis.

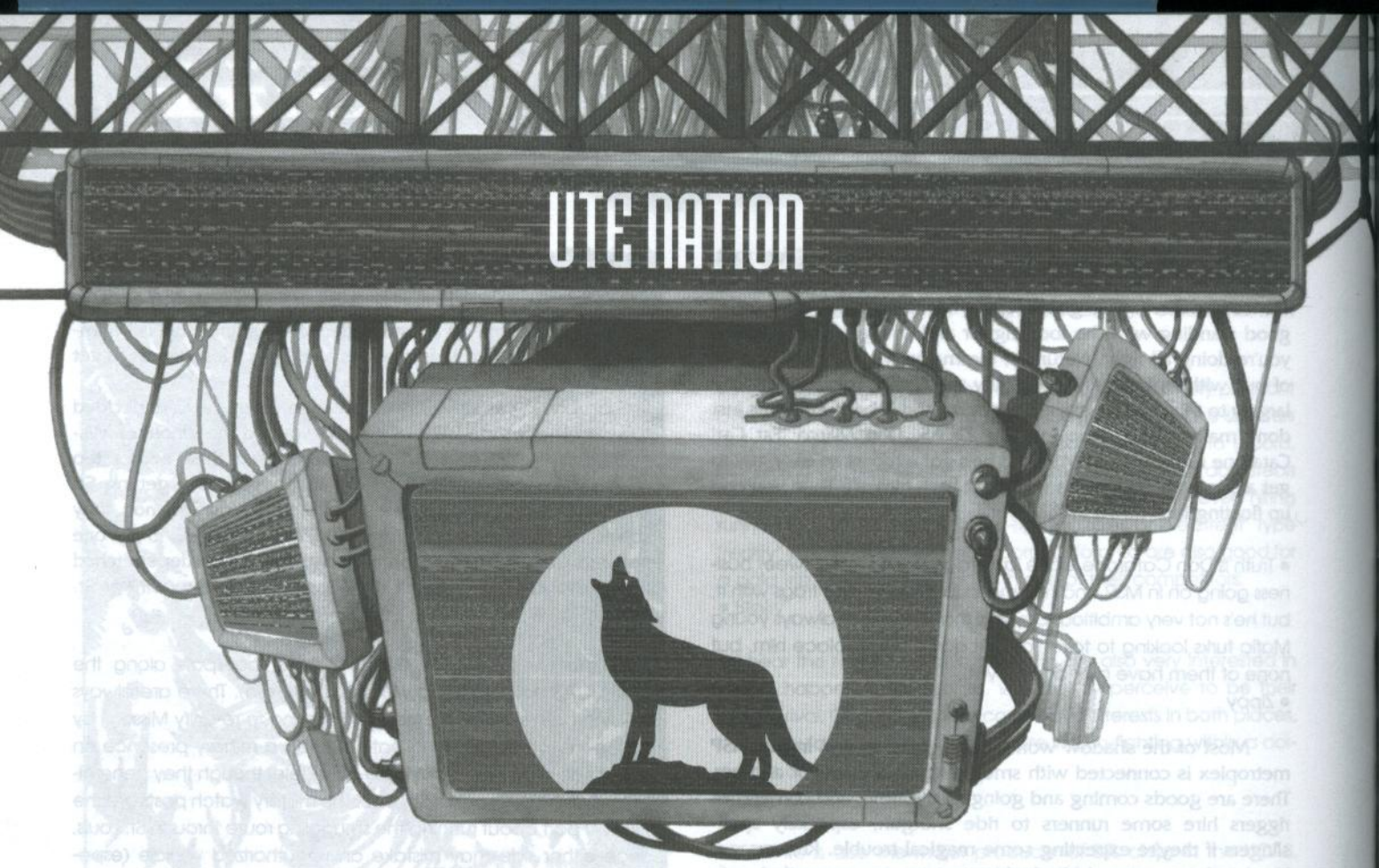
• Missouri remains ones of the biggest hot-spots along the CAS/UCAS border (along with North Virginia). There are always folks on both sides of the border agitating to re-unify Missouri by taking the other half. Both nations keep a military presence on either side of the border in case of trouble, though they generally keep the troops out of St. Louis. The military watch posts are the trickiest part about running the smuggling route through St. Louis, since either side may mistake an unauthorized vehicle (especially a T-bird) for a military intrusion.
• Jammer

Like MSP, shadow biz in St. Louis is heavily tied into smuggling. The big difference is that while MSP has the smuggling biz down to a science (heavily controlled by the Mob), St. Louis has seen smuggling operations increase tremendously in the last few years, particularly since Chicago was shut down. It's a real free-for-all in the shadows of the city, with everyone out for themselves. Bring someone along to St. Louis you can trust to watch you back. My advice is to stay out of the various struggles between the major factions for control of the city's shadow-trade. There's a lot of money to be made at it, but you have to live to spend it first, and this war is shaping up to be real bloody.

• I've heard that Miriam Kozlowski, the Don of New Orleans, would love to get her claws deep into the biz in St. Louis before any of the other capos can get a firm grip on it. Normally, what La Dame du Mort wants, she gets, but first she needs to take care of the mob war brewing in her own backyard.
• Godfather

• The other major biz that goes down in St. Louis is working for the UCAS or CAS government, gathering information on the other side of the border, smuggling people and goods across and generally keeping the other side off-balance so they don't get too confident. Pay is good, but the secretary will disavow all knowledge if you're caught (of course, what else is new?).
• I-Spy

UTE NATION



The Ute's been on a downward spiral lately, and recent events haven't made things better. I found the most unbiased (relatively) yet still knowledgeable source I could on the subject to fill us all in. He does a fine job of introducing himself, so without further ado I'll pass the mic to him.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 14 August 2062 at 18:44:07 (PST)

by Lead Foot

If you want an opinion on the Ute Nation, ask an outsider, if you want millions of opinions on the Ute Nation, ask the locals. That's a bit of wisdom from these parts that goes a long way towards spelling out the divisive and chaotic in-fighting that plagues this nation.

So who the hell am I to tell you about this mess called Ute? I'm a Mohawk drifter making a living in Ute because an unstable nation always has room for a morally lax capitalist. I'll tell it like it is because I don't have any political agenda at stake. My living requires that I know the scene, so I'm as informed as any local. I'm repaying a few favors by writing up this document, but I'm not getting paid by the hour for it so I'll keep it brief.

STATE OF CONFUSION

If you come to the Ute, be prepared for the worst because you'll probably find it. The economy is stagnant, the people are xenophobic, the megacorps are hesitant to bring any big business within the borders and the government accomplishes next to nothing. Needless to say, the people of the Ute nation are not happy. In fact, they are fragging ticked off. The country is mired in recession and violent protests and acts of political terrorism are a daily occurrence.

How did the Ute get so cluster-fragged? Well, first let me explain the economic crisis, then the political crisis that prevents anything from being done about it.

ECONOMIC THRASHING

Ute has never been an economic powerhouse. The nation is only barely kept going by agrarian development and light manufacturing, but unemployment has always been high and wages are low. The brain drain that followed the purge of most of the non-natives didn't help.



UTE TIMELINE

2019–2021: Anti-Anglo extremists spark widespread violence in a push to drive remaining non-natives from the country. Despite heavy harassment and bias, many Anglos remain. They are treated as second-class citizens at best.
2038–2048: Minor border skirmishes erupt between Ute and Pueblo.
2059–2062: Over three years of severe drought cripple the nation's agricultural-based economy, throwing it into deep recession.
September 2061: Ute inquiries into suspicious events at Chaco Canyon are rebuffed.
December 2061: Ute officials condemn Pueblo's annexation of Los Angeles as hostile "military adventurism."

For decades Ute teetered along, kept afloat only with support from the other NAN states.

The Anti-Immigrant Factor

Ute's unfriendly image as the "Anglo-buster" state sure hasn't helped. Since the country was founded, it was made clear by a vocal (but large) minority that Anglos weren't wanted. Right after Ute was founded, a lot of Anglos were shoved out the door through threats, intimidation and direct violence. Some harsh immigration laws were dropped into place to keep any more non-natives from moving in, and the ones that stuck it out had to adapt to life as second-class citizens with a regular serving of bias and discrimination.

• No drek, this bias is hardcore. It's not just the "oops, we forgot your order" or the "sorry sir, this Native man's appointment was before yours" drek you get in most of the other NANs. It's more like "what are you looking at, Anglo?" threats and finding slurs graffiti'd all over your door or car in the morning. Anglo visitors are also the victims of a higher percentage of "random" street crime.
• Pale Rider

• The majority of Ute Amerinds won't give you drek like this—it's just that those that do are pretty aggro about it. And it's not nearly so bad if you're Black, Latino or Asian.
• Eth-nix

This attitude problem has, over the long-term, probably been the biggest kick to the groin of Ute's economy. The country badly needs the skill sets, labor force and market boost that a more open immigration policy would give them. Corporations are reluctant to invest here, especially megacorps who don't want to leave their pet accountants and lab monkeys at home, so they take their business elsewhere.

• The Ute government realizes that a more lenient immigration policy is crucial to their nation's recovery, and the megacorps that line their pockets are lobbying strongly to have the restrictions trashed. But so far, the legislation that has been pushed through sees heavy protest from anti-immigrant groups and it ends up shot down by the public.
• The Keynesian Kid

• Yeah, but since they can't get it pushed through legally, they've just stopped enforcing the immigration law. For the past few years corps have been bringing in employees on visitor visas and then keeping 'em around long after the visa has expired. The government cut down its enforcement on lax visas to almost nothing, turning a blind eye as long as the corp files its taxes on time.
• Tie Fighter

• Which means it's easier for shadowrunners to stick around as well without worrying about immigration inspectors coming after your hoop.
• Exile

UTE AT A GLANCE

Population: 3,310,000
- Human: 67%
- Elf: 9%
- Dwarf: 9%
- Ork: 12%
- Troll: 3%
- Other: 0%

Tribal Affiliation: 90%
Major Tribes:
- Ute: 31%
- Comanche: 25%
- Pawnee: 18%
- Wichita: 10%
- Shoshone: 6%
- Other Tribes: 10%

Per Capita Income: 22,500¥
Estimated SINless: 23%
Below Poverty Level: 20%
Corporate Affiliation: 15%
Education:
- Less Than Twelve Years: 17%
- High School Equivalency: 53%
- College Degrees: 24%
- Advanced Degrees: 6%

Major Languages Spoken:
- English: 88%

Currency: Nuyen
DocWagon Coverage: 20%
- Guaranteed Response Time: 15 Minutes

Heavy Weather

The bullet in the brainpan for Ute wasn't a drop in the value of the nuyen or a shift in global markets—it was the freakin' weather. Extreme weather patterns have plagued Ute over the past couple of years, worse than ever before. Flash flooding has followed months of drought—the combination completely wiping out huge yields of crops the Ute economy depends on.

• No joke, the weather here is out of control. It'll be bone dry for months, creating serious fire and dust hazards. Dust storms strip away the topsoil, and blazing brushfires choke us with smoke. Then—SWOOSH!—a deluge of water drops out of the sky, leaving us neck deep in mud. Flash floods blow away bridges and highways, and mudslides scoop away entire subdivisions. Then you won't see a drop from the sky again for another four months.

I've heard claims that the Ghost Dance screwed up the continent's weather patterns, and since Ute was at ground zero we get it the worst.
• Desert Snowflake

• You think water smuggling is good biz in California? My friends, you'll get double your prices in Ute. Pure water is at a premium, as are magicians who know how to put water spirits to good use. In fact, I've heard of shamans passing through towns who were kept hostage until they produced some water as a "travel tax."
• H-Twenty

The comet's passing didn't make anything better—if anything, it got worse. So now the economy is plunging down like a SAM-tagged panzer, unemployment is skyrocketing and the resident angry crowd has grown furious.

UNITED WE STAND ...

Like all roads to Hell, Ute's began with good intentions. Everyone knows the NAN was built on the efforts of revolutionaries. Daniel Coleman, the Howling Coyote of the Ghost Dance rebels, was Ute and it was his core group of followers that settled here and set down the foundations for the Ute Nation. These were the opinionated idealists and the strategists and the hardcore guerilla warriors; the ones who had cut their teeth attacking American soldiers, put their lives on the line for the Ghost Dance and led the Amerinds to victory. More than any other NAN country, the Ute was built with the fiercest loyalties to Howling Coyote's spirit.



These founders were determined to put the decision-making in the hands of the Ute people. Even before the "Indian Question" and the re-education centers, these were the people who criticized the corrupt reservation leaders that served only American money, not their own Native people. So they attempted to set up a system where the people, not bureaucrats, called the shots. In the decades since, that experiment has backfired.

The Bureaucrats

I've heard some Ute anarchists say that Mistake Number One was putting in any bureaucrats at all, and they may be right. Twenty-two local districts vote forty-four Elected Council officials into four-year terms. Two years into each Elected Council term, a Great Chief is elected by the nation to lead the Council. The Great Chief appoints advisors but a majority vote by the Elected Council must approve them. In the case of a tie, the Great Chief is the tiebreaker.

• So far, everything sounds fair, right? The districts don't have any rules about previous residency, though, which has led to some serious carpetbagger problems. An influential person from a populous district runs for office in a smaller district where there is less competition, but after he or she wins, they ignore the concerns of the people who put them in office. The people never know who to trust politically and yet they still insist their vote counts. Do I sound fed up?
• Bobby Growling Bear

While the Elected Council drafts most bill proposals, they possess little to no power when it comes to transforming a bill into law. That power rests with the people.

• These days, it isn't Councilors who draft most bills, it's the corps and policlubs. At least half the Councilors are in someone's pocket—sometimes ten someones' pockets—and they churn out proposals just like they're told.
• Orphx

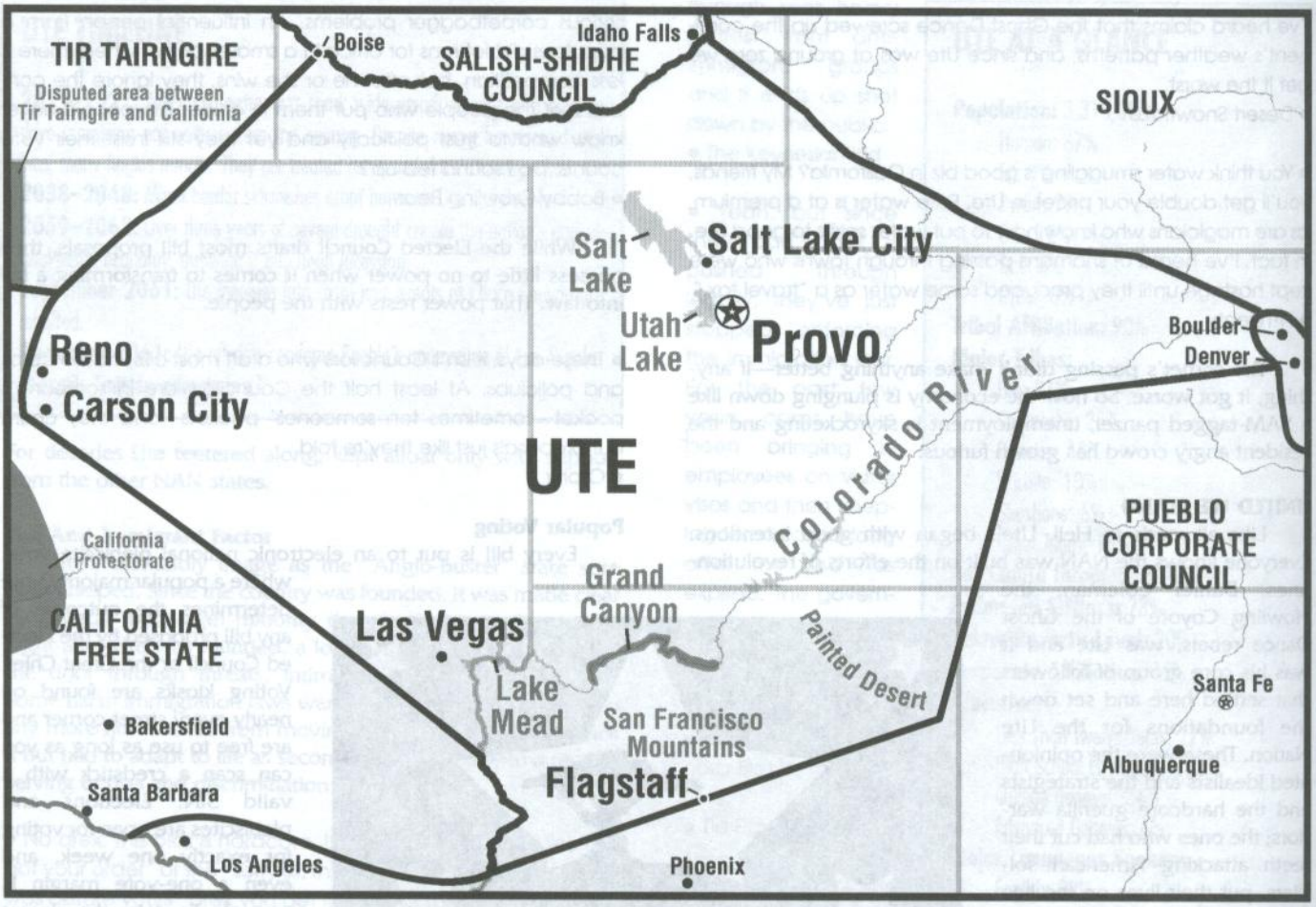
Popular Voting

Every bill is put to an electronic national plebiscite vote, where a popular majority vote determines the outcome of any bill proposed by the Elected Council or the Great Chief. Voting kiosks are found on nearly every street corner and are free to use as long as you can scan a credstick with a valid SIN. Elections and plebiscites are open for voting for exactly one week, and even a one-vote margin is enough. To date, the closest vote in Ute history came down to thirteen votes.

• I voted twice on Tuesday, once Wednesday, took the voting day off on Thursday, two more times on Friday, then once again today, Monday. Half the votes are already up for a recount. A damn bill can win 90 percent of the vote and some yahoo on the council will cry foul and demand an investigation and a recount.
• Bobby Growling Bear

• Right-o, BGB. In my short lifetime, I've seen votes that lopsided go the other way after a second recount and back again. And when that happens, ya gotta figure a corp is involved. Votes are like gold around here, and any decker worth a damn can make a decent living.
• Static

To some, this might seem like the model of democracy. In reality, it's a nightmare. There is little attempt to inform the public about the decisions they're making, and most Utes are too busy eking out a living to study the issues and developments. The Council has become skilled at attaching riders and amendments, or camouflaging important decisions behind a flurry of



petty ones. It's common for a law voted in place one week to be eviscerated just a few weeks later.

• I don't even know what I'm voting for half the time. We can't get anything done. It's driving me crazy! Why am I voting on the Sanitation Infrastructure Commission travel budget when my kids don't have drinking water? We spend more time voting than we do accomplishing anything! The people don't have any power. The damn council just wants to keep us confused!
• Bobby Growling Bear

• I vote you shut up, BGB.
• First Wind

• Bear is right. The Elected Council decides what we vote upon, and the choices they give us are no choices at all. They blind us with the spectacle of democracy and meanwhile the corps and politicians ignore the laws left and right. The dream is dead. We were once revolutionaries and now we are slaves. Next election, vote with a bullet.
• Burrow

• The dream is never dead ... just biding its time.
• Black-Eyed Angel

The Business of Politics

An entire industry has sprouted in the Ute Nation surrounding the "vote." Security firms (not the government, natch) work around the clock to ensure voting kiosks and vote databases retain their integrity and that recounts are handled properly. In the shadows, an entire criminal subculture has set itself in position to rig votes as best it can. The two often clash, though some claim that they work in hand in hand.

• There's also a whole sideline biz devoted to pushin' the Pet Cause of the Day through adverts, spam, petition-peddling, propaganda, staged "news-casts" or even bribing citizens on the sidewalk with small gifts.
• Vendor

• The deckers that work for the Matrix-voting sec firms are friggin' egomaniacs. They're super-aggressive and take their jobs very seriously. They all have this psychotic gleam in their eye because

they're single-handedly "protecting the will of the people." Talk about power going to the head.
• Static

• The top firm in the biz is called VoteSecure. It's not public knowledge (in fact, it's well hidden), but VoteSecure is a tiny yet extremely profitable arm of Shiawase. And voters are supposed to believe that they're not biased?
• Black-Eyed Angel

• The vote-rigging schemes are in the hands of the Comanche Mafia. They've got back doors in all the main systems, databases of eligible SINS and they know what buttons to push to get Councilors to jump and submit legislation. Want to be the Ute ambassador to Amazonia? Talk to these guys, they'll set it up for the right price.
• Frankie

POWER ABOVE, POWER BELOW

Like all times of turmoil, the Ute is flooded with self-designated leaders and saviors and groups that are going to provide the solutions to everyone's problems. Yeah, right. Amidst all the din and racket, it's hard to tell who to trust, if anyone. Most Utes have simply given up caring. I've covered the best and the worst below, so pick your poison.

• Sounds to me like it's their own fault. If the people of Ute want something done about it, they're going to have to take care of it themselves, if ya get my drift, Kemosabes.
• Fractura

• A revolution? A true rule by the people, for the people, with no bosses?
• Misty Eyes of Fire

• Just remember, I didn't say that.
• Fractura

GOVERNMENT WAGS

While most of the politicians are too busy working deals and getting rich to pay attention to public demands, a few firebrands stand out from the pack, preaching reform.

United Socialists

These rabid reds, led by Councilor Eric Twann, call the Ute technocracy "useless" and "corrupt" and very vocally call for decisive action to protect "the working class" (whatever that is, in this age) of the Ute Nation. The Socialists have done some serious grassroots organizing in the smaller, rural communities of the nation (the ones hit hardest by poverty), and it has produced the most radical following. As their support grows, so do the violent protests and acts of sabotage.

• The Ute Sec Force presence in Ute's rural areas has almost tripled in the last year. In some areas, it's practically martial law with checkpoints on major routes. Naturally, the sec goons antagonize the situation with warrantless raids and searches, punitive arrests and sheer brutality. Some Socialists are thinking smart, though—they're actively recruiting cops and convincing them that they're on the wrong side. Makes sense, cops are feeling the financial crunch too.
• Baton

• That Sec presence isn't just to contain rebel farmers—it's also intended to put a dent in the smuggling and telesma trades. Keep that in mind when you're jamming through Ute's rural lands.
• Josie Cruise

Judge Utall

Nick Utall is probably the strangest political critter in Ute. He's a veteran judge and a powerful Snake shaman who seems to think Ute would be better off with shamans running the show like they do in the courts. He's got the magical population on his side, and he's actually swayed a lot of the landowners and farm workers by promising to use shamanic magic to calm the angry weather in the nation.

• Control the weather? Nope! There's been a ton of research in weather controlling magic and no one's ever been able to do it reliably on a large scale. There are just too many factors and too much chaos in the system.
• Magister

• Don't look at it from a hermetic perspective. Shamans look past the "chaos factors" and talk to the nature spirits. If they can coax the spirits of the storms into seeing things their way, I guarantee they can control the weather.
• Derek Whitemane

NATIVE WORKER'S UNION

The NWU is the predominant anti-Anglo and anti-immigrant force in the nation. They play on tribal nationalism, cite several hundred years of oppression under Anglo-rule and claim economic reasons for not only keeping new immigrants out of the country, but driving out the ones that are still around from the pogroms in the early '20s. And if some metahumans or unfavored tribes like the Navajo happen to get pushed out too? Well, most of the NWU wouldn't mind that either ...

• The NWU draws heavily from tribes that feel they got a raw deal with the formation of Ute. That includes tribes that were traditionally situated in California who are miffed that their homelands were left in Anglo hands, and some Ute who are peeved that some ancestral Ute land was actually given to Pueblo. Their xenophobia is tinged with war cries and urgings for the Ute to seize the land it was denied. Friendly folks.
• Wichita Witch



CORPORATE AND FOREIGN INTERESTS

Ute's friendly neighbor Pueblo has politely offered to help bail Ute out of its financial jam, but the Ute response is barely fit to print. Some of Ute's politicians have a problem with pride, and they're too damn stubborn to accept help from any other NAN, even the Sioux. There are very few other nations that count as allies, so that's led the ones in charge straight to the corps.

The usual gang of foreign-based megacorp hoodlums are sticking their grimy fingers into the Ute mix. None of their operations are particularly extensive, as the immigration regs and low-skill sets of the Ute people hamstrung their expansion plans—at least until they all began to flagrantly ignore the law. The corps have an ally in Isabella Sun-Dancer, Ute's current Great Chief. Sun-Dancer has organized a group called the Economic Progression Council (EPC) to present compelling arguments on why Ute should be allowing more non-Natives into their nation. No surprise, the EPC is loaded with names directly from megacorp payrolls.

• The poor scream for social programs to assist them during this recession while the government tries to open up the borders for international business interests? Unemployment is already rampant! Bringing in outsiders is only going to make it harder to find a job! Who is she working for? It's definitely not us!
• One Angry Indian

• Keep your eye on Aztechnology—they're a stealth player in the Ute. You won't see their name much, but they have several subsidiaries in Ute that collectively have some serious clout and bargaining power. Maritech Enterprises is the key slugger, since it controls Ute's primary water reservoirs (and thus the water trade), and it also is a key agro-producer, with fish farms and genetic crops.
• Pyramid Watcher

• I don't see it mentioned here, but I've heard rumors of a movement growing behind Ute's chaotic political scene. Some people are starting to talk about a Dance, maybe a ritual like the Ghost Dance or Sun Dance. The way it's whispered, this Dance is going to whip the Ute's problems—calm the weather, humble the people, and put the self-promoting "leaders" back in their place. And the Dance may start with Ute, but it won't end there. It's going to keep going, shake up the entire NAN, and root out all of the evil and corruption. It's going to reunite the Native American Nations, pulling the tribes back together again in the face of adversity.

Maybe it's just a story, but it chilled my bones when I heard it. Now I hear people whispering about it in the backs of bars, or in huddled groups on the street corner. Whatever it is, it's gaining momentum. The Winds of Change may be on their way soon.
• Whisper

SAINTS AND SINNERS

Heaven and Hell, black and white, fire and water. Ute has its own polar opposites—Salt Lake City and Las Vegas.

SALT LAKE CITY

Salt Lake City (SLC) is unique as the largest Anglo reserve left in the NAN. SLC achieved this sovereign state status early in Ute's formation thanks to the influence of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (otherwise known as the Mormons). The Mormons traditionally controlled SLC and, unlike most Anglos, they had supported the Amerindians' claims for tribal land during the Ghost Dance War. The forming Ute government seemed to feel that they owed the Mormons and so granted their request, giving them the entire city, lake and a significant chunk of countryside (and also Brigham University in Provo as an extension of Mormon land). The Mormons did concede some concessions: they pay taxes to Ute and technically must receive approval for certain types of legislation and economic dealings. But in reality, SLC is a sovereign Mormon-run enclave.

• OK, what's the real story here? No way did a bunch of victorious Amerinds just hand a bunch of vanilla-as-you-can-get Anglos an entire city because they said a few pro-SAIM things. What really happened?
• Reality Czech

• The Mormons did more than vocally support the Amerinds—they surreptitiously fed them money and arms and often secretly housed or protected them. Rumor has it that Daniel Howling Coyote even spent a few weeks living with a Mormon family while hiding from the American government. The Mormons have a lot of cred, and they offered to share some of it to get the Ute on its feet if they were allowed to keep their land in return. It was all about military aid and economics.
• Bills

• The real reason is because the Ute didn't want the area—their shamans considered it defiled ground. The entire region is a massive mana ebb. Trying to cast a spell here is like trying to propel a bullet with your breath. You feel like you're scrambling to draw enough power to light a match, but the effort is as draining as chucking a monster fireball. I don't even want to think about trying to summon a spirit here.
• Starving Sorcerer

• Which is also why the Mormon Church shuns magic, why SLC cops have an easy time taking down magicians and why so many Ute corps opt to build their offices here—free magical security.
• Shetani

The Mormon Church appoints a Council of Elders to govern the city. The entire city is squeaky clean as far as crime goes. In fact, it's antiseptic. You can walk the streets at night without fear, and everyone keeps an eye on suspicious types. Firearms of all sorts are banned, and the type of disorderly conduct that's practically required in the Barrens will get you tossed in the slammer here. Even the police in Salt Lake City are unarmed except for stun batons. Social pressure is a big thing—screw up once and the entire city seems to know it. Suddenly any friends you may have had within the SLC borders disappear. More often than not, arrest is a secondary option. The first is always to run you out of town.

• It sounds like a criminal's paradise, right? Cops with stun batons? But the force is numerous and vigilant, and they carry a friggin' arsenal in their trunks. You just don't see Joe Average beat cop toting it around. If you make noise during a run, though, they'll descend upon you like a whirlwind.
• SeeMore

• No place is this clean. It's eerie, sure. But it also feels lifeless and dead. Makes you feel like there's something going on behind every closed door.
• Pixxy Stix

• I hear some Mormon cops have secretly resurrected the Dannite sect. Way back in history, these fraggers believed they had achieved such a saintly level that they were free of sin (convenient, eh?). They believe their duty is to prevent anyone who lives in sin from going further astray—preferably by beheading them. Vigilante sickos.
• Iron Neck

SLC has an open border policy, whether you're a corp or a t-bird jammer. This makes it a great spot to chill out for smugglers who aren't Amerindian or who had heat on their tail—just watch your manners while you relax. If you take advantage of the hospitality, you'll be run out of town or worse.

The corps take full advantage of the situation, much to the benefit of the Mormons as well. Saeder-Krupp makes a killing from the Kennecott Copper Mine at the western edge of SLC. It's the largest open pit copper mine in the world and a good source of gold as well. The Great Salt Lake is also a significant source of various types of vital industrial chemicals that are harvested out of it via evaporation ponds.

• Has anyone mentioned that the lake reeks? I mean really, really *really* reeks?
• Skaven

• The Mormons must be doing something right. The rest of the Ute nation wallows in poverty while SLC rakes in the nuyen. Their tourism intake from the little ski towns like Park City (conveniently nestled within Salt Lake's extended borders) is almost half of the entire Ute nation. If you ask me, I think the whole situation stinks!
• Shameonus

• A tip for those looking to make some quick nuyen: Hit the Sundance International Trideo Festival in the sleepy hamlet of Park City in January. Lots of dough floating around town during those ten days, and the Trideo Studios are always looking to hire sabo-

teurs to make sure something "unfortunate" happens to the competition's merchandise.
• D$

LAS VEGAS

Viva Las Vegas! It's difficult for me to be objective here, as my enthusiasm for Vegas is boundless. It is without question one of my favorite places in the world, and not only because of the gambling and prostitution. There's money to be made in the self-proclaimed den of sin. And it all starts with the biggest and most powerful corps in the Ute nation—the casinos.

The Players

There are hundreds of casinos in Viva-town, so I'll focus on the three biggest players.

The Wynne Conglomerate is the oldest on the Strip, and the foundation of their success is The Mirage. Built in the 1990's, the Mirage has seen more guests than any other casino in the world and it still attracts the A-list celebs and high rollers despite it's adherence to old-school games and entertainments (no sims or Matrix games here—at least, not in the public areas). The Conglomerate is owned by Paddy McManus, an ornery Irish dwarf who started out as a blackjack dealer.

• Paddy backstabbed his way to the top—literally. He left a wake of corpses in his climb to become William Wynne's right hand man (Wynne was the grandson of the company's founder). Wynne choked on a prime rib dinner one night at the Mirage buffet and croaked. Paddy's name happened to be on the will.
• Peace Pipe Porridge

• There is always work to be found with the Wynne Conglomerate <wink-wink>. Paddy has a very public feud going with the owner of the casino next door, an elf known only as Phaedra. Paddy has wanted to expand the Mirage for over a decade and needs to get the land Phaedra's Red Casino sits on. He'll try almost anything to get it.
• Lip Splitter

The Flamingo Casino Group opened its first casino in Vegas only ten years ago on the hallowed ground of the site where the first casino started it all—The Flamingo built by the infamous Bugsy Seagal. The FCG is run and operated by the Verontesse Mafia family and is the largest operation in Vegas (controlling over half the casinos on the Strip).

• Capo Dominic Freda also controls the political power in Vegas (and all the smaller mobs answer to him as well). No matter who ends up in office here, they end up in Dominic's pocket within the year.
• Frankie

The Wind Speaker Corp is run by an Amerindian syndicate and a man named Roger Tekwa, a Comanche who started out as a smuggler. His rise to prominence came through a knowledge of crime at its most minute levels—a scam is a scam after all, whether it's ten nuyen or ten billion. He makes no bones about his criminal past but insists now he is a legitimate businessman working to improve his nation and the interests of his people. He is a celebrity of the highest order in Ute and his casinos are as flamboyant as he is.

• Word on the street is that the Verontesse boys are losing ground to Tekwa's mob. The recent political violence has masked an increase in syndicate fighting, but those of us who work the scene are noticing change.
• Broken Nose

• The Comanche mob got their start back before the turn of the century through the casinos that popped up all over Indian reservations. They quietly rode the wave of Amerindian ascension, building up support in the Ute cities the Mafia ignores or can't get their grip into. And now they are finally confident enough to take Vegas.
• Jimmy Geronimo

• You better watch your mouth, Jim-Jimmy.
• Cigar Chomper

• Or what?
• Jimmy Geronimo

• Or you'll find yourself at the bottom of the Hoover Dam with your hatchet-swinging friend Tekwa. Make no mistake, boy-o. The Verontesse family is in COMPLETE control of the goings-on in our fair city. VIVA LAS VEGAS and VIVA VERONTESSE!
• Cigar Chomper

Aside from the casino allure, Vegas has many other diversions to offer even the most discerning pleasure seeker. The designer drug and BTL market thrives here, with most of the product moving through the nightclub scene. Giant video arcades allow massive linked ASIST gaming and even illicit pit fighting arenas can be found—if you know where to look. Paracritter fighting, drone duels, blood matches, Russian Roulette, we got it all.

• Away from the Strip, Vegas is a hellhole. The cops and mob keep the tourist areas sparkly, but the rest of the place is as crazy as the Redmond Barrens. Squatters live in squalor, gangs kill each other over turf and scraps and groups like Tamanous creep around in the background, harvesting organs or kidnapping sex slaves for the parlors. Watch yourself.
• Working Girl

Those seeking sexual gratification will find the most abundant (and legal) array of prostitution houses in the world. Simsex, bunraku parlors, androgynes, fetish-play, snuff, spirit prostitution—whatever gets you off, it's here. Just be careful you don't get rolled in the coffin motel or end up as a sex-slave yourself.

Chicken ranches (as us locals affectionately call them) can be one of the best sources of information for a shadowrunner. Some people will say anything in the throes of passion or if they think their "escort" for the evening will really find them interesting. "She likes me, I tell ya! I think she really likes me!" Yeah. Right.

HOME ON THE RANGE

Ute has enough natural beauty to make even the staunchest city rat think twice about what he or she is doing with his or her life. The majority of the land is stunning, gorgeous wilderness. Ute actually does a decent job of taking care and protecting it, but large areas remain totally unobserved and lawless. This makes Ute a hot spot for telesma-seekers.

• During the 2040s, telesma bandits caused millions of dollars of damage to the Petrified Forest. Telesma harvesting carries harsh sentences if you get caught—so don't. But do us all a favor and don't mess it up for the rest of us either.
• Leaf Cutter

The endless wilderness holds an allure to the lawless and free-spirited, and smugglers rely on the anonymity of the empty wastes to transport their goods. Biker gangs and tribal traditionals roam the deserts, often as part of nomad camps that move through the sands like the gypsy tribes of Northern California. Some wander looking for work, a migrant labor force. Others have formed independent communities that are self-reliant and protective of their freedoms. A smart smuggler or shadowrunner can lay low and disappear among these nomad camps, assuming he has something worthwhile to offer them.

• Some of these nomad camps maintain close ties to the Anasazi of the Mojave Desert and others are close to the gypsy camps near Shasta Dam. There is, in effect, a whole hidden society among the wilderness areas of the Southeast, a throwback culture created by the chaos of the Sixth World.
• People Watcher

• Be careful around these camps, though. Some of them do not appreciate strangers at all. The best of these require newcomers to prove themselves in dangerous (and sometimes fatal) ways. The worst will just rob a stranger on sight, kill him and leave him to rot in the desert.
• Holly

GRAND CANYON

There are many magnificent features in the Ute wilderness—too many to list. But one place deserves note. The Grand Canyon is a place of both historical and spiritual significance to Amerindians. After signing the Treaty of Denver, Daniel Howling Coyote gave his first public speech at a ridge of the canyon. A shaman friend of mine says the Grand Canyon is a symbol of the magnificence of the Amerindian spirit and that the Colorado River is a gateway to the spirit world.

• The shaman is right. The canyon is a massive power site connected through manalines to other power sites throughout the Southwest. I would not be at all surprised if the Amerindian revolutionaries used the power in these locations to help fuel the Ghost Dance.
• Weaver of the Winds

• Speaking of the Ghost Dance, I know some folks that are keenly interested in finding the location where the Ghost Dance took place. They suspect it's in Ute, and considering the nature of the ritual, there should be some residue—if not a mana warp—to give it away. They've scoured the land, to no avail. Anyone got a clue?
• Raven Blue

• There are some very powerful people who don't want that site to be found. I suggest you find a healthier pursuit, if you get my drift.
• Dancer

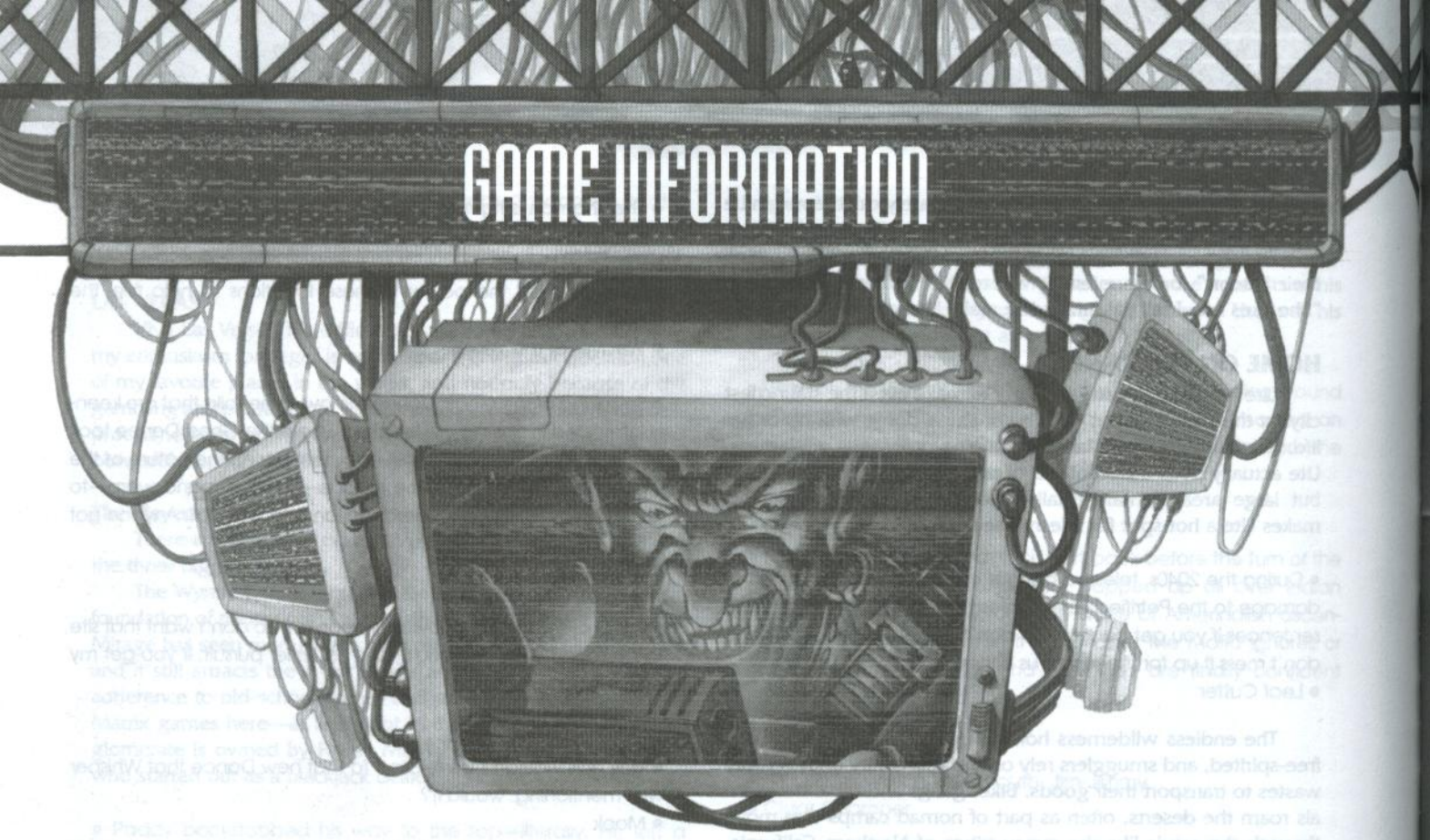
• Hey, this wouldn't be related to that new Dance that Whisper was mentioning, would it?
• Mook

• I'm going to change the topic before someone says something that gets them killed. You want to know about Ute magical spots? Check out the Painted Desert and Petrified Forest, east of Flagstaff near the Pueblo border. Both areas are primo telesma spots, but Ute guards have been all over the site since some prospector discovered orichalcum here in February. Aside from the petrified trees, rare minerals and fossils, the area has some unusual quartz and crystal formations. Just watch out for the basilisks—they're everywhere, they're mean and they're hungry.
• Chipper

• If you need a place to lay low, steer towards the Grand Staircase Escalante area, near the Grand Canyon. Not only is the area ripe for talislegging, it's a maze of canyons and mesas that makes it great for hiding out. There are rumors of conquistador gold and lost smuggler caches too, if you buy into that sort of thing. Just be careful of who your guide is in league with.
• Jon Who

• Here's a spot to steer clear of: the old US Army Desert Chemical Depot near Tooele (southwest of SLC). They used to store about half of the US chemical weapon arsenal here. We're talking nerve agents like GA, GB and VX, and blister agents like mustard and lewisite. The storage containers were unstable, so they built a weapon incinerator onsite. The site is sealed and blocked off now, but who's to say that some of that drek isn't still buried there somewhere ... maybe leaking into the groundwater. Warning: the area has a background count, and is generally spooky and unfriendly.
• Pike

GAME INFORMATION



North America is a big place, and there are many factors shadowrunners must keep in mind when they venture outside of Seattle. This section provides rules and suggestions for incorporating the places, people and events described in this book in your *Shadowrun* campaign.

In addition to the *Shadowrun, Third Edition (SR3)* rulebook, gamemasters will find several other rulebooks and sourcebooks useful when using *Shadows of North America (SONA)*. The events described in *Year of the Comet (YOTC)* tie in heavily to this book, as do the descriptions and rules for magical fluctuations detailed in *Target: Awakened Lands (T:AL)*. *Target: Smuggler Havens (T:SH)* contains information on the major smuggling routes in North America. The advanced magic and Matrix rules given in *Magic in the Shadows (MITS)* and *Matrix* will also be useful.

HOW TO USE SHADOWS OF NORTH AMERICA

Shadows of North America provides a wealth of plot hooks, places, characters, organizations and events for each nation on the continent. The gamemaster can use this material to provide an exciting foreign scenario for shadowrunners who venture away from their base of operations (usually Seattle). This allows the gamemaster to introduce characters, places and events that the player characters don't normally encounter or deal with in their home settings. The gamemaster can easily build a scenario from one of the plot hooks mentioned in the fiction, or construct one using the ideas given below. Gamemasters can also use the material given as a baseline to create their own people and places, based on the attitudes and background provided.

Alternatively, gamemasters can use the information in this book to establish their campaigns in settings outside of Seattle. Running in the same city may get boring after awhile, so here's the opportunity for a change of pace. There are dozens of large sprawls that could be a good home base for shadowrunners, such as Denver, Las Vegas, New York, Atlanta, Cheyenne or Los Angeles, just to name a few. Each of these cities has enough underworld dealings to support a campaign, whether it is based on organized crime, megacorp squabbling, gang warfare or politics. Though the information provided on these cities doesn't have the depth of *New Seattle*, the prime power players are presented to give the gamemaster something to build on. From there on out, it's up to the gamemaster's imagination, perhaps supplemented by additional info presented in other *Shadowrun* books.



SONA also provides fodder for campaigns that are more travel-oriented, such as mercenary, smuggler or pirate campaigns. There are several places in North America where open warfare or low-level conflicts are taking place (Salish-Tsimshian, AMC-Manitou, Saito's Californian Protectorate), providing working opportunities for mercenaries on either side. As described in *Target: Smuggler Havens*, smuggler routes criss-cross the continent, allowing runners to see some action in a half-dozen countries on a single run. Pirate activity is heavy along the West Coast, particularly near the Big Sur, LA and San Francisco, but also spreading further north towards Athabaska and also taking place on the Gulf Coast. Who's to say pirates can't also take to the riverways and Great Lakes, or even to the airlanes?

The important thing to keep in mind when using any of the places described in *SONA* is that North America has undergone serious changes since the present day. The Ghost Dance War and subsequent Balkanization in North America has divided a land that was once more or less uniform. The dozen-plus states that occupy North America in 2062 each have their own histories, cultures, traditions and social values—and sometimes languages. Borders aren't just imaginary boundaries; they separate distinct cultures. So when your runners take a trip to a NAN country, or even a place like the CAS or Denver, they should be given the impression that they're in a society that isn't Seattle and that they're not used to—and that may not be used to them. If they look like aliens or act out of place, they'll trip alarms and get bad reactions from the locals. If they keep a low profile and don't act like a fish out of water, they'll have an easier time.

ALGONKIAN-MANITOU COUNCIL

The AMC is on the brink of civil war. The anti-tech, back-to-nature Manitou seek independence from the Algonkian tribe and their Aztechnology puppetmasters. Only time will tell if this movement succeeds or tears the nation apart.

GETTING IN/OUT

Access to the AMC is exceptionally easy. Travelers from any NAN country, the UCAS or Québec do not require visas. The AMC has two international airports capable of semiballistic and suborbital traffic: Calgary and Saskatoon. Other large cities have regular air and bus travel to nearby nations. Getting through customs is a swift, efficient and painless process, unless you happen to be from the Manitou tribe.

AMC borders are wide open, especially during the winter months. This makes the region prime for smuggling activity. As long as routes are chosen to avoid traveling directly through major cities such as Calgary and Saskatoon, bootleggers and ne'er-do-wells have the run of the country. Thunder Bay is a smuggler haven and the nexus point of several smuggling routes. The AMC typically uses nature spirits and drones to patrol its borders, backed up by four-man patrols and the occasional shaman.

The area claimed by the Manitou, however, is a different story. The "line in the snow" (the Churchill River) is carefully watched and patrolled by both Manitou militias and AMC military troops.

RUNNING IN THE AMC

Under the current crisis, there are many opportunities for shadowrunners in the AMC.

The Manitou Secession

The Manitou need to hold out for their independence bid to succeed, so they're looking for ways to keep the AMC military and Aztechnology distracted while they pressure the STC and other NAN countries for recognition. Dealing with the Manitou may be difficult, as some of them take a hard-line approach towards techno-enthusiasts like deckers, riggers and samurai. On the other side, War Chief Doxtator is eager to wipe the Manitou out, so will be eager to probe their defenses, gather intelligence and sow division in the Manitou ranks. While Aztechnology is too distracted by other world events to take a direct hand, civil war is bad for business, so they are also looking to end the dispute.

Internal Conflict

Ceremonial Chief Hawksford has thrown a monkeywrench into the gears at the upper levels of AMC power. Until Bear, Doxtator, Longmiles and Aztechnology can remove her from office, the government's hands will be tied when dealing with the Manitou. If political methods fail to oust her, they may resort to stronger tactics. The crisis may spark the Ojibwa and Haudenosaunee tribes into taking a more active role in the country's affairs—or at least inspire their secret societies.

Smuggling

Thunder Bay is a smuggler hive, so there's plenty of work to be had moving shipments in, out and through the AMC. The various gangs in Thunder Bay are always seeking to get ahead of one another while also keeping the officials looking the other way.

Lakehead

Lakehead University is an anomaly—most other magic schools focus on the hermetic arts. In order to capture the more freeform style and outlook of shamanic paths and disciplines, the courses at Lakehead have a much looser, yet more intensive, structure. Characters who are seeking rare metamagic techniques or other esoteric lore may find it here. Many of the teachers, students and objects of study are unique, and thus valuable to the right parties. It is common for egocentric hermetics to push their luck here, possibly requiring help to bail them out. From afar, some hermetic schools may view Lakehead as a threat to the "correct way" of doing things and seek to disgrace or undermine it in some way.

AMC LAWLESSNESS

Partly due to the rural nature of the AMC, law enforcement tends to be much less strict outside of business centers such as Calgary and Saskatoon. To reflect this lax approach in the rest of the country, apply a +2 bonus to the Legality Code of all illegal items, +4 in the city of Thunder Bay.

ATHABASKAN COUNCIL

Athabaska is a frozen wonderland, with true wilderness and natural magic. It is also home to two distinct cultures—the high-tech city dwellers who use the Matrix and/or BTLs to socialize and escape the adverse conditions, and the rugged frontier folk who live off the land.

GETTING IN/OUT

The main problem with traveling to Athabaska is the weather. Storms frequently keep all air traffic grounded during the winter months, and ice poses a real hazard. Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks all have international airports. The Ares SpacePort on Kodiak Island handles semiballistic and suborbital traffic, but only for Ares and specific contractors. Roads are not always available or accessible, and some towns simply can't be reached except by air travel.

Athabaska strongly encourages visitors, so the restrictions on travel in and out of the country are practically nonexistent. The Tsimshian border is closely guarded and the AMC border is also watched, especially the border areas claimed by the Manitou. Athabaska relies primarily on the radar-net and listening posts it inherited from the United States and Canada, but it also makes good use of aerial drones and patrols. Ground patrols, and in some cases water patrols, have been known to use paranormal animals. Frontier towns tend to have their own citizen militias and will take the law into their own hands if necessary.

RUNNING IN ATHABASKA

Though Athabaska is not in the grip of a crisis and it's a bit out of the way, there are still plenty of jobs to draw shadowtypes up north. Runners will need to keep in mind the problems posed by remote locations, winter weather and culture clashes.

Beautiful and Deadly

Athabaska draws a number of wilderness adventure types, some of whom may want to take along armed escorts. The wildlife and natural dangers may catch hikers unawares, or weather conditions may put them at risk. Nature has been known to strike back on occasion, burying small outposts or threatening isolated corp facilities. In these situations, runners could be contracted for rescue missions, or perhaps to beat a rescue mission to the prize.

Bounty hunting is also popular in some circles, especially when hunting sea wolves, but eco activists and sasquatch may take offense to this practice.

Black and Green

Oil is the lifeblood of Athabaska's economy, and the abundance of natural resources draws many corp operations. A thriving eco movement is challenging this practice, targeting corps that exploit the land. The remote nature of many corp sites makes this difficult, as does the angry response from locals who rely on corp work to survive. Some corps may use ecoterrorism as a cover for industrial sabotage, to distract attention from the real culprits—and possibly causing eco cells to seek to clear their names.

Political Jockeying

The chaotic nature of Athabaska's political system means that factions are constantly forming, shifting and breaking apart. This provides plenty of opportunities: black bag jobs, threats and intimidation, blackmail schemes, manufactured slander and the usual backroom deals.

Thrill Seeking

The remoteness, short days and cold weather has a strong impact on many Athabaskans, particularly reckless youth. Thrill gangs are constantly looking for a new rush, eager to take risks and more than willing to challenge (or force) others to take them as well. Others turn to the Matrix for entertainment, meaning that Athabaskan Matrix gangs are a constant nuisance to corps and people maintaining local systems. Victims of Matrix thefts or defacement may want revenge or seek to get their data back before it causes them harm.

Smuggling Stops

As the main stopover point on the Seattle-Vladivostok Sea Run, Athabaska sees a lot of smuggler traffic. Some free traders bring along the type of baggage that they can't give away—whether they're on the run or carrying nasty cargo that no one sane would touch. Many stop for repairs or to take a break, then become embroiled in local affairs. Some may need hard-to-get parts, or may be looking to unload their goods early so they can head back for more. The Vory have their fingers all over the black market, trying to squeeze every last nuyen they can get out of it. Some do it by providing useful service, others resort to protection rackets. Not all smugglers cave in easily, presenting bodyguard or leverage-seeking job options.

THE ATHABASKAN MATRIX

Many small towns, remote corporate stations and frontier outposts rely on wireless methods (particularly satellite links) to connect to the Matrix. As a result, some of these LTGs and hosts are accessible only via a PLTG that is leased off of and maintained by the Renraku Globalink satellite network (p. 47, *Matrix*). This sub-grid is accessible only via the Athabaska RTG or the Globalink RTG, and its security and ACIFS are identical to Globalink's.

The wireless Matrix links that remote places count on are vulnerable to Athabaska's severe weather conditions, particularly during the stormy winter. At the gamemaster's discretion, characters may simply be unable to log into these LTGs and hosts from the RTG, or vice versa. Alternately, the weather may disrupt the signal connection, enforcing I/O Speed and bandwidth limitations, applying modifiers to any tests to account for signal degradation or randomly dumping characters. Gamemasters are encouraged to use this as an extra challenge and/or for dramatic effect, rather than simply punishing the players.

THE SEA WOLF

A sea-faring amphibious pack hunter, the sea wolf is found exclusively along the Athabaskan coasts and is one of the area's most feared predators. Some have speculated that sea wolves are an Awakened or mutated version of seals, sea lions or mermaids, but others point to similarities with polar bears. Sea

wolves have elongated snouts, long thin bodies (averaging 2.5 meters long in adults) and two short legs that allow them to move on land with some difficulty. They have black fur and long, sharp teeth. Sea wolves are fast predators that prefer fresh kill to carrion. They have been known to attack in packs and target metahumans.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
6	6 x 2	5	—	4/6	4	4	5

INIT: 5+2D6
Pools: Combat 7 (9 with Enhanced Quickness)
Attacks: 7S
Powers: Binding, Cold Aura (twice per day for [Essence]D6 Combat Turns), Enhanced Physical Attributes (Body and/or Quickness, once per day each for [Essence]D6 Combat Turns), Enhanced Reactions, Enhanced Senses (Hearing and Smell), Fear (Howl)
Weaknesses: Allergy (Purified Air and Water, Severe), Reduced Senses (Sight)
Notes: Movement modifier for swimming is x 4.

DENALI AND HARDING

At Denali (formerly known as Mount McKinley) the barrier into the spirit world is very weak. The area is a Rating 3 power site at Denali's base, rising to Rating 6 at the peak. The top of the mountain is occasionally an astral shallow (see p. 100, *T:AL*). An initiate who climbs the mountain, leaves his body near the top and undertakes an astral quest reduces the target number for all tests on that quest by 1. Additionally, there is a 1 in 6 chance that an astral rift (see p. 102, *T:AL*) will open when the questor returns, lasting for 1D6 hours. Needless to say, Denali is a sacred site for all the native people who live in her shadow.

The Harding Icefield is a massive power site—a nexus of several manalines. The area is aspected toward totemic magic, though the particular totem in favor changes every 1D6 days. The rating of the power site fluctuates between 2 and 5.

SAGE

Sage is a magical compound cultivated from an extremely rare fungus, similar to the magical compounds described on p. 122, *Man & Machine*.
Vector: Inhalation
Advantages: In addition to hallucinations and a +1 Perception increase, sage provides the user with the Magic Sense critter power (p. 12, *Critters*).
Disadvantages: Sage reduces the user's Perception by –2 and inflicts the user with a Light Physical Wound.

CALIFORNIA FREE STATE

Though the name fits less and less each day, the Free State is still a chaotic mixture of power factions and dangers. For more details on the events that led up to the current situation, see *Year of the Comet*. Additional details on General Saito can also be found in *Threats 2*.

GETTING IN/OUT

With the exception of Saito's Californian Protectorate, California has very little in the way of border control. The California Rangers and irregular military units keep an eye on some highways, as do town militias and Hestaby's supporters in the Northern Crescent. Saito's troops guard all major access routes in and out of the Protectorate, but they focus most of their attention on the Bay Area and Sacramento.

Three California airports take international flights: San Francisco, Oakland and Sacramento. All are securely guarded by Saito's troops. Visitors are not required to have visas, but customs checks are strict and metahumans will be refused entry unless they carry special corporate dispensation.

Sea travel is mostly unrestricted, though pirate activity is common. Most sea transports go to and from Oakland, though (still free) Monterey is the port for those who wish to avoid Protectorate inspection.

RUNNING IN CALFREE

The events of 2061 have made the shadows across the Free State busier than ever. From the Northern Crescent to the depths of the Mojave, California is in turmoil—which means plenty of options for shadowrunners, provided they know the ground beforehand.

The Northern Crescent

The apparent defection of the great dragon Hestaby to Tir Tairngire, long the Northern Crescent's bogeyman, has sparked severe war jitters in this region. Combat-oriented player characters can find a broad array of employers here, from the Redding Militia to nervous small towns to the various corporations angling for advantage among the Crescent's often-fractious communities. Given the Tir's rep for serious magic, combat mages are in high demand. Waterjacking is another source of cred; likely employers here include Pueblo, non-Yakuza mobs, and independent waterjackers battling for survival along with the usual suspects.

Various corporations have also left goodies behind in newly abandoned facilities. With fears of a Tir invasion growing by the day, several corporations chose to consolidate their secret installations in one or two spots rather than leave their labs scattered across the region. Some have moved out of the Crescent entirely. Though player characters are unlikely to stumble on anything truly earthshaking, they can still find paydata and other valuables in some hastily-vacated corporate compounds. They also risk getting nailed by booby traps set for just such thieves, but hey, no one ever said running was easy.

The Central Valley and Bay Area

Most shadow action in the Central Valley starts in Sacramento or Chico-Oroville. There are many players in this area with no love for the Imperial invaders, such as Ben Alvarez, the CEO of Pacific Foods who also leads the militant California Agriculture and Water Society (CAWS), which is dedicated to breaking megacorporate power in the Valley. Gamemasters may also invent local businesses interested in hiring shadow talent to protect their installations, or to strike against the corps bankrolling

Saito. Ares Macrotech, which is already hiring runners to mess with Saito's power structure, may funnel monetary or other support to smaller local corps that otherwise could not afford such expenditures. Even other racists, such as the Native Californians policlub, are unhappy—its members hate foreigners as much or more than metahumans.

Runners can also find work rescuing confined metahumans, sabotaging Saito's expansion plans, or softening up the resistance in Chico-Oroville to make Saito's next acquisition easy. There is plenty of work to be had smuggling people out of and weapons and tech into the danger zones. Both Pueblo and Tir Tairngire are closely monitoring the situation.

Big Sur

Pirate activity remains the primary source of biz in the Big Sur, principally seaborne and t-bird smuggling. The goods have gone from standard Pac Rim contraband to include just about anything useful to the various Free State combatants, from weapons to spy drones to mil-spec communications devices. The bulk of these are going to anti-Saito forces via Grania O'Malley's pirate empire, recently expanded toward San Francisco Bay.

Meanwhile, Captain Monday continues to rebuild, while Paco Ramirez's surviving loyalists gather their resources and plot revenge. Runners interested in making cred through piracy while staying out of the simmering political conflict can find ample opportunities for lucrative business on either side, whether capturing the big haul for Captain Monday or intelligence-gathering on Monday's operations for Ramirez's avengers.

Mojave Desert

Magic is the biggest deal in the Mojave Desert. The Orichalcum Rush may attract runner teams looking to strike it rich, or various interested parties (principally the megacorps, Pueblo and Ute) may hire runners to find the precious ore in the Mojave's shifting sands. Wannabe prospectors should have strong magical talent on hand; the comet's passage made the already unusual magical energies of the Mojave even more bizarre and considerably more powerful. Telesma smugglers likewise face extra peril, from hostile Joshua trees to spirits who oppose their very presence.

The spirits can be wily antagonists or crafty allies, depending on how the player characters approach them and what the runners' agenda is. Some may be tricksters, while others may try to wipe the player characters off the map. Still others may try to use the characters to accomplish their own ends. As a rule of thumb, the spirits of the Mojave are alien to metahumanity in terms of how they think and what they want. This means that the player characters can never be certain how to deal with them, or whether any bargain struck with one will be kept. Use this element to keep players guessing, but make sure to give the runners at least a fighting chance of coming out ahead no matter what spirit they may meet.

CALIFORNIA MAGIC

California is unlike anywhere else on Earth, particularly when it comes to the Awakened side of things.

Talismongering

Both the Mojave and Northern Crescent areas are ripe for talismongers. Because raw materials are so abundant in these areas, the base time to collect one unit is only 5 days instead of 10. Joshua trees are prime targets, as their roots, leaves, bark and wood reduce the base time for artificing and refining by half (round up). If the gamemaster allows it, Joshua and Redwood tree parts can also be used as exotic materials (see p. 43, *MITS*). Other telesma gathered from the Mojave or Northern Crescent can reduce the base time for refining and artificing by one third to one half at the gamemaster's discretion.

Mount Shasta

Whether natural or due to Hestaby's presence, the area surrounding Mount Shasta is a power site ranging in rating from 1 to 3. This power site is aspected towards shamanic magic and summoning nature spirits.

Mojave

The entire Mojave Desert is a power site with a rating that fluctuates between 1 and 3 (up to 5 at Ubehebe Crater). This power site is aspected against Conjuring, making it more difficult to conjure spirits here. The Background Count in the Joshua Tree forest is 2 and is also aspected against conjuring spirits. Spirits summoned in the Joshua Tree forest are much more independent and act contemptuously toward their summoners. Gamemasters should make summoned spirits act as if the summoner has robbed it of its freedom; the spirit will actively oppose the magician, perform services with great reluctance, and exploit any chance to break free from control.

Spirits can also manifest at will within the forest without being summoned. Spirits usually manifest spontaneously to protect its domain, though each spirit will have a different motive.

THE CAS

The Confederation of American States is a country in the midst of an identity crisis. Many Confederationists think of themselves as Americans first, Southerners second and have seen the Confederation's recent good fortunes as a sign to take greater involvement in North American affairs. A significant minority, however, still believe the myth of the Old South and are resisting the changes.

GETTING IN/OUT

CAS visitor visas require a minimum amount of red tape wrangling. Visitors from the Caribbean League can expect a more thorough investigation and Aztlan visitors will need a very good reason to enter the country. Customs officials care more about checking for contraband than travel authorization.

The CAS has a dozen international airports, though Atlanta, Houston, Nashville, New Orleans and Dallas/Ft. Worth see the most traffic. Flights to other countries in North America are frequent, as are train and bus routes to the UCAS, Pueblo and Sioux.

The Aztlan and Florida borders are heavily militarized, the former to guard against aggression, the latter to put a dent in smuggling. Both New Orleans and St. Louis are major access points for smugglers and are the best bet for illicit entry.

The CAS relies primarily on sensors and vehicle patrols for border monitoring. A wide range of vehicles are used, including submarines, Hawker-Siddley Skytrucks, Surfstar Seacops and Banshees. Three-man patrol groups are common in some areas, accompanied by trained attack dogs.

RUNNING IN THE CAS

There are a number of events and places within the CAS that can set the stage for adventure. Each has its own unique flavor or theme, which may favor one type of adventure over another.

Games of State

The current political schism in the CAS has increased intrigue and raised the stakes. Political parties are hiring runners against their political rivals, either to find incriminating evidence they can use or to plant false evidence to damage their reputations. There are alliances to be made or broken, favors to be called in or scores to settle. Furthermore, as real life has shown, political scandal can take place anytime regardless of the political season. The stakes are particularly high in the House of Representatives, where the leading party has only a slim majority.

Additionally, various government agencies seek to further the CAS's interests at the expense of neighboring countries or the megacorps. The ERLA in particular is a potential player, hiring shadowrunners to do against the corps what the corps regularly do to each other.

Capital Intrigue

As the capital of the CAS, political intrigue is a dominant theme in the Atlanta shadows. The UCAS, NAN, Aztlan, and the megacorps conduct numerous espionage operations to divine Confederation secrets or influence Confederation politicians. Runners may be involved in conducting these operations or they may be hired to expose them. One country or megacorp may hire runners to expose another country/corp's spy game, so as to curry favor with the CAS.

Scientific research is another significant source of shadow activity in Atlanta. Though it still plays second fiddle to MIT&T, Georgia Tech is in the same league and conducts its fair share of cutting-edge research. A megacorp may hire runners to acquire or sabotage a research project sponsored by a competing corp. Likewise corps may hire runners to infiltrate the CDC, either to obtain information about a particular disease, conceal information or meddle with a competing corp's certification. Likewise, the CDC may hire runners to fight various groups that spread disease, such as toxic shamans, terrorists or cultists.

Unease in the Big Easy

Once the terminus of many smuggling runs across North America, New Orleans is thrashing in the throes of a major gang war, further inflamed by the CAS's open bounty on those who summon and control the undead. The New Orleans Mafia feels particularly embattled, as the SURGE transformation of one of its major power players has strained internal tensions.

The Gulf Coast

Tampa is a lesser smuggling haven, but rather more of a place to fence goods stolen from elsewhere. Additionally, many wealthy executives and VIPs from the UCAS or Europe vacation or retire to the Tampa area, which gives them considerable political clout in Florida politics. As such they can affect politics in either the CAS or their original home countries. The CAS, UCAS and various European countries may take advantage of the situation to further their own plans.

Pensacola and Mobile are major Confederation naval harbors, which make them prime targets for military intelligence analysts. The CAS makes heavy use of submarines, which can easily elude detection; UCAS and Aztlan intelligence officers may hire runners to obtain classified information on submarine operations. Rumors that the CAS has developed a carrier sub capable of launching combat aircraft have the espionage community abuzz. No other navy in the world has anything like this, so many countries around the world, from Imperial Japan to Great Britain, may hire runners to obtain classified specifications.

Aztlan Hostilities

Texas is a region on the brink of war. For a long time the threat came from Aztlan, but with their recent setbacks, it is now the CAS that has become the aggressor, as many Texans itch to retake lost land. Leading the call to action is a relatively new policlub called the Sons of the Alamo, which has begun to use militant action in addition to political action. The Sons of the Alamo also advocate secession of the Lone Star Republic, however, which makes many politicians in both Dallas and Atlanta nervous. Both the CAS and Aztlan may hire runners to infiltrate the Sons of the Alamo, either to get intelligence on the policlub's leadership, or to thwart their more radical plans.

Though the CAS has not yet declared war on a weakened Aztlan, they have encouraged rebels and militia groups to make trouble in the occupied regions of Texas. Runners may be hired to smuggle arms or supplies over the border to these rebels, or to extract rebel leaders in danger of capture by Aztlan. Alternatively, runners could be hired by Aztlan to disrupt rebel aid from the Confederation side of the border.

The UCAS Border

Though not as hot as Texas, considerable opportunities abound for shadowrunners along the UCAS-CAS border. Cross-border smuggling takes place at various points along the border, particularly around the Mississippi River, as St. Louis serves as a waypoint between New Orleans and Denver. (Gamemasters may also wish to consult *Target: Smuggler Havens* for more information on North American smuggling routes.) Nashville has also become a notable place of shadow industry, as a burgeoning entertainment industry provides a supply of illegal chips to be smuggled out of the country.

Secession is also a major issue along the border. The UCAS created the buffer state of North Virginia to protect DeeCee, an unpopular move with many residents. Similarly, residents in Missouri are split on the decision of secession and policlubs on both sides wish to see Missouri reunited, either as part of the UCAS or the CAS. Furthermore, although Kentucky elected to stay in

the UCAS, many of its residents have pro-Confederation sympathies and could force the state government to change its mind. Runners may be hired by either the Confederation DSI or the UCAS CIA to aid or obstruct secessionist plots.

DENVER

As a divided city ruled by a great dragon, Denver is a diverse place, making it ideal as the backdrop for all kinds of campaigns. For information on Ghostwalker's takeover of Denver, and additional information on the sector representatives, see *Year of the Comet.*

GETTING IN/OUT

Access to and from Denver depends entirely on which sector you're trying to get in and out of. Each sector sticks to the laws and standards of its own country in regards to patrols, customs and visitor controls.

Denver has no less than seven international airports (the CAS and UCAS both have two). Some of them barely qualify as their facilities for semiballistic and suborbitals are substandard or downright dangerous. Several main traffic arteries lead into the city from the Sioux Nation and Pueblo. Illegal cross-country smuggler traffic is common, despite an increased crackdown by the ZDF.

Getting around within Denver from sector to sector, can be a nightmare if not planned right. Air traffic is congested (with frequent near misses), but care must be taken to acquire the proper authorizations when passing over another sector's airspace. Vehicle gates between sectors are infrequent and backed up, though pedestrian crossing checkpoints are common and some allow motorcycle traffic.

RUNNING IN DENVER

The times have changed in Denver, though smuggling is still the most popular pastime of the criminally minded.

Dragon Intrigue

Ghostwalker's presence has turned the Denver shadows upside down. Like all great dragons, Ghostwalker has myriad plots and schemes in motion, and these activities are creating waves and turbulence. Everyone wants to know what's going on, but there's too much to keep track of. Rumors and innuendo are flying, factions are collapsing and re-forming and no one knows who to trust anymore. New names and faces pop up daily, and even more disappear quietly. An entire cottage industry of data mongering has sprung up just to make a profit off of all the comings and goings.

The runners can become embroiled in one of the dragon's plots or they can be hired to find out about them. Everyone's curious about who's making petitions to the dragon and for what, and some of these envoys may hire protection. As new deals are brokered across the FRFZ, there is a strong demand for information, blackmail, protection and arm-breaking work.

Smuggling

Denver is a nexus point of smuggling routes, particularly the Big Dance route between Seattle and either St. Louis or Austin (as described in *Target: Smuggler Havens*). Other minor routes also pass through, and smugglers may often stopover going both ways, visiting Denver frequently in the course of their careers. Smuggling is also a major pastime between separate sectors, so some free traders never even leave the FRFZ.

Los Espejos

Aztlan and Aztechnology were not content to be kicked out and to let the CAS take their land, and their resistance is slowly becoming more organized. The fifth column movement, Los Espejos, is organized in a cell structure much like other resistance groups and policlubs except that its leadership is aware of the extent of its membership and their locations. Los Espejos has been busy smuggling allies and weapons in from Aztlan, though Ghostwalker takes a dim view on this and the ZDF comes down hard on any smugglers involved. Supporters of La Venta and other Aztlan resistance groups are clashing with Los Espejos, providing many opportunities for runners to become involved with, spy on or disrupt either side.

Denver Matrix

The Denver Matrix is also home to the Nexus, the largest data haven in North America. The Nexus is described in detail starting on p. 31, *Target: Matrix.*

HIGH ALTITUDE

Newcomers to Denver often have trouble adjusting to the effects of high altitude. They may have trouble breathing, suffer from dehydration and headaches and they will tire easily from physical exertion. When a character first arrives in Denver, they will be susceptible to these and following effects for 12 + 1D6 days (note that the Rule of Six *does* apply to this roll). Note that characters with extended volume bioware (p. 66, *M&M*) do not suffer these effects.

First, newcomers will suffer decreased tolerance. During this period, reduce their effective Body by 1 when making Resistance Tests against diseases and toxins.

Second, Awakened newcomers will suffer increased Drain from magic use. During this period, reduce their effective Willpower by 1 when making magic-related Drain Resistance Tests.

PUEBLO CORPORATE COUNCIL

The Pueblo Corporate Council is an odd blend of high technology and mystical Amerind magic, with the Pueblo Matrix on one hand and the Kachina Society at the other end. Sometimes the two blend together in harmony (as they do in Albuquerque and Santa Fe), but in others it creates an odd and undesirable mix (as is evident at Trinity and Los Alamos). The PCC recently expanded its borders by annexing the Free City of Los Angeles (for details, see *Year of the Comet*), a move that has created a few allies and some strong enemies.

GETTING IN/OUT

Getting into Pueblo legally isn't difficult, though it requires the purchasing of a preferred share, as described on p. 88. The current rate for preferred shares is 100¥, though this amount

may fluctuate. Unlike residential shares, preferred shares have no voting power, but they can be purchased by anyone and allow their holder to stay in Pueblo relatively indefinitely.

Pueblo has two international airports; Sante Fe and the recently acquired Long Beach. Pueblo does not yet have a firm grip on Los Angeles' docks and sea access. Regular air, bus and train service is available to the Ute, CAS, Denver, UCAS and Sioux.

All Pueblo borders are heavily patrolled, though the Aztlan, Ute and California borders are especially strict. Stealth drones are sent to investigate any disturbances, and response teams will be tailored to the size and apparent threat of intruders.

RUNNING IN THE PCC

Pueblo offers many opportunities for shadowruns, from high-level political and entertainment mischief to low-level syndicate wars and toxic cults.

Extraterritoriality Audits

Though extraterritoriality isn't illegal in the Corporate Council, Pueblo imposes many requirements that make it a pain in the butt. The worst requirement is the two yearly audits, which allow Pueblo to conduct random and annoying inspections at its convenience. In order to avoid scrutiny, corporations may hire runners to steal their own secrets temporarily. Some corps may also take advantage of the audits to send in disguised shadowrunners or access confidential information on their rivals.

Friction at the Top

In recent times, the dominant Hopi-Zuñi faction on the PCC's Board of Directors has crumbled. The Hopi leaders seem to have split with the orders being passed down from the Soyoko, backing new President Emilio Cajeme. The murder of Carlos Estefan, Chairman of the Board, signals a deeper rift. Though temporarily distracted by the annexation of LA, the boardroom battles and personal politics are certain to create many opportunities for shadowrunners.

Absorbing the City of Angels

The annexation of LA is causing many problems for Pueblo, outside of border hostilities with Aztlan, Ute and Saito. The Pueblo took LA because they wanted a port city and a piece of the entertainment industry, and the disasters that struck LA have driven the studios down to bargain prices. But the situation remains in flux, as some studios scramble to flee while others strike new deals. The corresponding mob war that is developing between the Los Angeles Mafia and the newly arrived Pueblo Koshari feeds the fires. There are plenty of opportunities for runners to get involved, as new companies, syndicates or gangs seek to gain power at the expense of the incumbents.

Unhealthy Pursuits

The eastern half of Pueblo has been disturbed by the nuclear testing done in the last century, affecting magic in small and unusual ways. Many agencies are interested in this effect, and shadowrunners may be hired to investigate unusual phenomenon in the area. The Atomic Kiva cult is also active in this area, and the runners may be asked to enter highly dangerous areas to investigate the cult or foil their plans.

In a similar vein, the nuclear research facility poses another potential hazardous objective. This facility was buried by Redondo Peak during the Great Ghost Dance, but Pueblo has secretly excavated it out and is using its facilities. Adventures revolving around Los Alamos should focus on uncovering the secret research conducted by Pueblo, as well as the unholy marriage of nuclear power and Ghost Dance magic.

PUEBLO GRIDS

The main Pueblo RTG (now NA/PUE/FE) is detailed on p. 16, *Target: Matrix*. Pueblo has also established a new RTG for the area of California it has occupied (NA/PUE/LA) with a Security Code of Orange–4/6/8/6/6/7.

MAGIC IN THE PUEBLO

Magic in Pueblo has its own idiosyncrasies. Listed below are game information and rules for portraying some of the quirkier aspects of Pueblo magic. For details on the Anasazi ruins at Chaco Canyon, see pp. 78 and 120, *T:AL*.

Yaqui Shamanism

The Yaqui tribe converted from their native religion to Catholicism some time around the seventeenth century but incorporated bits of their own religion in the Catholic rites. Instead of following totems, Yaqui shamans follow Idols (see p. 16, *MITS*). Catholic-appropriate Idols that the Yaqui might follow would be Dragonslayer, Fire-Bringer, Great Mother, Sky Father, and Wise Warrior.

Kachina Shamans

The kachinas are spirits from Hopi and Zuñi religion. In their ceremonies, dancers wore masks to represent the kachinas, which would then enter into the dancer and possess him. Hopi and Zuñi shamans who follow the paths of the kachinas are sometimes called kachina shamans. Kachina shamans cannot conjure Spirits of the Waters, but they can conjure Ancestor Spirits (see p. 106, *MITS*) instead. Kachina initiates must also learn the Channeling metamagical ability (see p. 109, *T:AL*) as their first metamagic technique.

Los Alamos

The Background Count around Los Alamos and Redondo Peak is 2. Both sites are aspected towards summoning Spirits of the Flames (see pp. 105-106, *MITS*), but Redondo Peak is aspected towards regular spirits while Los Alamos is aspected towards toxic spirits. The nuclear spirits described are actually toxic spirits of the flames.

Eastern Pueblo

The region of the Pueblo Corporate Council to the east and due south of Albuquerque has a Background Count of 1 due to the nuclear testing conducted here last century. Any magic performed in this area (sorcery or conjuring) takes on a twisted appearance, though the spells and spirits function normally (other than the Background Count). For example, spell signatures

would appear warped and disgustingly discolored in astral space, while nature spirits summoned in the area appear stunted, deformed, or misshapen.

Trinity

The Trinity detonation site has a Background Count of 5 and is aspected in favor of the Atomic Kiva.

UCLA

The astral space around UCLA has been polluted because of the continuing war of magical pranks between UCLA and USC magical students. The rules for mana surges (p. 86, *MITS*) and wild magic (p. 87, *MITS*) apply when using magic around UCLA or USC.

QUÉBEC

Once a rabidly Francophone isolationist nation, Québec is undergoing some serious internal changes and opening up to the world once again.

GETTING IN/OUT

While Québec has relaxed some of its visitor and immigration standards, a strict visitation period (usually one month) is still enforced on non-residents, especially in the case of metahumans and non-Francophones. Customs checks are strict going in but very lax going out.

Québec has international airports in Montreal and Québec City, and both cities also serve as major ports. Vehicle, bus and train traffic to the UCAS and AMC is common.

Québec is rabid in regards to border patrols. Typical patrols consist of two guards in a Patrol One with aerial patrols performed by Yellowjackets. They make frequent use of a modified Cyberspace Designs Wolfhound drone, as well as Appaloosas, GMC Riverines, and modified Lone Star SWAT Hovertrucks.

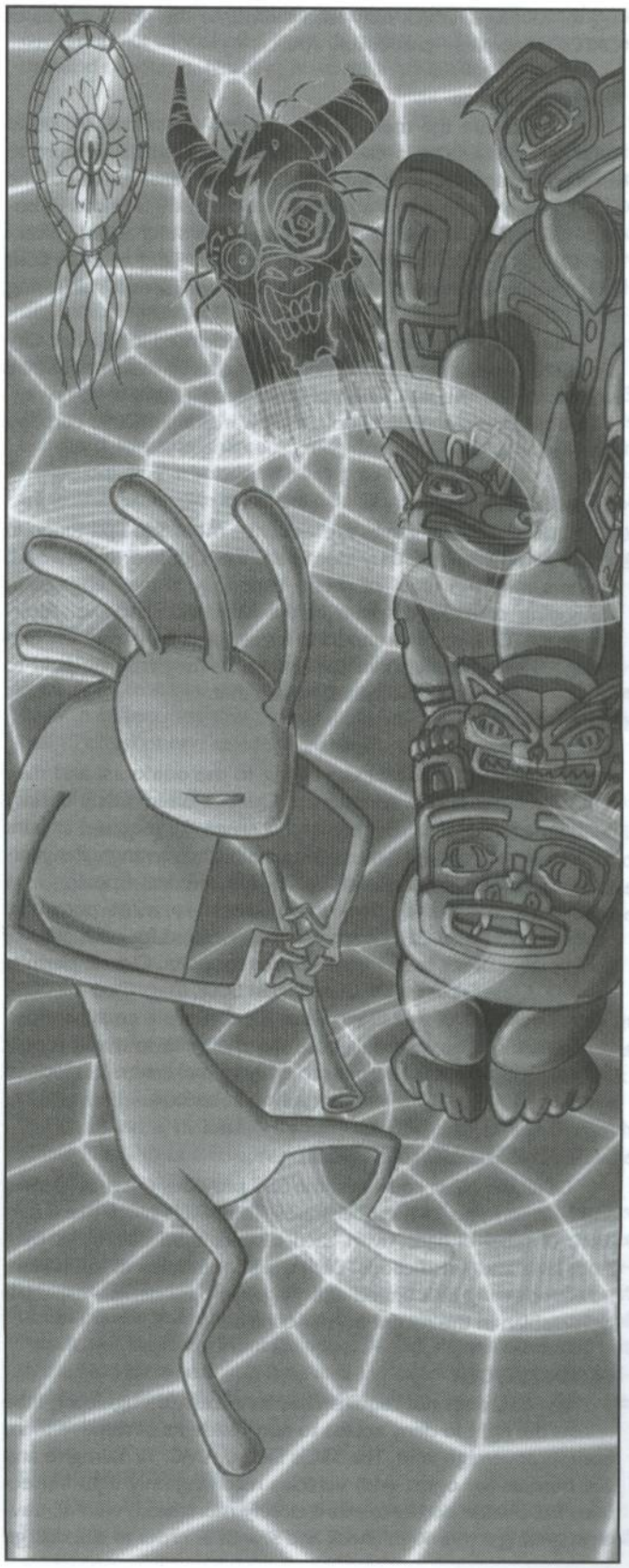
RUNNING IN QUÉBEC

There are two things runners need to keep in mind about Québec. First, language is always an issue, and it may affect whom the characters have as enemies and allies, as well as playing a role in most social situations. Second, the Seraphim are everywhere, gathering information for Cross. Characters that aren't careful may quickly attract Cross' attention.

The New Guard

The Démocrates Mondains have seized power in Québec, but their hold is a fragile one. While in power, they are using their position to force through as many changes as they can. At the same time, the Parti Québécois is doing everything they can to disrupt their plans and get back in power. Add in the machinations of the smaller factions, and the Québec political scene offers a wealth of opportunities for runners to get their hands dirty.

Despite the shift in power, Cross Applied Technologies (CATCo) is still a major force behind the scenes. In fact, rumors suggest that Vice President François Lemay is in fact an agent for CATCo, puppeteering the idealistic President of the Republic, Hélène Bard. Cross' shifting allegiances have put many powerful people on the outs, and they're not pleased by it. Some are look-



ing for revenge, which may lead them into the good graces of CATCo's enemies—particularly Ares.

Enterprise Zones

The EZs are the method the Québec government uses to keep the megacorps in check. Runners can turn this feature to their advantage either by targeting corp facilities outside of the EZs, though many corps are careful to keep their primary projects safe in the heart of their EZs. Québec is strict about enforcing EZ regulations, and many corps are unwilling to push their luck chasing a group of runners outside an EZ and risk losing their EZ altogether.

The competition for the EZ that is unclaimed in Québec City is a stiff one, with many companies vying for it. Runners may be hired to smear the reputation of other competitors or to "sway" the Démocrates Mondains' opinion towards a particular corp, by any means necessary.

The Biker Gangs

Québec's biker gangs are equal to most Seoulpa Rings in terms of power, and they dominate the Québec underworld. Runners may run afoul of them, especially if they engage in smuggling or make a splash in the Montreal shadows. Alternately, CATCo may hire runners to investigate the gangs and find a way to bring them under their wing, or they may be paid to take on one gang at the benefit of another.

Bounty Hunting

If your characters feel like taking to the outdoors, and they don't have much of a conscience, Québec offers many bounty hunting opportunities. Permits and licenses are required to hunt paranimals professionally, requiring a SIN and costing a flat yearly fee. The base license costs 100¥; this certifies a person as a paranimal hunter and gives them access to most paranimal bounty hunter resorts. Permits are then needed for each class of paranimal in order to get the bounties for pelts. Class E permits cost 50¥, Class D cost 100¥, Class C cost 500¥, Class B cost 1,000¥, Class A cost 5,000¥ and Class S and X permits are equally priced at 10,000¥. Ministry officials both tag the pelts to avoid repeat cash-ins and examine them thoroughly to make sure it is indeed a kraken they just killed and not a hot air balloon.

SALISH-SHIDHE COUNCIL

Of all the NAN countries, the SSC provides the most power and autonomy to its member tribes. The SSC is more like a network of tribal entities, with each distinct tribe having its own land, laws and jurisdictions. Each tribe contributes to the nation, however, acting as a united entity against opponents—especially Tsimshian in the recent border conflict.

GETTING IN/OUT

The SSC does not require visas for access, though each tribe retains the right to deny access to non-residents or remove them from its sovereign land. The SSC's Sioux, AMC, Tir Tairngire and Ute borders are open, with vehicles receiving only light inspection. The Seattle border is more closely monitored, with all travelers getting a thorough check and search in order to discourage smuggling and talislegging. Smuggler traffic in and out of the SSC is heavy, especially thanks to support from the Cascade Ork tribe.

The SSC's only international airport is Vancouver, which is also its primary trade port. There is regular air, bus and road traffic to Seattle and the neighboring NAN countries.

Salish-Shidhe border patrols are standard four-man teams traveling in a light scout vehicle. In emergencies they call on the Salish Rangers who typically use Citymasters, Appaloosas and Hughes Stallions. A Ranger team usually includes one mage or shaman.

The Tsimshian border is closed and travel is discouraged in that region due to extreme risk. Military units watch, patrol and clash along both sides of the border, making any sort of exit or entry highly problematic.

RUNNING IN THE SSC

The SSC is more than just a vacation spot for stressed-out Seattle sprawl-dwellers. The following are just a few possibilities for shadowrunners.

The Border War

The simmering border situation between the SSC and Tsimshian is now boiling over, with flares of open hostilities occurring on a regular basis. This conflict could be the centerpoint for a mercenary campaign, as both sides hire freelance units to make raids, conduct recon and spread sabotage behind enemy lines. Even shadowrunners can make profit from the war, as there is plenty of espionage and maneuvering going on away from the battlefields. New prototypes are being drawn up, plans and research are being made, and allies are being made, bought or coerced.

Biowarfare weapons, mana lines and control of strategic resources add other elements into the equation. There are many powers in the world that want to know who is responsible for the devastating attack on SSC forces, and what exactly it was that was used. Some are interested for moral reasons, others hope to gain knowledge that they can exploit to their advantage. Others are merely interested in placing the blame on opponents. Likewise, if the conflict is over resources (magic or otherwise), who is currently in control of those resources and what are they doing with them?

Corporate Politics

Away from the border conflict and war fever, it's business as usual in the SSC. The relative lack of domineering megacorps has created an environment where smaller corps have managed to thrive, but now the big boys are looking hungrily at all of the possibilities for takeover. Many SSC corps are eager to get a solid standing on their own two feet before they are gobbled up, which means they're looking for subversive methods to get ahead of the competition.

Smuggling Opportunities

The Cascade Orks make smuggling in the SSC easy, and in return they reap tremendous profits. Many other tribes and people within the country get their share and so benefit from looking the other way, but there is a growing number who think the

Cascade Ork operations are getting out of hand and placing a black mark on the nation. Some of these opponents may turn to shadowrunners to gather evidence against or damage the Cascade Ork smuggler pipelines. Likewise, the Orks may look for aid in silencing outside meddlers, whether through bribery or force. As the Cascade Orks subtly interfere with the SSC war effort in order to drag out the conflict and reap more profits, they risk turning their peers against them if their counter-productive agenda becomes known.

SIOUX

The Sioux remember the days before the Ghost Dance War, when Native Americans were a colonized people. The country works hard to stand vigilant against outsiders, uphold the NAN and never let such days return.

GETTING IN/OUT

Applying for a travel, work or immigration visa to the Sioux is easy, though UCAS, CAS, Aztlan and megacorp citizen applications undergo special scrutinization by the OMI. Customs checks are routine except for the Denver and UCAS border, where physical searches and scans are more thorough.

The Sioux Nation has only one international airport: Casper. Regular air, bus and train service are available to all surrounding countries.

Though Sioux borders have a reputation for being well defended, there is simply too much territory to cover it all adequately. Border patrols are standard four-man teams using Sikorsky-Bell "Red Ranger" Scout ACVs and microskimmer drones. Shamans are common, and in some cases Sioux Wildcats may be available for back-up. Smuggler traffic is high, so the response to illegal border crossings is swift and heavy.

RUNNING IN THE SIOUX

There's plenty to get involved with in the Sioux, from the corp competition around the University of Cheyenne to the attempts of the Lakota Mafia to control smuggling through the country. A few options are described below.

Military Games

The militaristic nature of the Sioux Nation presents many opportunities. War games along the UCAS border are common, with both sides hiring deniable assets to goad and mess with the other. The Sioux like to keep a close eye on any potential threat to the NAN (primarily the UCAS, CAS, Aztlan, Saito and Tir Tairngire), and if they can't use their own spies, deckers or commandos they'll use any runners that are available. The OMI and Sioux Wildcats also have a professional rivalry going, and so each side may turn to outsiders for assistance in their contests. The Wildcats also like to test their skills in real-life combat situations, so they are occasionally sent to hunt down troublesome shadowrunner or smuggler crews.

STC Intrigues

Cheyenne is home to the STC headquarters, including all of the primary STC agencies. This is the political battleground on which the NAN member states seek to outmaneuver each other and get the edge in negotiations and deals. This generates shadowrun ops of all varieties, from datasteals to blackmail to frame-ups and sabotage. Nothing is worse than "sibling" rivalry.

Outdoors Adventures

Sioux country has a lot of natural wonders and supernatural ones to boot. Characters may be asked to trespass on Sioux sacred sites to collect telesma, or they may run afoul of go-gangs on lone stretches of highway. Long-abandoned towns may be smuggler hideouts or carefully camouflaged corporate enclaves. Even worse, they may be overrun with shedim zombies or bug spirits.

DEVIL'S TOWER

The sacred site also known as Bear's Lodge is a Rating 3 power site that raises to Rating 5 during the solstices. The site is aspected towards shamanic magic, and in particular to health magic during the solstices. It is up to the gamemaster to determine the exact effects of the Sun Dance ritual and other phenomenon here (such as tribal myths). The disappearances may have been caused by hostile spirits, an astral rift or something else entirely.

TALISLEGGING

The Badlands, Black Hills and Yellowstone Springs are abundant with telesma. At the gamemaster's discretion, the base time to collect one unit of raw materials should be reduced by half (5 days) or one quarter (7 days).

TIR TAIRNGIRE

The highly celebrated Land of Promise is now a land of civil strife and turmoil. This elven paradise recently came close to economic collapse, forcing it to abandon its isolationist policies to survive. Even so, a rebellion is in the works that may challenge the abilities of the Princes to keep control.

GETTING IN/OUT

Getting a tourist visa to visit the Tir isn't the nightmare it once was. Most visitors are funneled through Portland; to get anywhere else, you have to undergo a more thorough check. Customs checks focus on weapons smuggling.

Portland is Tir Tairngire's only international airport. Through either Portland or Boise, regular air and bus routes are available to the SSC and Seattle.

Tir border patrols tend to rely on stealth and magic (spirits and detection and illusion spells) rather than physical firepower or numbers. A typical Peace Force patrol consists of four personnel with SOTA detection gear and several microdrones. One out of ten patrols in the north or south will actually be composed of Paladins of the Great Hunt (Superior NPCs). Patrols often stay out in the field for weeks at a time and are expected to become intimately familiar with the area they work in. In a pinch they are backed up with a scout LAV.

RUNNING IN THE TIR

Tir runs tend to focus on the extreme ends of society. There's a lot of activity among the rebellious lower classes and

the criminal activities, but the real mind-numbing twists and turns and political schemes come from the Princes at the top.

The Rebellion

The growing dissent and civil strife in Tir society has "shadowrun" written all over it. Runners may get involved by smuggling Rinelle members out of the country or weapons in. They may be hired as backup for attacks against the government and corps, particularly if Rinelle feels the run is above their abilities. Socially conscious runners may become integrally involved in the rebellion, leading to entanglements with the various factions that each strive for different goals. More mercenary runners can take on jobs infiltrating or hunting down Rinelle cells, torturing them for information, or framing horrible terrorist attacks upon them to decrease their public support.

Elite Machinations

The Princes at the top levels of Tir society are constantly scheming—extravagant plots and Machiavellian schemes are second nature to them. The exact details behind the recent shake-ups are murky, but it is certain that each of the Princes is scrambling to cement a superior position and undermine their foes. Foremost is the scramble to fill the Council seat left vacant by Oakforest, and the seat soon to be abandoned by Ehran (unless he changes his mind). James Telestrian III is the primary candidate, but other Princes have their favorites too. Hestaby is the new wild card on the Council, and many of the Princes aren't sure yet what to make of the arrangement. Some may be currying favor, while others (such as Maria Cinebal) are clearly outraged by her presence. And even though Lofwyr and Oakforest may be gone, their own plots may continue to bear fruit in the Tir unless the current Council acts to stamp them out.

Working for the Princes has positive and negative aspects. Having a potent figure as a patron can be quite the boon ("Expense? What expense?"), but it quickly leads to the drawback of having potent enemies that want you dead.

Rite of Progression

The next Tir Rite of Progression—postponed for almost a decade—will take place 1 May 2063. This event will provide many run opportunities, as potential candidates (or people supporting them) grab for any advantage they can get (illegal or otherwise). Some people will undoubtedly want to see competitors fail, preferably in a scandalous manner if that can be arranged. Since the Tir Princes can intervene into a subject's fate, promoting or demoting him or her despite the testing, "lobbying" and maneuvering for leverage will also play a role. Rinelle ke'Tesrae may organize a boycott of this underpinning feature in Tir class divisions, and some Rinelle cells may attempt to sabotage the proceedings. Runners may be hired by the Rinelle to help, or by others to stop any interference.

TIR PREJUDICE

Most Tir Tairngire subjects are prejudiced. Though racism by elven subjects against other races is decreasing, the intolerance of outsiders ("*goro*") is increasing. Tir subjects only subtract 4 from the roll when checking for racial prejudice (see p. 92, *SR3*), or 5 if dealing with a fellow Tir subject.

TSIMSHIAN

Tsimshian is a land scarred by resource exploitation, oppression of minority tribes and megacorp control. The tribes in power have sold out their country and are just now beginning to feel the consequences.

GETTING IN/OUT

Tsimshian has strict travel and visa restrictions. Unless you're a member of the Tlingit or Tsimshian tribes or a citizen of a megacorp with access privileges to Tsimshian, your visa will require extensive paperwork to get through a Byzantine approval process and will be refused if the slightest discrepancy is found. For shadowrunners, the best option is to get forged (or real) megacorp credentials or to sneak in.

Tsimshian has no international airports capable of accepting semiballistics or suborbitals. Instead, long-distance travelers must take a connecting flight to the Kitimat airport from Anchorage, Seattle or Calgary (flights from Vancouver have been temporarily suspended). The weather often impedes these flights in the winter. Ground and bus traffic are available to Athabaska, and a ferry service that used to connect between Kitimat and Vancouver now links to Seattle.

Tsimshian patrols are mundane three-man units in light scout vehicles, and their air coverage is very weak, except along the Salish-Shidhe border. The SSC border is heavily monitored and guarded by Tsimshian military units that will fire at any sign of unauthorized access.

RUNNING IN TSIMSHIAN

Shadowrunning in Tsimshian is a risky proposition. The country is a police state, and any sign of illegal activity is met with extreme hostility. Runners who are caught can look forward to a lifetime of enforced slavery or a turn in front of the firing squad.

Trouble at the Top

The mutually beneficial relationship between the Progress Party and MCT is on shaky ground now that MCT's profits are suffering. MCT is considering pulling out while they're ahead, which would leave the power structure without support. If Great Chief Jim can't convince MCT to stay (perhaps by forcing MCT's competitors out of the country), her position is doomed. Already the opposition parties, disgruntled that the Progress party didn't share the wealth enough, is currying favor with potential megacorp backers. A power struggle is destined to break out, and it's no longer certain who will be in power when the dust settles.

Tribal Conflict

The Tsimshian and Tlingit brutally repress the smaller tribes and metahumans in the country, keeping them down with discrimination and police state tactics. The Haida National Front has arisen to fight this injustice, but the group is plagued with splinter factions and forced to fight with BTL-



dealers and criminals in their community that perpetuate the cycles of oppression. Someone has been investing money and training into the group, however, and their attacks on the power structure are becoming more sophisticated. Outsiders may be brought in to smuggle them arms or gear, aid their operations or gather intelligence for them. Alternately, runners could be hired to infiltrate the rebels, exacerbate their splits and find out who's backing them.

Eco War

In the name of progress, Tsimshian has allowed MCT and a handful of other megacorps to exploit the country's natural resources without restraint. After years of this, the land is now ravaged by exploitation and pollution. Only a few eco-cells brave the police state to counter this eco-destruction. The most infamous is the secret shamanic group called the Long House Brotherhood, who target those responsible with terrible magic. Few other shamans remain in the country, lest they be swayed to the toxic path. Outside interests could hire shadowrunners to assess the country's devastation, pitting them against corporate security and toxic hazards. Or eco-cells unable to get past the strict security may hire the runners on for tasks they can't accomplish, or to restrain toxic shamans.

War Fever

Tsimshian is geared up for a war against the SSC, but they haven't committed yet because it may be a war they'll lose. Great Chief Jim won't launch an invasion until she knows MCT has her back, which means she needs to clean house first. In the meantime, the SSC may launch an invasion of their own. As both sides settle down to sniping at and raiding each other, both are bringing in merc units to bolster their own forces and hiring shadowrunners for more behind-the-scenes in-depth ops.

CULTURAL BIAS

The dominant Tsimshian and Tlingit tribes have a strong cultural bias against outsiders. Apply a +1 modifier to any social interaction or Charisma Tests made with Tsimshian or Tlingit tribals unless the character is from Tsimshian or is Japanese. If the character is Haida or metahuman, apply a +2 modifier instead.

TOXIC SHOCK

The unregulated industry and exploitation of Tsimshian's natural resources has transformed large swathes of Tsimshian landscape into toxic domains (see p. 126, *MITS*) with a background count between 1 and 5. Shamans will be unable to summon spirits here, and even in other areas of Tsimshian the spirits may be cross and unhelpful. These toxic areas have a very high concentration of toxic critters (see p. 17, *Critters*), especially near the more polluted sections of the nation. The extent of these toxic domains is growing, spreading into the sprawls and tainting mana lines and power sites. Toxic shamans are a growing concern, and most of them are Poisoners, seeking to spread the devastation even further.

Any shaman that spends too much time in the vicinity of this ecological disaster will start to hear the siren's call to the toxic way. The gamemaster is encouraged to play this up, introducing cryptic messages, warnings or rants from the shaman's totem and possibly forcing the shaman to make Willpower Tests to avoid flying into a frenzy when confronted with toxic devastation. This should be presented as a role-playing challenge. If the character succumbs to the toxic path, he or she immediately becomes an NPC and turns his or her character sheet over to the gamemaster.

THE UCAS

The UCAS has weathered many storms in the past decade, but it seems to be pulling itself up and forging ahead once again. After taking hits during the calamity in Chicago, the assassination of Dunkelzahn and the Renraku Arcology situation, the UCAS is tougher, meaner and ready to take on the world.

GETTING IN AND OUT

Entering and leaving the UCAS is fairly easy, if you do it legitimately. A valid passport and visa are required to enter the country, but the UCAS encourages tourists so visas aren't difficult to acquire. Customs checks are routine at best, and even characters with secure fake identification can make it through without too much trouble, provided they don't look suspicious and aren't carrying anything illegal on them (like weapons). Of course, their movements are logged on the Matrix—or the movements of their fake ID, at least.

The UCAS has dozens of international airports, with DeeCee, New York, Boston, Toronto, Chicago, St, Louis and Minneapolis-St. Paul receiving the most traffic. Air, bus, train and road travel is easy to acquire both within the country and outside of it.

The UCAS has a lot of border area to cover, so it relies primarily on sensor systems to detect smugglers. UCAS patrols consistently use GMC Banshees and Northrup Yellowjacket mini-choppers. Ground patrols frequently bring specially trained attack dogs. Several smuggler routes pass in and out of the country.

RUNNING IN THE UCAS

The UCAS will be both familiar and strange to shadowrunners used to living and working the Seattle Metroplex. After all, Seattle is technically a part of the UCAS, but it's isolated from the rest of the country by NAN territory, with an identity and character of its own. The other major regions and metroplexes of the UCAS are at least as diverse, each unique in its own way.

That diversity is perhaps the defining characteristic of the UCAS. While many other nations in North America work hard to maintain a single cultural identity, the UCAS remains a mish-mash of different cultures and peoples with a connection to the faded glory of the United States of America. Players should get the feeling that the UCAS has seen better days, but it's been beaten down by the forces of history, war, plague, disaster and the simple greed and short-sightedness of humanity.

DeeCee Shadows

DeeCee is a runner's paradise. The political games there are hot and heavy, focused on the six competing political parties and the current non-aligned administration. President Haeffner and Veep Daviar are key players, as everyone wants to know what they're up to and who they're in bed with. Each of the six parties is trying to consolidate enough power to challenge Haeffner in the next round of elections. Then there are other factors, such as intelligence games run by the Sioux, CAS or other foreign and domestic spooks, the investigation into the Dunkelzahn Rift (see p. 95, *T:AL*), and the schemes of the IOND and Draco Foundation.

Northeastern Shadows

Runs in Boston and New York often involve megacorp schemes. Boston is home to Novatech and the East Coast Stock Exchange, while New York is a high-security corporate haven. Boston runs can also take a magical angle, whether they involve disputes between witches and mundanes in Salem, cutting-edge techniques from MIT&T or new studies from the DIMR. For more details on Boston, see p. 23, *T:UCAS*. For additional info on the Children of the Dragon, see pp. 42 and 131, *YOTC*.

Great Lakes Shadows

Though most runners will want to steer clear, the wastelands of Chicago offer an excellent hideout—or a place to seek someone on the lam. The bugs are not entirely gone, the magic of the area has been warped and there may still be some undiscovered corporate gems or clues to loved ones left behind when the wall went up. A power vacuum still exists in the underworld, perhaps prompting someone with the guts to try and build a new criminal empire.

Detroit is notable as the home of Ares, making it a place of intrigue where competitors such as Cross scrabble for leverage. Toronto is both the UCAS's entertainment capitol and its major producer of BTLs, setting the stage for show business battles, underworld conflicts and smuggler runs.

Heartland Shadows

Minneapolis-St. Paul and St. Louis are both smuggling hubs, connecting the bulk of the UCAS to Seattle, Denver and New Orleans. With the Ghostwalker shake-up of Denver, both of these towns are seeing more traffic than usual. Minneapolis-St. Paul is also notable for a strong and wealthy Mafia presence—some Mafia upstart may try to take down Don "Fat Cat." St. Louis on the other hand, is likely to be the source of tension and border games played between the CAS and UCAS. Outside powers (such as the Sioux) may hire runners to stir up the antagonists.

MAGIC IN THE UCAS

A lot of people in the UCAS are still mistrustful of magic. Maybe it's because they lost three-quarters of their territory to Ghost Dance magic. Maybe it's because giant insects from the astral plane took over Chicago. Maybe it's because a small but visible percentage of the population mutated into freaks, and continue to do so following the passage of Halley's Comet. The population of the UCAS accepts magic as a real and valid part of the modern world, but a lot of them still don't like or trust it.

Magical goods and services tend to be more expensive in the UCAS than in places like the NAN, Tir Tairngire, or Seattle. Gamemasters may also want to apply the Racism modifiers (p. 92, *SR3*) to obviously Awakened characters in the UCAS to reflect this measure of fear and mistrust in magic.

UTE

The Ute's undergoing difficult times, and it looks like things are only going to get worse.

GETTING IN/OUT

The Ute has very strict policies for issuing travel visas to non-Amerindians. If the applicant is Anglo, the process will be difficult at best, and the visa may be slapped with heavy limitations. Travel visas to Las Vegas only are slightly easier, as the Ute relies on the tourist income. If the applicant is an employee of a megacorp with holdings in the Ute, barriers and restrictions tend to magically melt away. As a sovereign state, Salt Lake City does not require visas of any kind.

Ute has three international airports: Salt Lake City, Las Vegas and Provo. Air traffic within the nation is not as common as bus routes, but regular air, bus and ground traffic moves between Ute and its neighbors (except Tir Tairngire).

Ute border patrols are practically nonexistent, though Ute security forces make up for it with an elevated number of random traffic stops, temporary checkpoints and street ID checks.

RUNNING IN UTE

Non-native shadowrunners may have a difficult time running in Ute, as any Anglos in their group may suffer discrimination and harassment. If they can brave it, however, there's plenty of work to take on.

Voting Scams

The system of electronic plebiscite voting may have been a good idea, but the implementation is flawed. Only the Elected Council and Great Chief can submit legislation and they are careful to orchestrate submissions. Some topics will never be addressed despite public demands, while anything a megacorp asks for will be on the ballot the next day. But the Councilors, Chief and megacorps do not agree with each other, so there is a flurry of contradictory proposals. If someone has a particularly invested stake in seeing a vote win or fail, the Comanche Mafia and other sources have operations in place to adjust and rig the votes. Deckers will find ready work here, either hired to amend certain votes or paid to protect them.

Future Direction

Between the economic crisis and political bankruptcy, Ute is in desperate straits, and there are many voices calling for desperate measures. Some of these forces are already tak-

ing action, organizing protests, boycotts, sabotage and attacks. Others are maneuvering behind the scene, forging deals, creating allies (willing or not) and undermining the opposition. Shadowrunners can easily get involved, perhaps by framing one group on behalf of a rival or working to take one faction down a notch or two. There are many factions to represent, from the class-conscious United Socialists to the anti-Anglo Native Worker's Union to the megacorps who want to bring everything under their control.

Las Vegas Underworld

Las Vegas is an underworld paradise, with just about every form of illicit entertainment available, legally or not. This business rakes in mountains of cred, and for decades the Verontesse Mafia family has been king of the hill. But now a new player is in town: the Comanche mob and their pet Wind Speaker Corp. The Comanches want to grab a larger piece of the action, while Verontesse wants to put the upstarts down quickly. A mob war is in the making, and the runners can pick and choose their sides.

Out on the Range

Ute is home to long stretches of wilderness, ripe for telesma-gathering. But many nomads also make their home here, from bikers to bandits to migrant workers. The telesma trade is risky, as Ute security cracks down hard on the violation of their sacred areas. Some parties may take interest in the magical phenomenon of these places, hiring the runners to explore them, brave Awakened critters and find the veiled truth.

UTE PREJUDICE

Anti-Anglo prejudice is common in the Ute, so the gamemaster can choose to apply a modifier between +1 and +4 to Social and Charisma Tests when an Anglo character is dealing with a biased Amerindian. If the gamemaster chooses, this discrimination can take on other forms, from extreme rudeness to verbal assault to physical attacks.

UTE MAGIC

Ute magic has its own peculiarities, as outlined below.

Salt Lake City

The entire SLC and Salt Lake region is home to a large mana ebb (see p. 100, *T:AL*). The ebb is usually Rating 4, though it fluctuates during some times or in some areas (gamemaster's choice) between 2 and 6. Naturally, this makes the use of magic in the Salt Lake area especially difficult. Paranormal critters tend to feel uncomfortable in the vicinity of this ebb, and as a result they tend to steer clear of the area.

The Grand Canyon

The Grand Canyon is a sacred power site and the nexus of mana lines that criss-cross the Southwest. The Rating of this power site fluctuates between 3 and 5. It is not aspected (or at least not yet—many groups would like to see it aspected in their favor).

The Hopi believe that the Colorado River that runs through the bottom of the Grand Canyon eventually led to the underworld. In part, they were right—during certain times of the year astral rifts open up along the river, though they rarely last long.

The Painted Desert and Petrified Forest

Besides being a favored spot for basilisks (p. 22, *Critters*), the Petrified Forest and the nearby Painted Desert are lousy with raw telesma material. At the gamemaster's discretion, the base time to collect one unit of raw materials should be reduced by three quarters (2 days) in the Petrified Forest or one quarter (7 days) in the Painted Desert. Petrified wood and fossils may also serve as exotic materials (see p. 43, *MITS*).

BORDER CROSSING

Whenever characters cross a border illegally, they risk getting caught. Whether they are crossing "legally" with fake IDs and visas, sneaking across in the dead of night, or full-out jamming it, there's a chance for something to go wrong. Ideally, gamemasters will create encounters that generate sufficient tension and action and also serve to move the plot along. In a pinch, however, these rules offer several methods of testing for detection and encounters during border crossings.

PASSING THROUGH A CHECKPOINT

If the characters decide to put their fake identities to the test and waltz right through a border checkpoint, use the following systems to determine if the characters succeed. (Rules and costs for fake IDs are given on p. 239, *SR3*.)

ID Verification Test

The Checkpoint Verification Table lists out the standard ratings of the credstick/passport/visa/ID-checking systems used by each of the North American nations. Whenever a character passes through a border or customs checkpoint using false documents, an Opposed Test must be made pitting the fake ID rating against the checkpoint's verification systems rating as given on the table.

Because there are many random factors that may impact a checkpoint system's precision—system glitches, old equipment, poor training, over-vigilant personnel, high alerts caused by events completely unrelated to the character—the gamemaster should roll 2D6 and consult the Random Factors Table before making this test. Apply the modifier from this result to the verification system's rating.

The gamemaster should also consult the Verification Modifiers Table, and apply any appropriate modifiers to the verification system's rating.

Note that a character will usually have to go through border checks/customs twice; once when he leaves one country and again when he enters the other. If the gamemaster wants, this can be simplified to a single test using the highest rating of the two countries.

Results

If the character wins, the fake ID works and the character can pass through without incident.



If the Opposed Test is a tie, then the system instructs the operator to further "interrogate" the character. A series of questions based on the ID's information and history will be flashed on the display screen. The gamemaster chooses what these questions are and their difficulty. If the character answers any questions incorrectly, the system rejects the ID.

If the verification system wins (or the ID is rejected after interrogation), security will be silently notified and the character will be asked to step aside for questioning (and probably extensive searches). At this point, the character better have a back-up option or be ready to talk or fight his way out of the situation (good luck). Otherwise, the character will likely be arrested and thoroughly questioned. The authorities will attempt to determine the character's true identity, and then will either charge or deport him (or worse).

Caught!

If the characters decide to start blasting, the gamemaster must determine the level of security and response at that checkpoint. Checkpoints can vary from small minimum-crewed outposts with video cameras and shotguns on hand to sophisticated checkpoints with tire spikes, sentry gun turrets, armed drones, bound spirit guardians and armored response teams. Checkpoints are certain to signal immediately for backup, which may send surveillance drones, watcher spirits, military vehicles or SWAT teams in pursuit of the characters. Airport, train and bus stations will have containment measures in place to isolate and capture terrorists, ranging from automated barricades to knockout gas delivery systems. Random bystanders and civilians may also play a key factor in the character's escape, perhaps as cover, as hostages or as go-getting heroes who will try and take the runners down themselves.

Smuggling Contraband

If the character is also carrying contraband (any illegal item) when passing through a checkpoint, then additional tests may be necessary. First, the gamemaster must determine what automatic detection systems the checkpoint has in place, and whether or not they engage in more active methods of searching (visual, assensing, manual searches).

Whether or not a character gets searched may well depend on his look and attitude. If the character looks like a chromed-out street samurai or acts nervously, odds are that he will be picked out. Characters may be picked out based on other superficial profiling factors, such as their metatype, ethnicity or gender. A character may also be flagged for a search



CHECKPOINT VERIFICATION TABLE

Country	Verification System Rating
AMC	2
Athabaska	1
Californian Protectorate	2
CAS	3
Denver ZDF	4
Pueblo	5
Québec	4
Sioux	3
Tir Tairngire	4
Tsimshian	3
UCAS	3
Ute	3

Note: For Denver, use the rating of the nation that corresponds to the sector in question.

RANDOM FACTORS TABLE

2D6 Result	Rating Modifier
2	–2
3–5	–1
6–8	—
9–11	+1
12	+2

VERIFICATION MODIFIERS TABLE

Situation	Rating Modifier
International airport	+1
"Loose security"	–1
"Tight security"	+1
Time of crossing	
Rush hour (8–9:30 AM, 4:30–6 PM or 11:30 PM–1 AM)	–1
Dead of night (1 AM–8 AM)	+1
Crossing from allied country	–1
Crossing from hostile country	+2

because of his travel history (such as extensive traveling to suspicious countries or nations with known smuggling operations) or simply randomly. The gamemaster may simply have the character make an Etiquette Test to determine if they arouse the guards' suspicions.

Rules for MAD detection systems, manual searches and cyberware detection are given on p. 237, *SR3*. Rules for chemical detection systems (sniffers that detect explosive or ammunition odors) are given on p. 90, *SRComp*.

RUNNING THE BORDER

If the character decides to sneak across or run the border—or attempts to cross anywhere other than an authorized checkpoint—use the following rules.

The Unauthorized Border Crossing Table (p. 206) provides typical Sensor Ratings for the various North American nations. These ratings are an abstract approximation of the numerous technological methods by which nations watch their borders: satellite imaging and recognition, radar nets, remote listening posts, mobile sensor trucks, airborne surveillance drones and so forth.

For both nations (on either side of the border), make a Sensor Test (p. 135, *SR3*) with appropriate modifiers against the Signature of the vehicle being used. Use a number of dice equal to the nation's Sensor Rating, modified per the Sensor Rating Modifiers Table (p. 206). Use the Random Factor modifier to represent the fact that the entire border cannot be monitored at the same effective level, and also to diversify the challenges faced on separate runs. If the characters are using ECM or ED electronic warfare (p. 138, *SR3* and p. 32, *Rigger 3*) to hide and protect themselves, use the Flux, ECCM and/or ECD Rating of the nation to determine its effectiveness, applying any appropriate Flux Modifiers from the Sensor Ratings Modifiers Table. If a Sensor Rating is modified to 0 or less (or a Flux Rating below 0), the characters have lucked out and crossed through a zone not covered by sensors.

For underwater crossings, the gamemaster should consult the rules for passive and active sonar detection on p. 33, *Rigger 3*, and determine how what sort of test to make (if any).

Even if the characters escape detection, they are not yet off the hook. Roll on the Border Crossing Random Encounter Table (p. 206) to determine if they accidentally run afoul of any patrols, critters, sensor dead zones or other situations. For particularly dangerous borders such as Pueblo or Tir Tairngire, the gamemaster may choose to roll twice.

If the characters are detected, the nation's adjusted Flux rating can be used to benchmark how far out from the border they are detected (using the Flux Rating and Range Table, p.136–7, *SR3*). This distance may determine how the border defenses respond and what options the characters have. In most cases, a drone, patrol or interception team will be dispatched to investigate, depending on the country (see the specific *Getting In/Out* entry of the country in question). NPC and Professional Ratings (see p. 83, *SRComp* and p. 248, *SR3*) for standard border guards are provided on the Unauthorized Border Crossing Table. Interception teams are likely to be more loaded for bear than standard patrols, depending on what vehicle the characters are using and how they've responded thus far.

UNAUTHORIZED BORDER CROSSING TABLE

Nation	Sensor Rating	Flux	ECCM	ECD	NPC/Pro. Rating
AMC	3	5	—	—	Inferior/2
Manitou Border (AMC side)	3	3	—	—	Equal/2
Manitou Border (Manitou side)	1	1	—	—	Equal/3
Athabaskan Council	5	4	5	—	Inferior/2
CAS	6	6	3	3	Equal/3
Aztlan Border	8	8	5	4	Equal/4
Californian Protectorate	6	5	4	3	Equal/4
Pueblo	7	8	6	4	Equal/2
Aztlan Border	8	10	6	6	Equal/3
Québec	7	8	3	—	Equal/4
Salish-Shidhe Council	5	6	4	—	Inferior/2
Tsimshian Border	7	8	5	—	Inferior/3
Sioux	6	7	3	—	Equal/3
UCAS Border	8	10	5	4	Superior/4
Tir Tairngire	7	9	6	6	Superior/3
Tsimshian	5	7	3	—	Inferior/2
SSC Border	7	8	5	—	Inferior/3
UCAS	7	7	4	4	Equal/2
Ute	3	3	—	—	Inferior/2
Pueblo Border	3	5	—	—	Inferior/3

SENSOR RATINGS MODIFIERS TABLE

SituationSensor Modifier	Flux Modifier	
Near Major City or Airport	+1	+4
Commercial Flight Altitude (1,000–15,000m)	0	+2
Very High Altitude (over 15,000m)	–1	–4
Low Altitude NOE (100–1,000m)	0	0
Nape-of-Earth Flight (less than 100m)	–1	–2
Land Travel	–3	–3
River or Lake Travel	–3	0
Sea or Ocean Travel	–1	0

Random Factors (Roll 2D6)	Sensor Modifier	Flux Modifier
2	Sensors Down!	–2
3–4	–2	–1
5–6	–1	+0
7	+0	+0
8–9	+1	+0
10–11	+2	+1
12	+3	+2

BORDER CROSSING RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

3D6 Roll	High Altitude Crossing	Low Altitude Crossing	Land Crossing	Water Crossing
3–4	Special*	Special*	Special*	Special*
5–6	Flying Critter	Critter	Critter	Critter
7–8	Private/Corp/Cargo Craft	Sensor Dead Zone†	Fence/Natural Barrier	Pirates
9	None	None	Gang or Rural Cop	Private/Corp/Cargo Craft
10	None	None	Joe/Jane Citizen	None
11	None	None	None	None
12	None	Sensor Dead Zone†	None	None
13–14	Drone	Ground Patrol	Ground Patrol	Boat Patrol
15–16	Air Patrol	Astral/Drone Patrol	Astral/Drone Patrol	Astral/Drone Patrol
17–18	Fighter Squadron	Drone/Air Patrol	Air Patrol	Naval Ship

Note: Roll twice or even three times when crossing high-security borders.

* Special denotes something unusual: an accident, a dragon, an astral rift, a forest fire—go wild!

† Roll again and consult the Land Crossing column to see what the Sensor Dead Zone hides, but treat any result that seems unlikely to occur as a ground patrol equipped with mobile radar and surface-to-air missiles.

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