

# EURO SOURCE

The EuroTheatre Sourcebook for Cyberpunk



Everything The Cyberpunk Player Wants to Know About the Europe of the Future By Mark Galeotti

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1992: Let's see if we can make it a bit brighter than this, K?

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## THE CAST & CREW

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## INTRODUCTION

There's a new Edge in town; a new style. It's smoother, more subtle, with the sheen of expensive metal and silk. It moves through the cabarets and clubs like a cyberteched shark, seeking the action, defining the fashion, choosing its targets with precision. When it goes for the kill, a momentary fog of blood hits the water, then, once again, the smooth, remorseless waves close over the body.

What is it? It's Eurostyle. And there's only one place you can get it.





This book takes you there; across the Atlantic in streamlined, stratliner comfort, to a place known and envied by those few American Cyberpunks who can scrape up enough euro to "hop the pond". New Europe—in all its greed and grandeur, graffiti and glory. The place that sets the pace and makes the style. And a place where a deceptive tameness hides an even more lethal ruthlessness.

Here you'll meet the elite; the rulers of the most powerful entity on earth: the European Economic Community. You'll look into the megacorp boardrooms, the governmental sanctuaries, and the filthiest street hovels. You'll party with the Goldenkids in Cannes, dreampaint in Paris, scuffle with the Meatboys in Liverpool, dodge toxic waste and riots in Eastern Europe, face down the KGB in Leningrad, and maybe grab a few gamma-rays on the turbulent Greek Islands. It's a whirlwind tour of the Euro-Continent, complete with three slammin' new adventures to make sure you ain't sleepin'.

So here's your ticket, ripperboy. Grab your seat; the party's just starting. Here's Eurostyle—in your face.

# C O N T E N T S

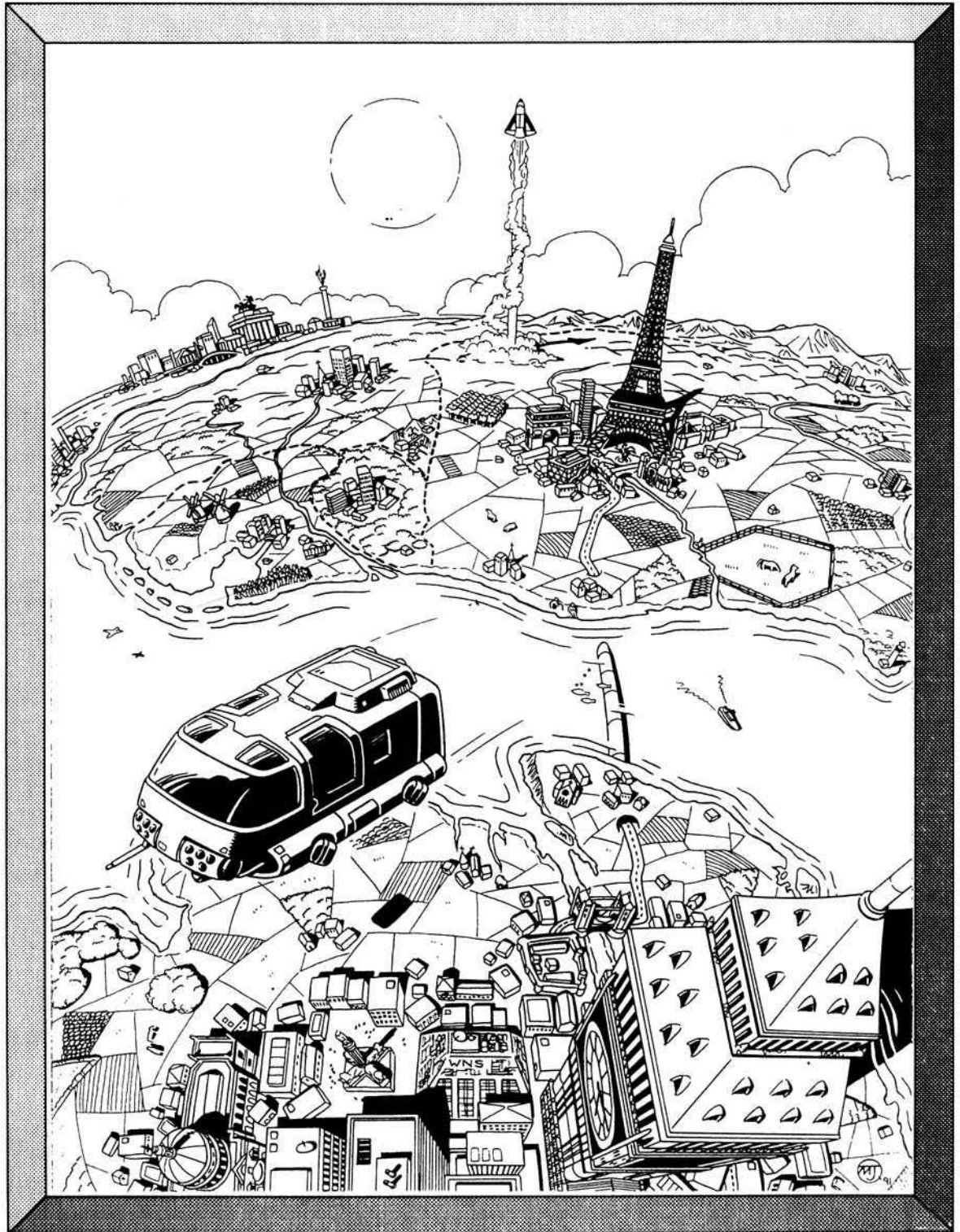
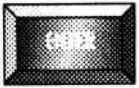
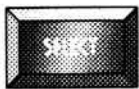
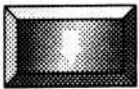
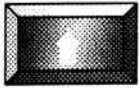
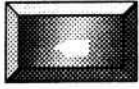


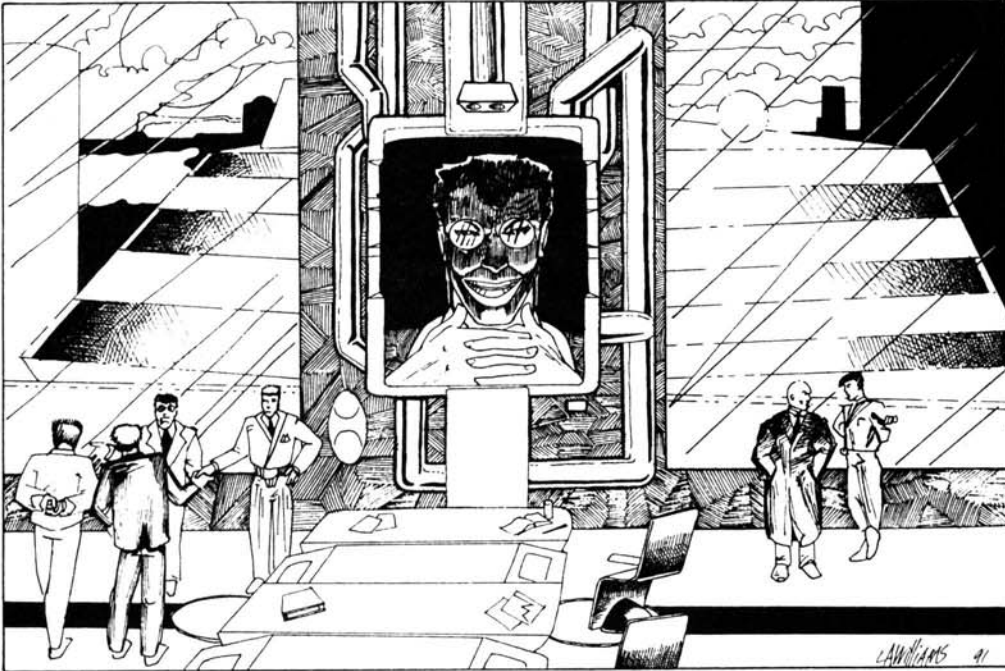
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# THE NEW EUROPE





## GERMANY: HEART OF THE CONTINENT

The industrial, and political centre of Europe, is Germany, a rich, prosperous nation with every intention of retaining its hold on Europe, and only slowly coming to appreciate the new threat from France. The past twenty five years of primacy have left their mark on Germany's physical exterior and national psyche. Most of the country is green and quiet - why bother polluting your own land, when you can just as easily pollute your poorer Central European neighbours? German industry is the most advanced in Europe, and German goods are prized for their reliability and value. Inside, Germans are not so much smug as proud: proud of a regained birthright, of their success in steering the EC to prominence in the world, and that they have managed to keep much of the anarchy and violence they see on their vid screens every day confined beyond continental Europe's boundaries.

### HISTORY AND POLITICS

With the reunification of Germany in 1990, the road to European dominance was clear and

inevitable. By the last years of the century the economic, political and social dislocations caused by the marriage of two so different systems had been overcome, and Unified Germany was the acknowledged regional superpower. Bismarck's dream, Germany's 'place in the sun', was assured.

It isn't that the Germans had any grand plan for European domination. If anything they were conspicuously 'good Europeans'—funding the short-lived EuroBank Development Plan for Central Europe, generous in the wake of the 1995 food riots in the East, forbearing in their response to the 'fire nights' crisis in the USSR. But economic power means political power, and power has a gravity all its own, attracting ever more, accumulating it and unwilling to release it.

As in so many other European countries, the Wasting Plague of 2000 proved a turning point. Germany was especially hard hit initially, but the biowar labs at Neustrelitz were the first to come up with a partial inoculation. As this was passed on to Germany's European

#### Note

**"A common market, a common heritage, a common destiny."**

—slogan at rally to celebrate signing of 1992 Common European Charter, Brussels, 9 October 1992

New Europe— one of the dominant world powers in the twenty-first century, at once a united bloc of economic and political allies and a motley collection of feuding countries, divided by national egotisms and historical bad blood. It's not the paradise some foreigners might think, and it's certainly not the paradise the eurocrats would have their flock believe— but it's definitely a world apart from the USA, with a polish, wealth, elegance and elitism all its own.

## Note

**Austria** is now in all but in name part of Germany, so closely tied into its neighbour's social and economic system that it is often called 'the Seventeenth *Länder*'. Calm and sedate, it is increasingly one big 'commuter village' for German suits who want a second home 'abroad', but can't bear the thought of living near all those foreigners.

## Note

Most Germans can't imagine life outside their corps, let alone live it.

## What's Going On?

There is some buzz in Germany. The backstreets of Berlin, KDC and Leipzig-Halle have their own nightlife and wheeler-deals. As nationalist revivalist gangs step up their campaign against the 'alternative' street scene - the *polizei* shut an eye. Are we seeing the rise of the sort of alienated underclass and no-go zones you find elsewhere in the world? It was none other than Lenin, though, who predicted there would never be a revolution in Germany because you can't book tickets for it in advance, and even at its seediest and most violent, German streetlife is tame by most standards.

partners, it became a powerful symbol in the election campaign of Volker Mohr and his New Liberals, whose slogan was, "Saviours of Europe, Crucible of a New Millenia." Mohr's crudely nationalistic rhetoric struck the right note at a time when the ravages of the plague had stripped away much of the sophisticated cosmopolitanism of the Germans, and left them looking for something to believe in.

After a few successes the New Liberals shattered into a dozen feuding factions, but Mohr's contribution had been to reestablish, 'the German identity' on the political agenda. Suddenly, every party had to proclaim its loyalty to 'traditional German virtues,' and present itself as the champion of 'German rights.' This meant demanding a far greater political say in the EC, equal to Germany's economic strength. Consider the European Court judgement against zaibatsus, which sparked the 2015 'Yen War': a German bid to limit the role of the external economic giants in Europe, thus leaving the way open for the internal one.

With France beginning to contest their hegemony, some Germans are beginning to wake up to this almost unconscious self-assertion. Some are trying to get back to the old approach, 'Europe one and indivisible'. Others, though, especially the political and industrial barons, are beginning to fight back.

## G E O G R A P H Y

United Germany is divided into sixteen regions (*Länder*), as well as the Greater Berlin Metroplex. More Germans live outside the urban centres than one might expect, due both to the excellent transport system and sizeable investment in telecommuting (working at home, linked by the Net to an office) and small-scale, high-tech 'village industries'.

**Greater Berlin** is a sprawling beast, a national capital seemingly beyond even the Germans'

ability to tame. The centre is the historical and administrative heart of the country, a beautifully landscaped place of parks, museums and dark-glassed office blocks. The suburbs, however, are relatively disordered and violent places, the focus for all sorts of corporate rivalries and private enterprise.

The other major cities are **Dresden**, the **Köln-Dortmund Conurb (KDC)**, **Frankfurt**, **Leipzig-Halle**, **Munich** and **Hamburg**. Munich is both Germany's second city and the capital of Bavaria, while the KDC is the key heavy industrial centre. The **Danzig Corridor**, a coastal strip reaching the formerly Polish city of Gdansk/Danzig was annexed ('taken under EC stewardship') in 2006, and is still subject to sporadic unrest. The presence of a major army live fire training area in the corridor does nothing to endear the Germans to their new citizens there.

## CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Outside the major conurbs, German culture is largely stable, stratified and content. Most Germans are, after all, employees, not entrepreneurs, beholden to either corps or the big bureaucracies of the E-government, or to national and *Länder* civil services. Even those apparently small businessmen or freehold farmers are actually franchise holders, or owner-shareholders of firms with corp sleeping partners. Cradle to grave, Germans are cushioned, comforted and confined by a network of corporate welfare services: health care, pensions, tied housing, corpcop security.

A lot of Euros like to sneer that it's made the Germans soft. So who's running the continent? The Germans *like* the way they live, and they are prepared to fight for it.

Most Germans go on holiday at least twice a year, with disposable incomes unparalleled in the world. Yet fewer than ten percent have ever been outside Europe, and half, indeed,

have never stepped beyond Germany's borders except to a corporate holiday resort: imported German beer and sausages served by, who? Czechs, Spaniards, Hungarians, Turks?

They drive German-made cars, even if most of the components were built in dirty factories in Poland and styled by Italians and all the factory in KDC did was install the Japanese stereo. Into that stereo they'll put a CD marketed under a German name, but probably made in a franchise in Hungary.

Odds are pretty much even as to whether it's the latest europop or some 'new traditional'—Wagner with synthesizers, or rap overlay mixing famous speeches and passages from literature. If he or she is young, he may listen to the latest nationalist heavy rock on the government label, probably without even realising the political message being pumped into the hindbrain. It's the same message that lurks behind almost every other aspect of German life: "We own Europe, but we love Germany".



Graffiti wars

When two unknown graffiti artists began competing for who could logo the most outrageous places, the screamsheets began playing it for local colour. One artist, whose splash was a laughing blue horse, finally managed to graff a plaque on the President then went on to unveil on live vid. Pretty chill. The securicams showed it was the Pres's own bodyguard: he lost his job, but no one was going to fracking well outdo him! It's not just streetscum and wageslaves who dream, ami. He's still at it, so if you come across a candangler crammed with bioware and the skills of any six triggerboys, you'll know who he is.

FRANCE: JEALOUS DREAMERS

Most commentators look at France from a political and economic perspective. After all, having emerged from a period of decline, France—still the only vaguely credible rival to German dominance in Europe - is beginning to challenge its neighbour, flushed with a new nationalism and confidence.

DREAMERS

Above all, France is about *dreampainting*, that particularly European version of the general Cyberpunk-era quest for Style and Edge. Originally it was the Goldenkids, bored credcard elite uptowners who looked to build a legend as a way of bringing some sort of meaning to their soft and easy lives. This has, to some extent, generally spread down the social pyramid, but it is the French who are most hooked on 'painting.



## The Low Countries

The Benelux nations (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg) are to France largely what Austria is to Germany. Integrated into their neighbour's power grid, transport network and economy, speaking (largely) the same language; while independent nations, they are heavily dominated by Paris.

Even a streetkid's dream is not just a warm little fantasy to make the grimy drudge of daily hussle a bit easier— it's a hard, sharp ambition he'll plan, consider, refine. Some day he'll make his bid, and then everyone better watch out. He'll probably leave his guts splashed across some wet street, or pump his veins with uncut Slash to atone for having failed. But maybe he'll succeed, and then he'll start thinking about the next step, while everyone else passes the word, and for a day he's hot stuff, chill as can be.

Lots of different dreams, lots of different dreamers. The razorgirl who wants to see Macchu Piccu in the flesh, the insurance broker who's going to cut a slice of streetlife one day, the cabbie who just knows he'd be the chef to end all. Most aren't violent, most aren't impossible, but the individual passions they inspire can be pretty awesome.

Don't stand in a dreamer's way, K?

**A N E W M O O D**

So why did 'painting hit off so hot in France? Usual answer: right place, right time. Early 2000s France was busy rebuilding from the Wasting Plague. In a way, it was a blessing, since it provided the sort of greater problem that overshadowed the race rumbles that could have resulted from the mass immigrations from North Africa and the Middle East. With a population now only minority pureblood Caucasian French, the country has an extraordinary level of racial harmony.

The agency of reconstruction was the Sixth Republic, an all-embracing corporatist regime that linked all the remaining institutions of organized power: the bureaucracy, big business, the unions, the military. The result was an efficient, utilitarian state that plodded on in a moderate, unchanging course. Elections came and went, but the government was pretty much identical, and

its compromise-driven programme surprisingly effective.

By 2010, France was rich, richer than ever. According to some indices, even rivalling Germany. The popular mood became increasingly dynamic, assertive, adventurous. People wanted change, they wanted action.

But the Sixth Republic, efficient as it may have been, couldn't reform itself. So many of these energies turned inwards, into personal growth, development and ambition. French art acquired a new power, with the Toulon-Toulouse graffiti school admired and imitated across the globe. Night schools were flooded with entrants and its per-capita rate of PhDs was unprecedented. Then came dreampainting, catching the new mood to perfection.

**P O L I T I C S**

The Sixth Republic collapsed, marginalized by its people. The Seventh Republic is, by contrast, a masterpiece of infotech democracy and demagoguery. Almost weekly electronic referenda, daily opinion polling over the phone, in the streets and through the screamsheets, and a programme of rotating, annual elections to the Chamber of Delegates make French politics fast, furious and often violent. The result is a government that fits the current needs of its people quite well: it's so tied up in political wrangling that it rarely does any governing.

Except in foreign and EC policy, where it is doing a good job of articulating the new French optimism and assertiveness. The French have always been heavily represented in the Secretariat, and now they are getting positive support and coordination in fighting for a unified national policy. The Germans may still top most of the economic indices—so far—but they might just find themselves out-bureaucraced.

## P A R I S

Paris is a perfect snapshot of France as a whole, steeped in the new mood of optimism and impatient ambition suffusing all of French society, from top to bottom. Literally top to bottom, in fact: since the rising water table put so much of the metro out of service (replaced by equally impressive overstreet monorails), the network of tunnels has been claimed by Parisian youth, with underground meeting places, squats and hideouts, largely unfazed by the reports that toxic leakage into the water table has begun polluting the area. Every now and then a turf war becomes too violent, and the *Garde Republicaine* seal off some tunnels and pump them full of stungas, but on the whole they confine their presence

to a few heavily armed and well-trained patrols and regular stop and search checkpoints at major entry points.

On street level, Paris has seen a decade of extensive urban renewal, and the seven glass towers of the Central Ministries and the glittering chrome New Paris University arcology are fitting symbols of the new nationalist elite. After the smog scares of 2013, and the humiliating spectacle of army oxy-wagons in the squares as if Paris were Birmingham, Detroit or Bucharest, private cars have been banned from much of the main plex centre, replaced by the monorail and thousands of the public pay-as-you-drive type of track-guided electrocar affectionately called the *souris* (mouse).



## BRITAIN: THE BORDERLINE OF EUROPE

Wracked by social and political conflict, half-hearted member of a bloc increasingly hostile to the USA, Britain has since the turn of the century been steadily more out of step with its Continental partners. Its large-scale industries are in terminal decay, its democratic traditions

crushed under martial law, and its voice in EuroGovernment circles ignored with growing regularity.

For all this, Britain has a raw, streetwise vitality alien to genteel Europe. As the big factories

## Facts

The country is in turmoil, our once-proud nation in ruins. With a heavy heart the Provisional Martial Law Authority announces the dissolution of Parliament and the formation of a military government. We set ourselves the target of one year to stabilise the country and establish firm footing for a new round of elections in 2002.

**-BBC TV announcement, London, 3 February, 2001**

The Martial Law Provisional Council, by the powers invested in it by the Emergency Act of 2001, has unanimously agreed to extend its authority by another five year period. This is a purely temporary measure.

**-BBC TV announcement, London, 2 February, 2002**

General Lord Beavoir, LONDURBMARLAUTH, on behalf of MARLPROCO, herewith issues notice that the Provisional Authority will retain its guardianship of the British nation for so long as the present emergency requires, in stewardship for the day when a properly appointed democratic government may take up the reins of power. That is all.

**-BBCVid announcement, London, 30 January, 2007**

**Running the lines**

To move from one MLA to another requires a Transit Permit ('Trapper'). Anyone not wanting to apply at the local police offices at least a week in advance had either better have good contacts (corporate support helps, consider it an AVERAGE Resources check), a hefty slush fund (at least 1k eb) or be prepared to run the lines. MLA borders are patrolled by the Transit Supervision Police (TRANSUPOLICE, 'Trashers' to everyone else), largely rather unimpressive army-rejects and convicts on time-and-a-half indenture contracts. The rarer occasions where patrols are mounted by the army they are much more dangerous. Of course, official business opens any door: an all-areas Open Travel Permit (issued top personnel) is well worth killing for...

close, small but often very high-tech 'cottage industries' are thriving, producing some of Europe's best hackers, most ingenious custom-builders and chilliest fine-tuners. British music retains an edge and a power largely submerged on the Continent under a sugary flood of bland euromuzak. The violence of British streets (and the ongoing killing ground that is Northern Ireland) produces solos second to none.

**H I S T O R Y**

Britain's recent history is, after all, a catalogue of disasters. Already facing economic slowdown, Britain was unready for the influx of immigrants from Hong Kong in 1995 when, two years before the official handover to China, the extremist Maoist Loyalist Cabal seized power in Beijing. At first there were hopes that an infusion of highly-trained and motivated workers would invigorate the economy, and that - given the Euromarket - excess immigration could simply be shunted onto the Continent.

In 1997, however, the MidEast Meltdown turned EC attention south, breeding a new hostility to refugees. In the last days of Hong Kong, though London tried everything from strict border controls to cash inducements to stay, one way or the other, refugees made it to a 'homeland' suddenly unable to transfer its surplus abroad.

Britain was already unstable. The Amnesty Massacre was a powerful symbol of the alienation of system and people. As refugee camps sprouted along the western coast, the 'kongs' became a convenient scapegoat for rising crime, unemployment and social turmoil. By 1999 this had developed into the 'Consolidation', a nationalist backlash that started with lynchings, moved on to terrorism and then spiralled totally out of control. Welsh and Scottish nationalists clashed with government troops, mobs looted the centres of the cities and food supplies began to run out.

The Wasting Plague shattered Europe's power to act in concert, and, without EC help, the government collapsed in impotent recrimination. In 2001 the army launched a successful coup, resisted only by the Royal Marines (later disbanded) and local loyalists. When King Charles III refused to endorse the coup, the monarchy was quietly disbanded: the relative apathy with which this was greeted was a sign of the chaos of the times.

**THE PROVISIONAL MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITY**

Since then, Britain has been controlled by a martial law regime run on increasingly feudal lines, with the Martial Law Provisional Council representing the eight most important Martial Law Authorities. Britain's new rulers are insular and suspicious, drawn from traditional military families and with a penchant for long, ridiculous acronyms. While wary of each other, they will unite to fight a common threat, such as the Scottish Uprising of 2016.

With only 46 of the 427 Community Councillors and not one EC Secretariat Commissioner, Britain's role in Europe is minimal. The Authority pretty much ignores its Councillors who, in turn, are equally snubbed in Brussels. If the UK has a role, it is as spoiler and fifth column. Despite the size of its army, it contributes very little to the European Defence Force, and there are often suspicions that London is 'Washington's man' in Europe. The truth is more complex, but there are certainly close ties, hence the near-exclusion of the UK from key EC projects like the Mars Mission.

**G E O G R A P H Y**

Britain is dominated by eight main conurbations, each capital of an MLA. London is much diminished. After the Plague and the food shortages it was near-deserted, and the government has actively prevented further

**THE MARTIAL LAW PROVISIONAL COUNCIL (MARLPROCO)**

Member	Region
General Lord Beavoir	London Urban Martial Law Authority (LONDURBMARLAUTH)
General Lord Grey of Bristol	Southern MLA (SMARLAUTH)
General Lord Fairbanks	N. Eastern Urban MLA (NOREASTURBMARLAUTH)
General Lord Edwards	N. Western Urban MLA (NORWESTURBMARLAUTH)
General Lord Cornell	Midlands MLA (MIDMARLAUTH)
General Lord Kerr	Welsh Special MLA (WELSMARLAUTH)
General Lord Hill	Scottish Special MLA (SCOTSMARLAUTH)
General Lord McKenzie	Northern Irish Pacification Authority (NIRIPAC)

immigration to keep it relatively quiet and disciplined. **Birmingham** has also contracted in size, and is now General Lord Cornell's seat of power. Since the Midlands OrbitAir facility is within his fiefdom, he has responsibility for Britain's minimal space programme. The **Southern Welsh Conurbation**, capital of WELSMARLAUTH, is also relatively stable.

New settlements to house nomads and kong refugees have doubled the size of SMARLAUTH's **Bristol**, which also coordinates the Army Franchise Agricultural Developments which feeds much of the country. Notionally under military control, the ARFRAGDEVs are actually licensed to agri-corps and smaller operators. Immigrants and refugees also sprawled Manchester and Liverpool into the **Cheshire Plains Conurbation**, capital of NOREASTURBMARLAUTH.

The fighting in Scotland has brought a vast influx of refugees - usually of English extraction - to the industrial **Tyne-Tees Conurbation** in NORWESTMARLAUTH, and as a result of the fighting, the **Lanark-Lothian Conurbation** (uniting Glasgow and Edinburgh) is now effectively under siege behind networks of defensive robot-mines, its margins killing grounds randomly swept by the

SAS and Army Intelligence Active Service (ARMINTAC). Vital supplies come in by air or sea, or in the huge, division-strength road convoys that at intervals punch their way through rebel-held areas.

This is nothing compared to the chaos of the Northern Irish 'Pacification' Authority, headquartered in **Belfast**, and its constant open war against a motley variety of anti-government forces. Operations are carried out by a division-sized unit, half full-time NIRIPAC regulars, half mainland troops rotated through on 12 month tours after a three month acclimation course in the Liverpool Combat Zone. The SAS and ARMINTAC spearhead the search & destroy and hunt & seek operations that characterise this brutal, tragic war.

**CULTURE AND SOCIETY**

British society largely resembles its US counterpart, with the notable exception of the **New Aristocracy**. Since the coup, the generals have replaced all previous titles with a new aristocracy based on service in the military and its civil service. MLA commanders, for example, become *hereditary barons*, while Colonels, Department Heads and Police Commissioners are knighted.

**Public enemies numbers 1-X**

The anti-government forces in Northern Ireland range from Catholic militants to Protestant zealots. The largest umbrella organisation is the IRA, which unites a range of Catholic Republican groups and conducts both terrorist and conventional military ops. Outside the IRA, though, are a variety of other Republican groups with whom the IRA sometimes feuds, sometimes cooperates, from Brendan McGarrahey's Warriors of Erin to the anarchist terrorists of Cell 14. There are also many movements opposed to the martial law regime on other than sectarian grounds, from Royalists to displaced, heavily armed nomads. Finally come the so-called 'Orange Hundreds', Protestant vigilantes too brutal even for the government, carrying out their own brand of counter-insurgency.

**Once and future king?**

Well-meaning but futile attempts by King Charles to support the civilian government had, in the short term, tarnished the monarchy, hence the indifference to its abolition. The royal family was widely supposed to have been 'liquidated' in the interests of stability. Of late, though, rumours have begun to circulate of a viable heir to the throne. While Wales and Scotland have their own nationalisms to unite them against the Lord Generals, this could, perhaps, provide the English with their own binding symbol. Are the rumours true? If there is a contender, is he (or she), genuine? D15, the government's main security agency, is increasingly concerned.

## Random facts and faces

Did you know, for example, that Framedog - the Framedog - was a Goth? He didn't find white facepaint and three kilos of silver jewellery weighing him down in the net, did he? And if you've ever admired one of McEwen's stately pastoral holosculptures, would you have credited it to a two metre biker who spends most nights running the WELSMARLAUTH/MIDMARLAUTH line to see her girlfriend at a maxcare hospital outside Kidderminster?

## Great vids of our time

When the **Ossie Mosley Blackshirt** revivalist gang finally met up with their long-time rivals in the sick'n'violent stakes, the **Viking GoBoys**, only a team from Net 54 got there in time to see the full, gory finale. The sight of these two gangs finally chewing each other up proved so popular, its screening at Christmas has become almost a national custom.

## The Emerald Isle

There could scarce be greater contrast between Northern and Southern Ireland. While in Ulster the armed struggle is increasingly moving from terrorism to open civil war, Eire has settled down as a comfortable and stable, if slightly peripheral, member of New Europe. Feeling the effects of global warming, Eire has been campaigning successfully for EC funds to diversify its agricultural base, and the vineyards and maize fields of Munster are proof of the operation's success. As NIRIPAC is forced to fall back and consolidate its hold on the key cities and Loyalist heartlands, the border has become ever more porous. Funds and weapons flow steadily southwards, but so far Britain has done little to prevent them, aware that the EC would welcome a pretext to involve itself more closely with British internal affairs. Besides, the suspicion that much 'development funding' actually goes to the rebels in the North - with the full knowledge of the EC - is common coinage in London and Belfast.

Despite all the efforts of the authorities, **nomads** are ubiquitous: simple fugitives from martial law, bandits and freedom fighters; kong who refused resettlement and took to the road; essentially peacable 'hippies' who left the cities as a protest against autocratic rule and tend towards reverence for a simple, inchoate nature cult, focusing on traditional sites such as Stonehenge and Glastonbury. Relatively well educated, politically and environmentally aware and organised, most are a far cry from the unwashed looters of the popular stereotype.

Official culture is not as dominated by the military as one might expect. One BBC channel is run directly by the army, but beyond the omnipresent censorship, the rest are kept under a fairly loose reign. This, after all, is the generals' guiding principle: they don't want to be bothered with the details of government and have taken over a civil service capable of handling all this.

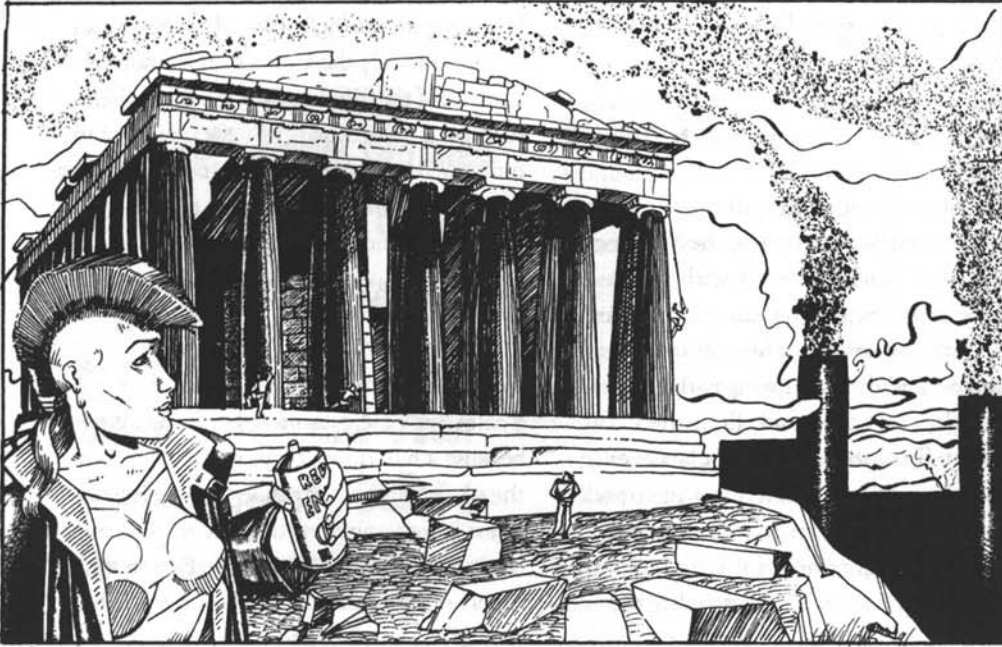
The real heart of British culture, though, is out in the streets, in its violent and constant undercurrent of protest, idealism and despair. Where some flee the control of the MLAs in a nomad life, most turn to internal, street-level cultural resistance, in the kaleidoscopic array of gangs and movements. **Revivalism**, for example, has a mass appeal, an escape to mythical golden days, from the **Round Table Knights** of the Bristol-Kingswood ResiDevelopment to the (predominantly Asian British) **Nabobs** of East London, in their colonial finery and pith helmets. Revivalists tend to be counter-culture undergrounders, along with other, music- and style-based groups. The cadaverous **Goths**, for example, whose androgynous black clothes and silver-skull accessories make them staple badguys for Continental vidflix but which are, by contrast, largely middle-class rebels against the timid conformity and compromises of their upbringing, more likely to be hotshot

deckrunners than doped-out knifers. Or, even the **AndroGoths** who take Goth androgyny one further, biosurgeried into so-called 'sexual neutrality.' The underground is a network of groups, not necessarily gangs - though there may be gangs of such types - nor necessarily antagonistic: they tend to cooperate in face of the greater threat posed by suspicious and trigger-happy authorities. They just want to do their own thing, more likely to meet at a gig than in a turf rumble.

That's more the scene of the other broad grouping of British streetkids, the gangs, like the **streetgangs**, usually short-lived groups coalescing around one or two charismatic leaders, the anti-cyber **meatboys** and more extreme **revivalists**. There are also the **kamikazes**, competing for more dramatic and ridiculous ways of spreading random mayhem, and the **subs**, dregs fallen through the rudimentary welfare, banded together in tattered, ragged and hungry bands who haunt the night looking for prey to mug, shops to loot and violence with which to repay society.

The overall effect is to bring real urgency and vitality to British street culture. Some of the world's hottest rockers came from its gutters, and many are still there, rejecting the plastichrome luxury of the corpcircuit for the gritty streetreality. Take the **North End Boys**, with their distinctive mix of trad 1980s-style folk and ultramodern interface rock, or the plaintive purity of Missy O'Neil's latest single, a world away from the comforting blandness of europap.

Another key influence has been the influx of refugees. Following the Consolidation, many kongs retreated into their own enclaves, recreating small slices of Hong Kong. Since then there has been increasing cross-cultural contact, with groups like **Down2Zero** and **Beijing Belle** mining a new, cosmopolitan seam.



## T H E S O U T H

Faction-ridden, largely poor and unstable, the southern tier is definitely the 'second rank' of the EC. While not as exploited as New Central Europe, nor as far from the mainstream as Britain, these nations are definitely treated with patronising contempt by France and Germany. They are also much less carefully controlled by the eurocrats and, hence, provide foreign freelancers greater opportunities to break into the European scene. Greece, in particular, has become well known as an entry point for ambitious 'lancers.

## I T A L Y

The Italian government straddles the North-South European divide. In terms of economic and political strength it ranks third in Europe, and the cities of the North Italian Plain are as modern and thriving as any in France or Germany.

In contrast, the Mezzogiorno, the Italian south, remains relatively underdeveloped, and economic stagnation has bred unrest,

resistance and conspiracy. With NCE providing new sources of cheap, unskilled labour, in 2010 the Italian government passed a law allowing mass land confiscations and their sale to corporations, in return for guaranteed work and services for the local populations and steady tax revenues for the state.

As one could have expected, this led to a land-rush as corps bought up huge estates, installed mechanised ag systems, and paid off local inspectors for a fraction of the amount they would have been expected to spend on the local communities. The result is a dispossessed and alienated people, increasingly bitter at the government in Rome, the EC and the corporations. The *Nuova Mafia* is just one manifestation of this grass roots unrest.

The corps are now hiring more guards for their latifundia, and the *Carabinieri* are having to come to terms with a new outburst of random ambushes and sabotage. The future of a unified Italy seems again in question as North Italians increasingly doubt the advan-

tages of holding on to their peasant hinterland to the south.

## S P A I N

Spain did well out of the early years of the century. Largely bypassed by the Wasting Plague, well-placed for trade with Africa, and the resuscitation of trans-Atlantic sea trade with the advent of high-efficiency robotankers and drogue-towing cargosubs, both cities and countryside flourished. Indeed, the Spanish smallholder class even managed to resist the 'corporatizing' trend, economically strong enough to resist the threats and temptations of the agribiz combines and their plans to industrialize the Spanish countryside.

### Quote

"I have faith in the Greek people. We shall never surrender, never collaborate with the generals who would extinguish our national democratic traditions. Greece, your most glorious hour awaits!"

—last words of Prime Minister Ioannis Laccanos, Athens, 22 November 2007

**After all, it's busy enough fighting partisans in the mountains, and buying all those shiny new tanks, aeros, subs and rifles.**

Since then, though, the country has been in the doldrums and has watched with dismay the rapid rebirth of the economies of France, Germany and Italy. Parliamentary government has become paralyzed as politics shattered into myriad small, narrow-focus parties and factions. While EC subsidies keep the cities in their former glory, in the country at large people are hungry and angry. Basque separatism has reappeared, while banditry and petty lawlessness are on the rise.

Nomad groups are a growing feature of the south, and government offices and centres are

becoming increasingly isolated. When times are bad it is only the air force and armoured convoys of the *Guardia Civil* that keep them supplied and defended. More and more of the hinterland is becoming 'bandit country,' as the independent-minded Spaniards take up arms on behalf of their villages and their families.

## P O R T U G A L

In comparison with its neighbour, Portugal is a calm and placid country - in no small part because a half dozen corps pretty near own the place and have considerable vested interest in keeping everything cool. The population is pretty much guaranteed a steady supply of new release vidflicks on the cable, stable food supplies and, in the cities at least, relative law and order. In return, all they have to do is file into the polling stations every year and keep thumbing that screen for the Consensual Progress Party.

The recent death of Progress Party supremo Victor Horta risks unsettling this little haven. Two of the main 'investors' in Portugal - and, incidentally, Progress Party campaign funds - are backing rival candidates. So far Metropolitan Merchant Finance's Sidonio Pereira has made most of the running, but Iberian AgroIndustrials have managed to woo WNS into supporting Rafaela Vaz, and the medi-acorp's screamsheets and vidnets have begun to eat into Pereira's vote. Will Merchant Finance's recent buyout of a series of small mercenary units prove relevant? All of a sudden, the corporate gameplans of Arasaka and Amazonian Service and Security - which together provide the mercs policing most of Portugal - have become very, very important.

## G R E E C E

Greece remains a major entry point to Europe. Cargoes from Africa, Asia and the Middle East arrive at its ports and airports - not the least due to the traditional corrupt-

**...Özcül's tanks rumbled into the outskirts of Ankara, airforce smarthomers brought them crashing to a stop, and Özcül fell to a sniper's bullet a few hours later,...**

ibility and laziness of its customs inspectors - and with them all sorts of hopefuls and expats, exiles and entrepreneurs, the flotsam and jetsam of cosmopolitan humanity, eager to get a chance to walk those streets paved with eurogold.

So long as some of that gold ends up in the pockets of the military regime, the Greek National Reconciliation Caucus (ie, the General Staff) is prepared to see this continue. After all, it's busy enough fighting partisans in the mountains, and buying all those shiny new tanks, aeros, subs and rifles. While the treasury dwindles, new taxes get added to the excise every day, and more and more underground movements spring up across the country...

Some of the hopefuls make it. Greece is a traditional hiring ground for ex-euro meat, whether by mercs, corps or one-man bands. The early jobs will come cheap, but the real aim is a chance to earn or buy those treasured work permits.

## T U R K E Y

Turkey has suffered by its proximity to the Middle East, and the worse things get, the worse its luck. Fallout and acid rain following the Meltdown blighted its croplands, forcing Turkey to rely on EC food supplies. By evil coincidence, this came at a time when the EC was looking to make up for lost oil supplies. The price it demanded was novel: the Taurus and Canik mountains.

Their peaks and slopes sprouted rotor-bladed wind-power arrays. German factories built them, Italian techs installed them and plugged them into the French-designed receptor grid. Hard-eyed guards hired from the British slums looked on as Spanish pilots lifted out the engineers. And the Turks? They got compulsory purchase orders, EC Land Appropriations and a week to clear out.

Displaced refugees streamed into nearby towns, worsening the food crisis. For a while it looked as though parliamentary government was doomed. The leaked words of ecommissioner Luc Villelacan's, that 'At least we can deal with soldiers, it saves all that messing around with the ballot boxes', suggested even the EC wanted a coup.

But it didn't happen. When Major General Özcül's tanks rumbled into the outskirts of Ankara, airforce smarthomers brought them crashing to a stop, and Özcül fell to a sniper's bullet a few hours later, in leafy Istanbul Street. Why there? Surely the fact that the EC legation was just around the corner must have been a coincidence. Surely?

So the National Assembly survived and, despite the odds - and another seven attempted coups - it continues. Most of its efforts are still directed towards damage limitation, and a daily struggle to keep its people fed and housed, but the desperately poor and violent shanty suburbs of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir all seem here to stay.



Fighting back

When the head of the German economic advisory team attached to the Hungarian Treasury came down with terminal lead poison, Interpol put it down to some crazy - albeit one with a custom-loaded, smartchipped sniper's rifle. Then those French eurocrats were car bombed in Lodz. And the arson attack on the Dornier plant in Varna. And surely it must have been sabotage that brought down the Austrian head of EBM's new Romanian consultancy over the Transylvanian Alps?

Welcome to NCE:  
a guide to the ruins

**Martial-law Poland** is fairly stable, the military government managing to fineline between arousing German anger and alienating its population by too many compromises. The virtual annexation of the former Danzig Corridor, though, remains a bitter blow to Polish pride.

The puppet leaders of **Hungary** and **Romania**, on the other hand, dominated by their Eurocrat 'advisory teams', are facing mounting unrest. The deployment of a brigade of French Foreign Legionnaires to secure Budapest airport, and a full division of German paratroopers 'on exercise' in the Hungarian countryside is a worrying sign of the times.

Whereas **Czechoslovakia** is near collapse, torn by renewed tension between Czechs and Slovaks, obstinate **Bulgaria** presents the EC with a different problem given its traditional ties with Russia. Much as they would like to simply topple the Peronist populist 'First Citizen' Khristo Zarev, this could not only trigger mass insurrection, but jeopardise strengthening links with Moscow.



**N E W C E N T R A L E U R O P E**

In the latter years of the last century the renaissance of former Eastern Europe seemed just over the horizon. Post-Stalinist permafrost melted in the face of people power and Western liberalism, and investment was set to recreate a new, all-European democratic order. Gorbachev and then Gorborev pulled out all the political controls to concentrate on internal reforms.

Chronically poor, tangled in the cobwebs of 40 years of bureaucratism, the Eastern European republics took time to find their feet. Then the World Stock Crash cut them off at the knees.

The sudden withdrawal of Western investment and aid shattered their fragile new economies. The first food riots left half of Belgrade a burnt out ruin, while Czechs and Slovak units of the Czechoslovak Republican Army clashed over the Brno grain depots. In the face of mounting unrest and starvation, the Polish government was the first to call in foreign troops to help restore order. Despite their own problems, the EC nations could not afford anarchy on their border.

Since then, Europe has been too busy to spare money elevating NCE to the levels it is desperate to reach. The psychological impact, now twenty years old, of French choppers lifting bread into starving Hungarian villages, of German troops in the streets of Warsaw, still conditions attitudes on all sides.

Associate rather than full members of the EC, the countries of NCE became the third-class hinterland of the Community, under the political and economic thumb of the Germans. Want to build an experimental fast-breeder reactor? Dump some nuclear waste? Build a cheap and dirty factory? Need cheap labour? Don't want to pay for security in Britain? No problem, dump it in the east.

Even in sullen, downtrodden NCE, however, there were stirrings, and a seemingly random string of terrorist attacks finally culminated in the spectacular series of explosions at the German military arsenal in their Danzig/Gdansk Live Fire Training Zone. This was the perfect opportunity for the 3000 group to announce its existence.

An umbrella group uniting nationalists from all across New Central Europe, 3000 has little positive programme beyond a rejection of EC control. For many this is enough, though, and 3000's example has sparked off a wave of petty and not-so-petty anti-euro (and, particularly, anti-German) violence. Stabbings, muggings, arson, vandalism— it's a good idea not to drive with German number plates these days, and leave your 'Ich liebe Berlin' t-shirt at home.

Besides which, nationalism has also sparked off a series of crush wars in NCE. If you've got

next to nothing, what little your neighbours have becomes attractive. In January 2018, Czechoslovakia tried to distract its feuding people by an attack on Poland, only to be repelled within the month. In the confusion Romania, egged on by the EC, invaded Bulgaria in an abortive bid to seize Razgrad hydropower station, which had been cutting water supplies to the Giurgiu agribiz developments. Then, just outside the EC, Yugoslavia finally annexed Albania in June 2019. Who's next?



## THE TROUBLESOME MARGINS

'Europe is an island in a sea of chaos.' It may be true, it may not, but that's how Europeans feel. But even chaos is relative.

### SCANDINAVIA

The Scandinavian Bloc is at once Europe's pusher, ally and dependant. Starved of petrochem, the Bloc (a loose federation of Sweden, Norway, Finland and the Baltic League) precariously hangs onto its 'European' lifestyle by providing the black clinics and de-

signer drugs forbidden by EC law. By road and rail from the Baltic League through Poland, by stealthy exec jet, in radar-invisible speedboats, they get across..

The EC is ambivalent: officially against it, unofficially cutting some slack, keeping the border guards there to make the runs hard enough to push the price above those the majority of Euros can afford. After all, mindful of its rep, the Bloc keeps labs, drugs and wetware rigidly regulated, monitored

#### Quote

Outside Europe? Sheesh, no, never been there. I'm a professional, not an anthropologist. If I want animals, I go to the zoo. K?

— Roger VanMorgen, midman

#### The Baltic League

An increasingly flimsy fiction since 2018, when Latvian troops seized the Lithuanian town of Daugavpils in a dispute over reparations from the 2017 Jelgava neurotoxin spillage. With the flower of its National Guard smashed by Latvia's brand-new Krupp-Melara battle tanks, Riga began hiring mercs. Backed by Arasaka-affiliated AsiaBank Pacifica, it hired the flower of the world's cybersalos and managed to push the Latvians out of the city, albeit not to within their own frontiers. The Bloc Council has imposed a ceasefire, but the mutual suspicion and grievances still haven't been settled

#### Neutral turf

Developed, but outside EC political control, Scandinavia has become an essential neutral meeting ground for agents, buyers, sellers and spooks of every kind to meet, deal and spy. And the Scands just charge everyone all they can for everything they can. So long as governments and corps want to play their power games, why shouldn't someone make an honest e-buck?

**Soviet disunion**

So who's left? The Balts were the first to pry loose, and then Moscow was happier to see turbulent Transcaucasia and Georgia secede, while Moldavia quietly rejoined Romania. Kazakhstan split north-south as the Russian colonists in the north rejected the Islamic Asiatic Republic that also united Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan and Kirgizia, and then smugly looked on when the IAR exploded into bloody factional and inter-tribal civil war. The remainder is largely the Slavic heartland. Ukrainian nationalism has peaked and dwindled, but could still be rekindled, though. Now that *would* be a problem for Gorborev.

**Jihad**

*Jihad*, 'Holy War', traditional cultural response to intolerable conditions. The Mossad fears Israel is its target; the New African Information Service is beefing up its networks in North Africa; the KGB just thanks its stars it no longer has to be too worried about Islam; Interpol is sure it's aimed against Europe. Probably only the 'Walker of the Wastes', that enigmatic messiah figure that comes and goes among the tribes seemingly at random could say for sure. But will even he be able to control the furies of the *Jihad*?

**'Made in USA'**

More eurocentric language. 'Made in USA' means something jerry-built, liable to fall apart in dangerous and spectacular manner at any moment. Particularly ironic given the superior level of US tech, but who cares about facts, right?

**'Going Naf'**

North Africa is close to Europe, a lot of Europeans are of North African descent, and its wars and crises are conveniently close for lazy European medias to cover, so it looms large in most Euros' idea of the violent world out there. This has even reached the language: 'going naf' now means something is becoming serious, dangerous.

and licensed, so the EC feels it's better not to leave the market exclusively to cheap, dangerous South American and Asian imports. Besides, the Bloc is also the unmarked bank account and secret database haven of the hemisphere, and that provides a lot of leverage. Remember, knowledge is power.

**THE USSR (UNION OF SOVIET SOVEREIGN REPUBLICS)**

The USSR - what's left of it - is balanced on a monofilament knife-edge. Gorbachev set the reforms rolling, and then appointed Andrei Gorborev as his successor. Even as the non-Slav republics seceded, he managed to hold on by playing off radicals in the streets and parliaments with conservatives in the apparatus, and then the US collapse that followed the Great Crash of '94 gave him further vital leeway.

Gorborev's refusal to take advantage of the '97 MidEast Meltdown finally persuaded the conservatives to act against him. KGB assassination teams launched an attack on the Kremlin, only to face the army. Since having been made an all-volunteer force, it had begun to modernize, and saw a return to the old ways as threatening rebellions in every part of the USSR—rebellions the army would be called on to fight.

When the 'fire nights' were over, the New Communist reformists were still in power. They still are, after a fashion (largely due to the disunity of the opposition), but through twenty years of painful reconstruction and political turmoil, they remain too weak to destroy the conservatives, and a final confrontation gets closer every day.

**THE MIDDLE EAST**

What can you say? Oases of extreme wealth amidst the rubble and the silence. The nuclear exchanges of the Meltdown shattered

the nation states of most of the Arab world. Israel's experimental particle beam defences saved it from the relatively few warheads coming its way, while Egypt and Syria's rather more primitive defences were augmented by realtime target telemetry from US and Soviet satellites, respectively.

Outside these heavily defended nations, power returned to traditional communities and rulers. Some sheiks still survive in opulence. More commonly, tribal warlords lead their miserable, starving communities into battle over a polluted, radioactive well, or a sand-blasted ruin. And in the tents of the warrior-tribe chiefs, in the palaces of the sheiks, in the hovels of the refugees, the whispers of *Jihad* continue to spread. Interpol is getting worried, and a lot of good agents have disappeared trying to get some hard data. They would pay a lot for something on the mysterious 'Walker of the Wastes'.

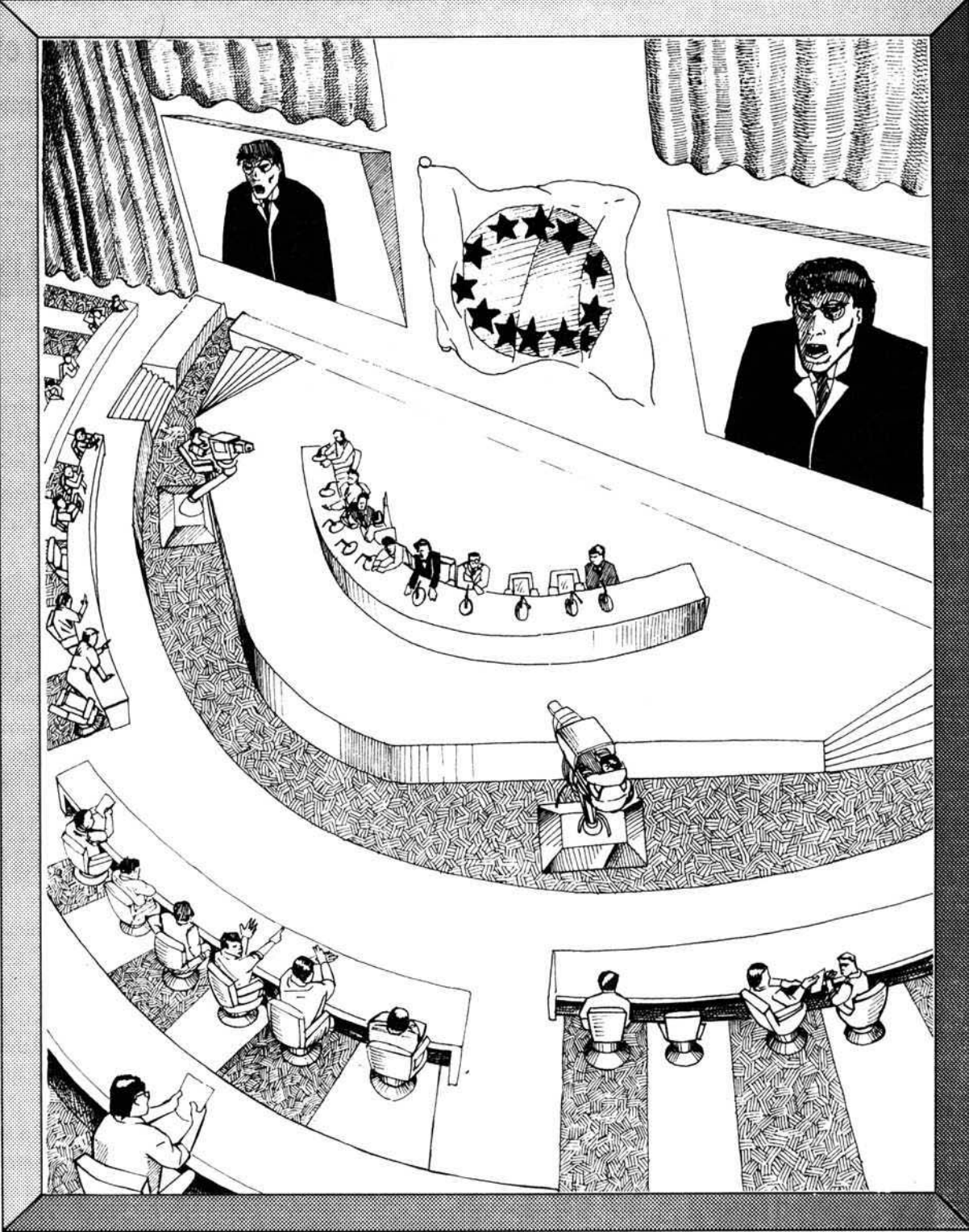
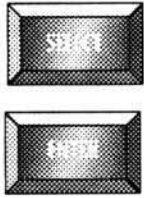
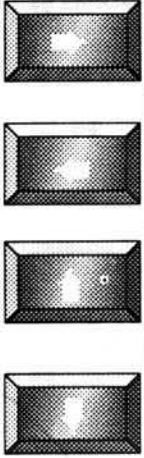
**NORTH AFRICA**

Whatever New Africa may say, North Africa is only notionally under its control. The half that doesn't glow in the dark, starves. Facing unbearable conditions, people flock to whoever promises hope: charismatic leaders, revolutionary movements, religious sects - and the corporations that draw some of their most devoted adherents from 'Naf', and use it as one big, corporate warzone.

**THE U.S.A**

Margins of Europe? Well, any Euro would say so. Most have a particularly bigoted idea of the US, carefully cultivated by the eurocrat media. They characteristically view it with smug scorn, a has-been nation full of crudely murderous thugs, pimps and nobodies.

# THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY



## Party men

Travelling from left to right across the rather limited political spectrum in the Council, the **Progressive** bloc supports legislation for labour rights and environmental protection, a hands-on and paternalist approach rejected by the centrist **Liberals** who mix free-market libertarianism with caution about the megacorps, which they would like to see hamstrung in Europe. The **Economic Democrats** want no controls at all. Finally, the **Social Integrity** group supports greater EC intervention on behalf of law and order, and to quell labour unrest, twinned with a more aggressive foreign policy.

“The European Community is not a political bloc. It is an affirmation of cultural, economic and historical community. No other continent can boast such an association of equals. No other continent is as stable and dynamic. I think the conclusions are clear.”

Dr Gerhard Zettelkasten,  
Speaker of the Council

## POWER IN THE EC

Who runs the EC? The rich and the smart, whether on the individual or national level. Germany's is the largest, most dynamic and powerful economy, hence, the lion's share of power in the **Community Council** in Brussels. Councillors are elected by direct ballot every four years, and the CC has the ultimate powers of taxation, funding, foreign and internal policies. Idealistic notions of egalitarianism have long since given way to hard-nosed 'Who pays the piper plays the tune' logic. Constituencies are based not on population or size, but tax revenue: the square mile of the City of London has a Councillor of its own, while the whole of Turkey accounts for just 12 of the 427 Councillors, compared to Germany's 130. The Associate Members of New Central Europe get just one non-voting Observer apiece.

Of course, being a Councillor costs money: to get elected, keep up with the political scene both back home and at Brussels, buy those Veis Wiler suits, and to re-spray the 'Benz thismonth's colour. Some are already filthy rich, some plan to get filthy rich, some have filthy riches thrust upon them. By

corps, mainly: it has become even customary for each Councillor to be sponsored both by his government and a corp. The idea is that their different interests cancel each other out. The practice is to make being a Councillor a big bucks profession.

Councillors tour the vidchat circuit, have high-profile debates and their votes clinch the final decisions, but arguably greater power rests with the EC civil service, the **Secretariat**, under its ten Commissioners. After all, the choices the Council makes are between options proposed by the Commissioners and on information compiled largely by the Secretariat. There are several broad party groupings, but they have been becoming increasingly impossible to distinguish, and their importance relative to national and corporate affiliation minimal.

By the way, have you noticed how linking votes with tax revenues effectively disenfranchises the poor and the voluntary and charitable sectors? Cute, huh?

The Secretariat is, in theory, a non-political, multi-national body of disinterested experts, working together in a spirit of mutual



collaboration for the common good. Right, and it never rains in Belgium. In fact, it is a battleground, where member governments try to pack key Commissions with their own

people, while pushing their own pet schemes. There are three key flashpoints at the moment. First of all, the French have always been over-represented in the Secre-

Quote

"The contented peoples of Europe sends warm and heartfelt greetings to the Council on the election of Dr Zettelkasten to the Speakership. May he fill his august post as honourably and wisely as his predecessor."

ECWorldService news

Quote

"The EC? Don't make barf. One easie got lost in conurb and dropped in rumble. Soft and spy, made dance, all right. Next time 'nother slums from high castle, comes out from behind gunboys, show him..."

Black Cat, street runner

Quote

"The Community is the boot on our necks. It is the gilded yoke that unmans and disenfranchises us, and is the foe of every patriot."

3000 Communique

**Gnomes in one's pocket**

EuroBank also has responsibility for relations with still-independent Switzerland. Although Scandinavia has replaced it as an anonymous banking haven, Switzerland now specializes in both secure financial data storage and services. Swiss moneybrokers and futures traders are disproportionately important, and engaging a Swiss firm of accountants or financial advisors is a mark of real success. EuroBank uses the Swiss government clearing house almost as a subsidiary arm, and all EuroBank's computer records are downloaded on an hourly basis to a back-up system outside Berne, behind about half the Swiss army and a berg of black ice. Since this was regularized by treaty in 2017, it is EuroBank rather than the Commission of the Exterior that handles relations.

**Europe scarcely needs troops so long as it's got those massdrivers up the gravity well. Just ask the good citizens of Colorado Springs.**

tariat - five of the current Commissioners are also French. Now France is beginning to resist German hegemony, while Berlin is trying to get more of its own into the top echelons. More general is the conflict of politics against professionalism. Who rises to the top: the clever or those playing the right political games, and come from the right countries? Is it coincidence that none of the Commissioners come from NCE, Greece, Turkey, Britain, Austria, or Portugal?

**THE COMMISSIONS**

<b>Commission</b>	<b>Commissioner Responsibilities</b>
<b>Finance</b>	Jean Carnet (Fr) EuroBank
<b>Interior</b>	Francoise Rigotard (Fr) Interpol
<b>Trade</b>	Daniel Galley (Fr)
<b>Exterior</b>	Beniamino Gava (It)
<b>Defence</b>	Gen. Jürgen Vogel (Ger) European Defence Force
<b>Population</b>	Dr Lise Auken (Den)
<b>Communications</b>	Bernhard Liste (Ger) EuroMedia
<b>Food</b>	Gene MacSharry (Eire)
<b>Energy</b>	Corinne Lorient (Fr)
<b>Technology</b>	Dr Maria Cavero (Sp) ESA

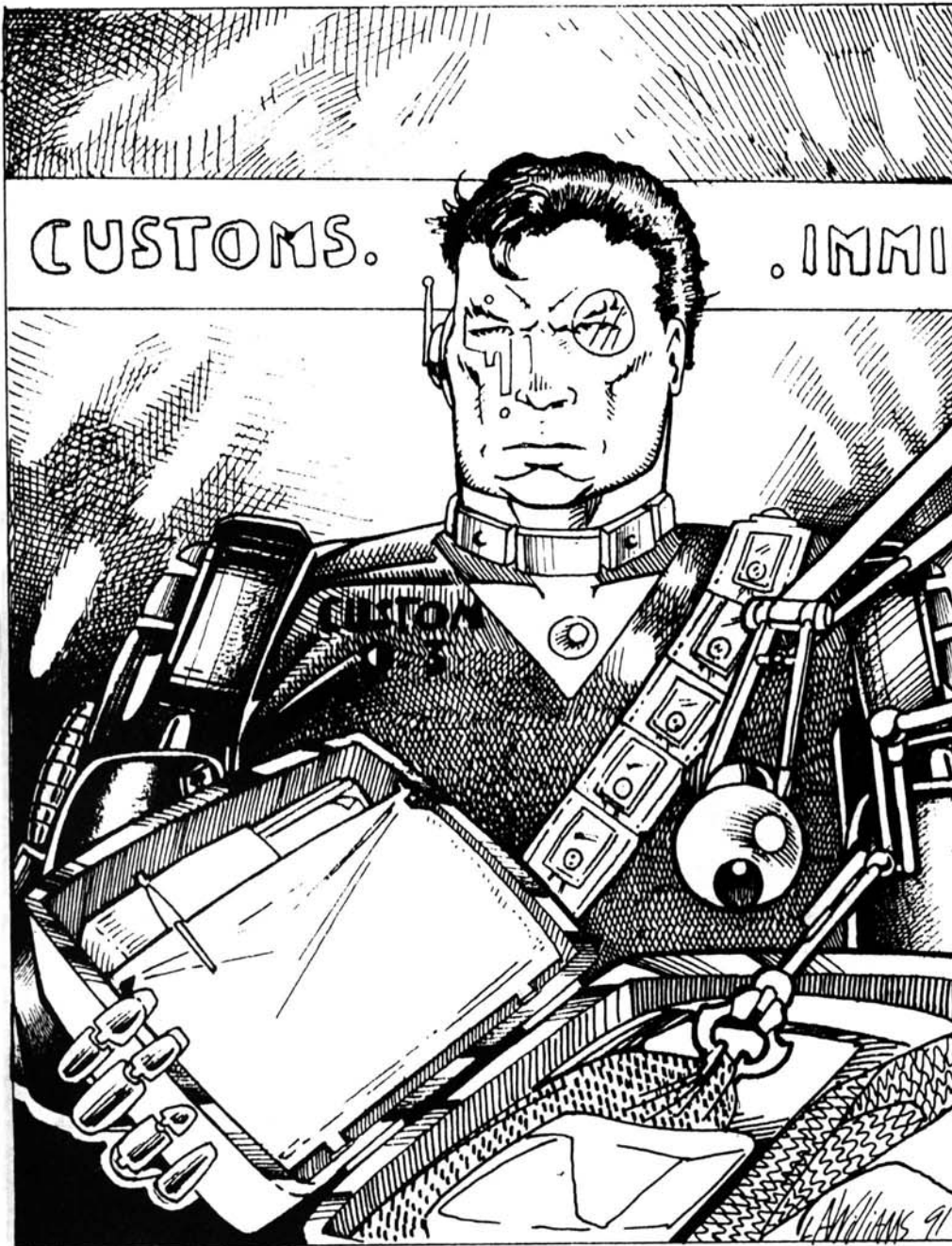
The Commission Chair is a revolving post. At the moment it is held by Corinne Lorient, who will hand over to Bernhard Liste next year.

**INSTITUTIONS OF THE EC**

The European Bank is the single most powerful institution within the EC, hub of the world financial order. Its eurodollars are the basic world currency, and EuroBonds the safest paper around. The EuroBank vaults in the mountains above Salzburg are hardened to resist direct strikes from multi-megaton burrowbombs and are rumoured to contain mountains of gold and seas of platinum. Probably not, though: nowadays money is about electricity, orbit-grown synthetics and data, not lumps of metal. Worth noting is that the EuroBank has been hiring 'lancers for sensitive work. Interpol's nose is out of joint, and the screamsheet instant-experts are evenly divided whether Carnet and Rigotard have been playing power games, or if the Bank suspects there are some dirty Intercops.

On the other hand, the **European Defence Force** is less impressive. Most nations retain standing armies, albeit quite small ones, and also allocate units to the EDF. At the moment it is about 176,000 strong, mostly hover-mech infantry and airmobile assault troops. Ultimately, though, Europe scarcely needs troops so long as it's got those massdrivers up the gravity well. Just ask the good citizens of Colorado Springs.

Those massdrivers are the responsibility of the **European Space Agency**. Dr Cavero has fought hard to keep the ESA out of mainstream EC politics, although Paris has a traditional edge given the number of French-speaking African communities lifted in the Hireout. But as the orbital factories become increasingly important to the European economy (with the ESA creaming 10% off the



lot), the big political players are getting more interested. The opening gambit has already been made, with Germany proposing the creation of a new post of 'Executive Consul' of the Crystal Palace. This would effectively distance the L-5 station from the ESA and provide an opening for the Germans to insert their current prodigy, Dr Anna Dorfmann. Who will win?

## WELCOME TO IMMIGRATION

Every European - in theory - has an official ID. A small smartcard, this serves as a driving licence, passport, work permit, EuroBank credit card and medical record. A brilliant expression of European technology and political control, the ID's existence guarantees work for a small army of netrunners,

### Quote

Europe scarcely needs troops so long as it's got those massdrivers up the gravity well. Just ask the good citizens of Colorado Springs.



techies and fixers in forging them, altering the supposedly secure data on them or simply getting hold of so-called 'recycled cards'. After all, they are important: any policeman or other official can demand to see yours at any time, and will have the requisite cardreader to hand. A hotel, an employer, a customs officer, anyone may at least request sight of the card, with its full-colour holo and summary bio printed on its blue-green surface. Not having your ID brings an automatic fine of anything from 500eb, up to prison and labour service.

Foreigners coming in through official channels get a temporary ID called a Provisional Alien's Card (PAC - the expression 'pacman' for a foreigner is dusted off every once in a while, but never really catches on), which they must keep with them at all times on pain of fine or deportation. Cards are colour-coded - white for tourists, red for official guests, yellow for limited-term work visas - and issued for fixed times, at most a year.

Even so, a PAC is limiting. Some areas are out of bounds (including many of the industrial centres in NCE and parts of the EC Enclave in Belgium), some jobs barred, some services not available. In addition, you pay premium rates for EC services and are generally branded a barbarian. Hence the demand for Residents; IDs for foreigners granted effective citizenship. But these are rare, very rare.

Unless born of European parents (or one euro, in Europe), you need to be able to buy your way in, one way or another. Literally, by purchasing 500,000eb of EuroBank non-redeemable bonds (a donation, by any other name), or by having a skill or trade on the famous 'Yellow List' (netrunners, for example, have a chance; grunts need not apply) or by sponsorship by a government, corp or the like, meaning you've worked hard, long and well. It might be worth it.

## ' E A S I E S '

Who are the 'easies', the bureaucrats who keep the huge EC machine running? Public attention focuses on the fast-stream, inside-track high-fliers who merge in with the general 'goldenkid' elite. Corp execs, national government politicos and civil servants, eurocrats alike, they all spring from the same stock, went to the same exclusive schools and universities, go to the same parties. But they are just a glittering veneer over the mass of ordinary bureaucrats.

Contrary to popular expectation, easies - even of fairly high rank - aren't paid megabucks. Still, they do OK. Subsidized housing in custom-built arcologies patrolled by well-trained and courteous paycops. Guaranteed power supplies that never seem to be cut or down-volted. Special clinics with the latest Japanese medtech and US-educated doctors. Cheap canteens, where they serve real food, not soysubs and synthpax.

Cut off from the problems and concerns of ordinary euros, physically and culturally distinct and eager to ape their eurocrat masters, easies tend to develop a detached and elitist point of view. For many their national identity, while still strongly felt, is more like membership of a club or a team, and the only time they see their home countries is on EuroMedia vid, or through the windows of the bullet train taking the family to a EC holiday resort on the Med or in the Central European forests.

Civil servants?

## I N T E R P O L

Interpol, the *International Criminal Police Organisation*, is the teeth of the EC. Given new powers, new responsibilities and a wholly new cohesion in the face of terrorism and corporate, US and Soviet meddling,



Interpol is now both symbol and guarantor of Europe's prosperity; a recognition of the envy this arouses across the shattered, polluted globe, its agents drawn from the cream of Europe's educated youth, a (self) consciously elite body drawing on the expertise and manpower of the national security forces within the EC.

The 'Pyramid', an ultra-modern office block in the outskirts of Berlin, houses Interpol-Centre. This is, however, essentially an administrative complex. An advanced, secure communications system called the PanEuro-Grid links the Pyramid with regional centres and the Operational Directorates. The Grid also links all Interpol commands with an almost obscenely comprehensive datacentre

**...agents are forbidden to shoot to kill, for example. Outside Europe, though, or once the bad guys have started shooting, of course, all bets are off...**

called the European Criminal Intelligence Centre - formally ECIC ('Ee-kick'), but 'the Pit' in Interpol jargon.

Regional centres are charged with monitoring their areas for possible infractions of EC laws, in liaison with local police and feeding relevant information directly to the Pit. They are staffed largely by new recruits just graduating from the training centres, supervised by an experienced cadre of veteran agents who are either locals or have served in the area long enough to accumulate a formidable range of contacts.

The real cutting edge of Interpol is the Operational Directorates, organised by function. If a regional suspects foul play, local agents conduct a preliminary investigation and submit a report, a 'blue form'. Until this point Interpol is bound by local laws and have no more powers than the local police.

The relevant Ops Directorate will dispatch a team of more experienced agents selected according to the apparent needs of the mission. This 'blue team' has a wide range of powers at its disposal. It can carry and, if need be, use any weapon, device or stratagem. It can coopt local police resources, files or information at will. Its netrunners have awe-

somely powerful programmes and access codes and the right to break into databases at will, bar max security government ones. Even they can be breached if the team gets the confirmation of their Director General.

The oldest and most powerful is the 1st (Counter-Terror) Directorate, based at the Greek island of Kerkira. Formed to combat the terrorism and crime wars wracking Europe in the early 2000s, it controls the External Security Department, Interpol's paramilitary strongarms who support other Directorates. Although a new generation of direct-recruit 'eurokids' have now risen high, the original cadre was largely drawn from the French DST and German BfV. This Franco-German split extends into the ESD, recruited almost equally from the French GIGN and German GSG9, along with some Italian NOCS commandos. As a new generation of ambitious, nationalist high-flyers gather, Paris and Berlin are both pushing their favourites to succeed the aging Dr Ettore Evangelisti. Still, the wily Director-General has a lifetime of experience to draw on, as well as the support of smaller nations eager to prevent either contender dominating the Directorate. Was the death of Assistant DG Heidi Kohl really an accident? And why did ESD chief DuBerry resign?

Espionage and counter-espionage, on the other hand, are handled by the 2nd (Counter-Intelligence) Directorate, under Brigadier (ret'd) Sir Magnus Caine DSO, now in a slightly precarious position: despised as a eurocrat at home, patronized as a Briton in Europe. Nevertheless, his success in cracking down on US operations in Europe wins him grudging respect all over Europe—and Langley. This is especially true given the relatively small size of the 2nd, (the 1st still monopolizes most internal security work). But the 2nd regards itself as select, and greater emphasis on ability rather than nationality has meant no original ser-

vice is dominant, and even the NCE 'poor cousins' are not as under-represented as usual.

Monique Barrot's 3rd (Netcrime) Directorate recruits on similar lines, with the highest proportion of Britons of any Interpol arm. Although the netcops regard themselves as an intellectual cut above the rest of Interpol, they aren't up to the standards of the top netrunners you'll find Stateside or in Japan (or in NetWatch). But you won't get them to admit that. The concept of netcrime is still being explored and defined, but the 3rd mainly concerns itself with netrunners conspiring to erase, alter or penetrate systems and databases owned by the EC or member governments, or which would have eurotheatre-wide implications. It also supports other departments' blue teams when they need high-powered net support and licenses the corporate netcops who operate in each city. Is Barrot *really* the hotshot e-runner who goes by the handle 'LaserBrain'?

Since most corporate crimes fall within the authority of other Directorates, the Milan-based 4th (Corporate) Directorate is primarily busy keeping an up-to-date index of corporate personnel, shareholdings and operations and developing its already formidable commercial intelligence service (the Second Section). The cadre was drawn from the fraud squads of France, Belgium and, especially, Germany, along with the anti-mafia accountants of the Italian police and *Guardie di Finanza*. They were led, though, by a specially recruited team of ex-corporates and the 4th continues this practice of recruiting poachers as gamekeepers. They don't approve of flow the other way. 4th agents are characteristically smooth and educated fixers and bureaucrats (corps), usually attached to other Directorates' blue teams when corpcrimes are under investigation. Polish DG Lieutenant General (Police) Kazimierz Jedynak, is passionately ruthless in his work as only an East European who has seen the

corps despoil what was left of his country and its hopes can be, and has survived numerous assassination attempts. So far.

Without any doubt the sexiest is the 5th (Orbital) Directorate, especially since the hit action-romance-tragicomedy miniseries *A Shield In Orbit*. It is responsible for law enforcement in space, primarily the L-5 and lunar colonies, often a politically delicate task in areas controlled by other nations, such as the Japanese 'Blue Parasol' workshack cluster, and the Soviet Mir network (now policed by an Interpol-trained Soviet team). The 5th is heavily dominated by the French, with many French-born agents and Francophone African-descent members of the 'ESA Hireout'. Netcops from the 3rd are recruited to police Orbitville—insofar as it's possible.

## PLAYING THE INTERPOL HEAT

Even in panache-conscious Europe, Interpol agents cut an elegant swathe. Razor-sharp suits and polychrome mirrorshades. Cool, confident and hardwired to the max.

Play them smart, tough and fast. They may not be infallible, but they do a pretty good impression. Intercops have a distressing tendency to be one step ahead all down the line. But they do have their blindspots. Their omnipotent image, demoralizing to their opponents, sometimes also breeds a dangerous overconfidence, especially in junior agents.

Within the EC they are also bound by rules rather more stringent than, say, a US psycho squad. Unless sanctioned by a senior agent, fired on or in a situation 'of the utmost importance' (which they will have to defend to a board of enquiry), agents are forbidden to shoot to kill, for example. Outside Europe, though, or once the bad guys have started shooting, of course, all bets are off...

### A 'typical' Intercop

#### COP

**INT 7, REF 7 (10), CL 7, TECH 7, ATT 7, LK 6, MA 6, EMP 5, BT 6**

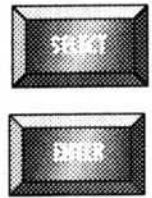
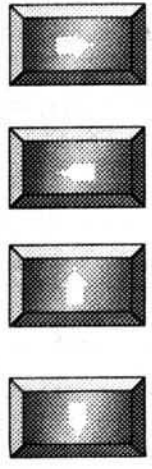
**SKILLS:** Authority +5, Handgun +6, Judo or Savate +5, Athletics +5, Awareness +2, another Language +2, Drive +4, Education +5, Expert: Criminology +4, Stealth +2, Shadow +3, Interview +5, Streetwise +3, Interrogation +4, Wardrobe/Style +5, Personal Grooming +5, Social +5

**CYBER:** Cyberoptics w/targeting; plugs; biomonitor; Sandevistan reflexes; chipped for specific skills and knowledges according to mission

**OUTFIT:** Tailored suit, kevlar vest, comlink, smartchipped autopistol

There is, of course, huge variation. Juniors are less tooled and skilled, top Intercops serious poison. Directorates also have their own traits: 1sts stress combat skills, 4ths as often wield a calculator and spreadsheet as a Beretta. The final variable is national origin: Germans have a reputation as gadget freaks, French for ruthlessness.

# LIFE IN EUROPE



## CLASS AND EUROSTYLE: LIFE AT THE TOP

Funny word, 'class', one cutting both ways. On the one hand, most non-Euros (and many Euros) asked about EuroStyle will say: classy. Razor-creased Italian silk suit, mirrored polychrome cyberoptics, the negligent assurance that's nature's equivalent of a platinum credit card.

Yeah, sure, lovely pin-up. But there's a down side. Whatever the EC WorldService net-casters may say, life in Euro isn't just about which Ferrari to buy, and a stable economy doesn't necessarily guarantee each and every citizen life, liberty and the pursuit of e-bucks.

The sumptuous lifestyle of the elite has created just that, an elite - a new technocratic aristocracy of the richest, brightest, fastest, most upwired. And it's an elite that's closing the roads up to their flashy little paradise. After all, with e-dolls you don't have to grow old like the commons, you just grow tin. You don't have to learn things the boring old organic way, you just plug in the chip.

Advanced treatments may stave off most individual cyberpsychoses, but haven't done much to heal the increasingly arrogant, aloof, aristocratic attitudes of these 'goldenboys' and 'goldengirls'. Just look at the subtle pressures of the state-controlled media to persuade the masses to accept their (benevolent, of course) guidance or, failing that, realise this is a fight they can't win. After all, these people control the EC, control the national governments, control the EuroCorps.

It's not a conspiracy, as such, just that Europe's prosperity does a good job of persuading people that it really is better: better to get out of a goldenboy's way in Bremen than starve in Bombay or be gunned down by 'dorphers in Baltimore. So there's the temptation to keep your head down, giving the top dogs the Imargin, the luxury to indulge in elitism. They can afford to be that bit

more exclusive; they don't have to be quite so ready to accept in outsiders who show The Edge; in short, they're strong enough that they probably don't need you.

Because, after all, their best really are very, very good.

If the price of stability is a rigid status quo, this threatens permanently to lock a lot of people out of the system. At least in the USA any gutterbum or triggerman can think he can cut his way to the top if he makes the grade. But in Europe the margins for non-conformity are narrow, and shrinking. EuroGov, EuroCops, EuroCorps, EuroElite - they're all quite happy with the way things are, and don't want any ambitious or idealistic outsiders rocking the boat. Consider Bermeo.

The new mood of cynicism still doesn't show much on the streets like it does in Seattle, USA (or Southampton, UK). Europeans are still too polite - or is it frightened? But it shows itself in a growing disillusion, a rejection of the eurocracy. Maybe they just lose themselves in the Once-Was (or Could-Have-Been) of Revivalism, or throw themselves into their work or maybe they just can't cope - more people die in the USA, but not at their own hand.

How long can this last? As in the States, there are signs of ferment in the streets, in the anarchic mix of violence, rock, idealism and self-interest that boils in the cracks between the corporate skyscrapers and luxury apartment blocks.

But the goldies have teeth. There's talk of creating a new public order directorate for Interpol, for example. But hell, that doesn't worry you. You're going to be up there with the best of 'em, right?

Or die trying.

### Note:

**Play goldenkids as though they own the place; they probably do.**

### Getting by at San Moritz

Face it, EuroStyle's something you've got or you haven't. But if you've got to bluff it, here are some hints. Spend at least 3,000eb on your outfit. Pavel Milano suits are good bets for both sexes this year, but remember: don't twin one with a grey tie unless you want to tell people you're gay; don't twin it with laser jewellery - just too, too Scandinavian; wear it with a belt instead of braces if you didn't go to the Sorbonne; and remember, by next year it'll be soooo dated.

And make lots of Social and Wardrobe/Style rolls: +15 if a Euro trying to impress unc cosmopolitan outsiders, +25 usually, and totally impossible if you're trying to snow goldenkids unless you're very clued-up on the ins and outs of the season, the people, the places, the expressions...

### The Bermeo Incident, 2016

Two hundred unarmed eco-protesters blockaded this holiday village when ParasCo bussed in its corporate hotshots for a junket. By the time ParasCo security stopped shooting, 127 were dead. So the Guardia Civil intervened...and charged the surviving ecos with 'obstructing a public right of way'.

The Portuguese anchorman Joao do Amaral probably put it best: 'Don't fight City Hall without a bullet-proof vest'. That was before his near-fatal car accident.

## L I F E F O R T H E C O M M O N F O L K

No such fun for the masses. For most Euros, life is virtually identical to that of corporate suburbanites and lesser corp employees State side. Nothing that exciting, not that luxurious, but it's safe, warm, well-lit, and most meals include a little natural food to spice up the soymixes and pseudos.

Euros wear disposable clothes. When most fashions only last a month or a season, why wear durables? Synthetic textiles and papercloth suits can be worn until soiled, then either sprayed with rebonder or dumped into the nearest recycling point. Otherwise, try something in a little more lasting reactant material: when a new colour hits big, just go to the autovend and pick up a vial of spraydye. Instant fashion. Rich Euros dispose too—but they buy genuine expensive clothes each time. After all, how else will people know they're rich?

Ordinary fashion is generally based on the fads and fashions of the goldenkids, a season or two later. Of course, it's all rather more simple and tamed down. When nudity with fluorescent body tatoos swept the jetset in 2018, it was transparent, tinted and painted body stockings that finally appeared in the megamarts, while the street equivalent of the orbit-grown crystal creations with which Sao Sao Sao wowed Pour Les Belles-16 was rather a series of synthetic, spray-on crystallines.

Real streetculture, though, still takes its cue from the real c-punks, with their distressed jackets (*real* leather!), spiked gloves, vidsuits and the rest. Check it out. But exotics and the most cybernetic sort of fashions really haven't taken off yet: just a bit too leading edge for good old Europe.

Euros are much less likely to drive cars than, say, North Americans. Most cities usually have extensive urban transit systems, whether overhead monorails, underground metros, computerised track-driven trams and taxis or a mix. Outside the cities, the grid of monorails is impressive and relatively cheap: the Paris-Berlin fare costs just 75 eb.

Most cars owned are either electric metrocars (Hondas and VW Semas, in particular) or small, CHOO-powered subcompacts (the VW Nogo, Fiat Atom and Toyo-Chev 273 are the market leaders, although the Yugo-Marakovka Misha's low price is making it a strong contender). Motorcycles are still popular, as well. All these are used largely for short-haul travel, leaving the vast network of major roads, built in pre-Meltdown days, often empty, dominated by the unmanned robohaulers Europeans favour.

And do remember *dreampainting* - it's not just a French fashion. It started as a goldenkid fad, a conscious desire to build a legend, a life that is a monument to ambition. This has percolated down to the masses. Sure, some Portuguese sanitary tech hardly has the opportunity of some multimega inheritor, but he'll most likely have some abiding passion or hobby, some ambition he hopes one day to fulfil. Find out what it is, and you may have the key to his heart—or the tool to wreck his life.

## G O O N S , G A N G S A N D G U R U S

Some go even further, seeking escape in the fads, movements and crazies thrown up by the often explosive mix of sharp wealth gradients, helter-skelter social and technological change, and the suffocating dominance of the goldenkids. Some are common, such as the Nihilists, Chromers and Posers. Others, though, are Euro through and through...



## MAXIMALISTS

Crime is still rife - especially in underdeveloped and unstable areas like Britain, Greece and southern Italy. Here Maximalism has emerged, vigilantes like US Guardians (and usually with the tacit support of the authorities) hunting down and executing criminals real and suspected. A vicious, low-key war where the boundary between enforcing the law and settling old scores is all too easily crossed; a fun game for all the family: solos kill, rocker-boys and medias smear, techs sabotage, net-runners deckduel...

## MEATBOYS

Meatboys reject fashionable grafting of metal onto meat, the cyborgation of humanity. With the gang-mentality of boosters, the intolerance of Inquisitors and their own brand of madness, they use all sorts of training, drugs and transplants to enhance their bodies, then hit the streets to prove the superiority of flesh over cyber in combat - from gang war to individual acts of provocation and murder.

The typical recruit, from a lower-class family, often made unemployed by newtech, starts training in underground gyms. Distinguishing himself, he'll begin to receive muscle-building steroids and, for combat, 'Serker drugs like Black Lace and 'Dorph, hoping one day to build up the rep and the cash for underground muscle graft ops.

## REVIVALISTS

In a time of kaleidoscopic change, many prefer to find some sort of spiritual anchor in the past. These Revivalists fasten on to a period of history - real or mythical - and try to revive its values, manners and often even dress. To some this is little more than a harmless hobby, to others a complete way of life.

Some are effectively semi-clandestine political societies, such as the notorious neo-fascist **Neues Reich** and the Greek meatboy/revivalist **Spartans**. Others are essentially circles of shared values and interests, with revivalism just an expression of these bonds. The **Hansa**, for example, is a group of

### Muscle Grafting

Why don't other people use purely biological synthsteroids to build up their bodies? Probably because it's illegal, dangerous, expensive and erratic. A month-long course in an underground clinic costs upwards of 4,000eb, and may, *may* increase Body Type by one point. This takes *three* +20 Med Tech rolls for the surgeon: to succeed in increasing BT, to avoid infection (taking another 10-60 days to get over, costing 200eb a day), and to avoid complications: minus one to INT (brain damage), REF (nerve damage), ATT (serious scarring - 'we offer special rates on plastic surgery, this month') or MA (muscle damage). A second course (whether or not the first worked) is a +25 roll, the third +30...

It doesn't have to be this crude, though. If you've got some cash to burn, and an aversion to metal, look at the chapter on MedTechs (page 44)



northern German and Scandinavian industrialists lobbying for the development of Baltic sea routes and happy to indulge in some fancy-dress after-hours drinking in its name.

Most are in between, combining the outward forms with a general belief in the period's ideals. The genteel middle-class French *Jeunesse Dorée*, excluded from the real elite, happily fritter away their e-bucks in sport and play. But the New Conquistadores still nurture a dream of a new Spanish economic empire in West Africa and South America.

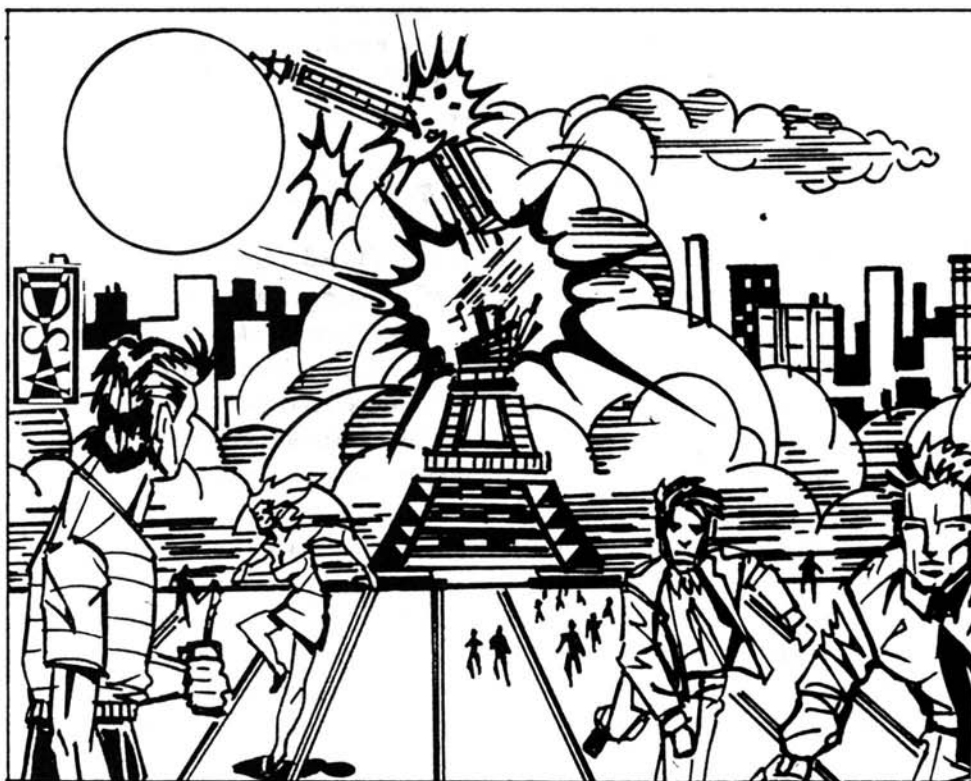
### FIGHTING BACK: ANTI-EC TERROR

What really worries the eurocrats is the steady increase in terrorism and random anarchy. As the channels of political power are dammed, as the big monopolies steadily step up their attack on the independent media, what else do you do? You give up and watch europap on the vid, or you get angry. Lot of angry people, these days.

### SEPARATIST AND NATIONALISTS

One source of violence is the desperation of separatist groups to break out of the smothering grip of the EC. Just as the EC is pretty good at redistributing Europe's wealth into the Swiss and Scandinavian bank accounts of the rich, it effectively perpetuates German/French colonisation of weaker satellite economies. See how far 'European brotherhood' and your Deutschebank Infinitycard® get you when your latest model Mercedes 940SLC breaks down outside Prague or Bucharest.

The IRA remains one of the old perennials, with a traditional base in Eire and Northern Ireland, and a fine old heritage. But there is also the new nationalist movement 3000, that is uniting the New Central European undergrounds with its calls for a withdrawal from the EC and confiscation of foreign assets. 3000 concentrates on sabotaging EC



and corp installations and the execution of local 'quisling' administrators. A third example would be the Basque separatist movement **ETA**, reformed after the Spanish government's decision to transfer funds from rebuilding Bilbao after the '97 quake to developing a new sports complex in Madrid for the 2008 Olympics.

## TERRANOSTRALAW

Let's face it, the Earth is a mess. Overflowing radioactive slag dumps. Dustbowls. Polluted seas. City smog that will pit your windshield. Why not sign a petition, slap a 'right-on' sticker in your window, and put a few euro into a good cause?

For some this just isn't enough. In environmentalist martyr Paolo Cavour's words, "This is a war for the soul of the planet - and in war you don't take prisoners". Cavour died of the bullet wounds he received while successfully mining the Hamburg-Bratislava pipeline the day before it began pumping nuclear waste into underground storage. Before he died, he faxed an impassioned declaration 'On the Fundamental Duties of Mankind' to a radical TV station.

This has become the gospel of a small, but growing band of young, dedicated and resourceful eco-terrorists committed to fighting the despoilers of the earth with their own methods, their own tools. Every month, it seems, a prominent corporate agronomist dies at the hand of a sniper, or another university student gets cut down by security, trying to break into an open-cast mine with a home-made thermite bomb.

## CRIMINALS

The crime syndicates being edged out by the EC - increasingly indistinguishable from a huge, international mafia itself - are also turning more and more to violence in their fight for survival. But there are also more

grassroots groups, such as **La Nuova Mafia**. While the 'real' Mafia got respectable, moving into offshore banking and data brokerage, the old traditions were being revived in southern Italy in resistance to poverty and 'foreign' rule. From bombings to kidnappings, they formed an uneasy cross between a political movement and a crime family.

The authorities are hardly helpless. Interpol handles major, transnational crimes like terrorism and big-time corporate misdeeds, but the rest is up to national governments. On the whole Europe is almost as lax as the USA over narcotics (bar those *engineered* for violent reactions or total dependence) and gun licenses. Though permits are quite easy to get, think twice before using ironmongery: while self-defence is still a valid defence, the cops don't like anyone spilling blood on their nice, clean streets.

This, after all, is one of the underlying facts about crime in Europe. There's less of it than in the States, and it is generally less violent, so Europeans can be rather more relaxed about policing. Prisons are adequate, though troublesome offenders are still likely to end up in braindance. Top security inmates are held in Interpol detention centres, and the Kirk Michael Maximum Security Facility on the Isle of Man has the dubious distinction of the world's greatest concentration of mass murderers in its cryo tanks, plus air and sea defences to make the Pentagon's mouth water.

Exile is also handled differently, in part because the governments in Europe still count for something, and ID cards do still get checked. Offenders can be banned from specific countries or the EC as a whole. Get caught sneaking back, and you may be introduced to that particularly European tradition, the *bodyfine*: one or more organs are

## Gun Law

Permits for light and medium pistols and non-autofire hunting rifles (like the Militech *Plainsman*, semi-auto version of the *Ronin*) and shotguns are freely available: the procedure is equivalent to that in the USA. These weapons can be carried fairly freely, though in most civilized areas loading a subgun will get you a lot of attention, especially from the cops. A basic firearms permit is needed to buy or wear

*Metalgear*, similar military-quality armour, or for a smartgun link, *cybersnake* or built-in light weapon.

Heavy pistols, light SMGs and autoshotguns require a *Just Needs Permit*: for corporate security and police types, this is just a formality.

Others will have to wait 4-6 weeks and will need to have a record free of serious criminal convictions (know a good *netrunner*, *triggerboy*?). Registered bounty hunters usually pack a *JNP*.

A *Secure Weapons Permit* is needed for anything heavier (including such gross cyberweapons as a *minimissile*), generally restricting it to those who clearly need it in the context of their work and who can demonstrably keep the weapon safe when not in use. But believe it or not, some people don't follow the rules.



removed for the banks, and replaced with old, cheap or diseased ones.

As for *CorpoCops*, they do not, strictly speaking, have the same general powers of patrol, arrest and mass slaughter as in the USA. In practice, fat chance. *Corps* mean money, and money has always had a fairly cosy relationship with legality. Where local *corps* and the authorities get on, their security will have been granted 'powers of deputy' giving it the status of police so long as there are no real cops around. This heightens the usual rivalries. In a firefight it's often worth the *corps'* while wasting police 'by accident' lest they arrest targets the *Corp* wants dead. And the police know this, only too well.

But there are still some sharp contrasts within the EC. Britain is, as ever, the exception and boasts slums and *DMZs* as lethal as anything the US can offer, with race riots, turf rumbles, tong wars and *corp-clashes*. Policing is very North American in style, with paramilitary cops backed by a harsh and summary code of laws.

## WPC SARAH MACKENZIE

Woman Police Constable MacKenzie is a typical British beat cop from *TyneTees Metroforce*. Her army-surplus SA-80 assault rifle is conveniently short and won't get in her way riding shotgun in the squad's armoured sedan. The X-9mm on her hip is standard issue, but she also carries a personal favourite, an *Armalite 44* with customized grips in a shoulder rig over her flak vest. In her 4-cop squad there will be two rifle cops: the driver (with a subgun, typically an *MPK-14*) and one with a shotgun (able to fire *teargas* rounds).

## COP BRITISH

INT 6, REF 8, CL 10, TECH 5, ATT 5,  
LK 2, MA 7, EMP 3, BT 7

CYBER: plugs; cyberoptics w/target, l-lite

SKILLS: Authority +4, Handgun +6,  
Rifle +6, Streetwise +5, Melee

+5, Interrogate +4, Intimidate +6, Brawling +6

**OUTFIT:** SA-80 smartgun, X-9mm, Armalite 44, fighting knife, flak vest, kevlar helmet with visor and integral radio, gas mask

Remember: Britain is still under martial law, so don't waste your time bleating for a lawyer or a phone call. If you're caught (and survive as far as the police station) you go in front of the Emergency Powers Magistrate. If he says you walk, you walk. If he says you die, you die.

In most European countries, though, policing is less urgent and violent. In the median law countries - Italy, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Eire and France - cops are likely to at least consider alternatives to lethal force, and the national legal system still clings to some of those old 20th Century values, like innocence until proof of guilt.

### **UFF. ETTORE GIANFRANCHI**

Officer Gianfranchi is a member of the Milan police force. His uniform includes a kevlar armourjacket, tailored for inconspicuous protection. He has a holstered Beretta 97 autopistol, but in usual circumstances uses his Luigi Franchi P.16 riot gun to fire baton rounds, though he carries loose flechette and AP slugs in a handy pocket. One member of his 4-cop team also carries a H&K MPK-9 subgun, but for real firepower they call on the paramilitary *Carabinieri*. In a special cargo pocket he carries a pocket computer, loaded with an updated file of wanted felons and scheduled events in the city, as well as the current criminal code.

#### **COP ITALIAN**

**INT 6, REF 7, CL 9, TECH 5, ATT 5,  
LK 3, MA 7, EMP 6, BT 6**

**CYBER:** 1 cyboptic w/image enhancement

**SKILLS:** Authority +4, Handgun +6, Rifle +4, Streetwise +4, Melee +3, Interrogate +4, Expert: criminology +2, Judo +4

**OUTFIT:** P.16 shotgun, Beretta 97 smartgun, smart-goggles, baton, radio, medium armourjacket, pocket computer

In Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Austria, though, crime is less pressing and high-tech (networks of computer-cameras on the streets, firearms detectors in every bank, etc) allows an even more laid-back approach. The cop becomes less a streetfighter, more a tech. These countries even allow themselves the luxury of *rehabilitating* criminals. Bizarre!

### **PZO HANS ULF-JAHREN**

Police officer Ulf-Jahren pounds a beat in Austria's second city, Graz. Pounds? Well, he and his partner patrol in a lightweight, environment-friendly electric car with a real-time video-link with the main police computer. Anything the computer's videos pick up can be transmitted to the car and vice-versa. For self-defence he carries a holstered X-9mm, while the car also carries a Minami-10 loaded with rubber bullets. More usually, though, he uses his incapacitating tearstick.

#### **COP AUSTRIAN**

**INT 6, REF 7, CL 8, TECH 8, ATT 5,  
LK 4, MA 7, EMP 5, BT 5**

**CYBER:** Plugs, MRAM chips for Law Code +1 and an updated list of wanted names and faces, cyberear w/recorder option

#### **Weapon**

##### **Luigi Franchi P.16**

SHG • 1 • J • R • 4d6 (00) • 20 • 10 • ST

A short and stubby autoshotgun, generally used for security work and marketed as a 'restraint rifle' since it can also fire incapacitating baton rounds and gas shells.

#### **CyberPsycho Squads**

Cyberpsychosis is much less a feature of Continental life than in the States: less metal, more bucks to blow on treatment to ease its installation. But cyber is becoming increasingly common, and within a few years the police will have to start forming their own Psycho Squads. For the moment, though, there is no US-style registration, no specialized squads—just some poor grunts in the paramilitary arm of the police who keep getting the crazies.

## Option:

**EuroNetics**

If you want, you can simulate the effects of the less developed state of local cyber by simply upping the price of everything beyond basic plugs, chips and simple (one-function) optics and audio by 10-60%.

Anything bought through an ordinary shopfront outfit may also be unreliable: 5% crap out at the most inconvenient moment possible in the first month, though the store will then replace it. Fancy stuff - body plating, reflex boosters - need corp or government labs or a trip to Scandinavia.

## Atraumatic Enhancement

So how do I get to use these fancy Scandinavian clinics?

Cultivate the right contacts. Then be ready to pay double usual cost for the op, with an additional fee of at least 750eb per max possible humanity point loss. Then, rolling for humanity point loss, roll the same dice again and subtract the second figure from the first for actual point lost (you can't regain points lost previously). If you're lucky, there's no humanity cost.

**SKILLS:** Authority +4, Handgun +4, Streetwise +4, Melee +3, Interrogate +5, Expert: Criminology +6, Aikido +3

**OUTFIT:** X-9mm, tearstick (truncheon with integral AKM PowerSquirt, loaded with 10 doses of KO compound), armour t-shirt, radio

**C Y B E R T E C H**

Buy a synthiflesh sleeve for that chromed, copper-traced HotMetal™ arm. Sure, it's the latest fashion in downtown Night City, but Europeans prefer subtle to gross, and some of them might have the time and the ability to point this out to you in some back alley.

So forget everything you heard on the other side of the Atlantic. Optics are fine. Plugs, reflex chips, MRAM - no problem, though plug heads are seen as pretty bad taste. Ever since high collars came back in fashion, the neck has become quite popular, but most play safe and slot their wrists. Aversion to overt cyber also affects dress sense. Techhair, synthskins and chemskins are all very rare: hot metal outfits are daring, flash, but look too tech and you stand out. But you don't mind that, do you?

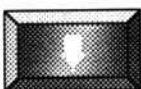
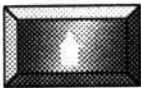
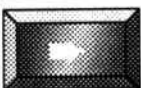
As for cyberlimbs, appreciate the statement chrome makes. In the States, it's simple: I'm hip, got the bucks; wanna make something of it? In Europe, though, you're fineline walking. With a Schroeder's suit, subtly set off with an orbit-grown pearl bracelet, just getting out of your Ferrari *Pantera*, no problem: not just rich, *that* rich I don't have to worry what you think. Great, if you can swing it, but if not, you risk looking like every eurovid thriller's idea of an American hitter. Or worse still, like some poor invalid without the insurance for a proper graft. Bad PR.

One of the reasons why Euros aren't so sold on wholesale cybergrafting is that on the whole their hardware isn't up to US/Japanese standards, and the marketing is pure stone age. The only Europe-wide chain is a German franchise outfit, *Urbemensch*, which really sticks to optics, plugs and chipware. The service is bad, the hardware dubious (one in twenty short out within a month!) and the slogan ('We can help you be someone else') less than snappy.

The only thing going for *Urbemensch* is that it's a subsid of the German state industrial group, with government backing to use the EC machinery to enforce monopoly. With monotonous regularity, *Bodyshoppe*, *Docs R Us*, etc, try to move in, only to be forced out by punitive export taxes or media campaigns. Until, that is, the newly-assertive French chose this pretext to flex their political muscle. Last year *Urbemensch's* entire launch batch of their new *NightHawk™* optic had to be recalled due to an unfortunate tendency to strobe randomly from normal to IR in the rain. In the recriminations, a French E-Commissioner managed to license European subsidies to three big US and Japanese firms, so rich Euros soon won't have to go to the States or Scandinavia for decent cybertech.

But they still have access to the (incredibly expensive) black clinics of Scandinavia and Switzerland that specialize in easing the marriage of meat and metal. The e-bucks keep cyberpsychosis at bay for the elite, washed away in a steady stream of gene-tailored pseudohormones and Finnish vodka.

# ROLES IN EUROPE



Come on in, room for everyone. Rockerboys, solos, fixers, we've got the lot here in Europe. But it's not just about different accents. Whatever role you play, you better know how the streets go, over here. You see, we expect you to play it our way. Capisci?

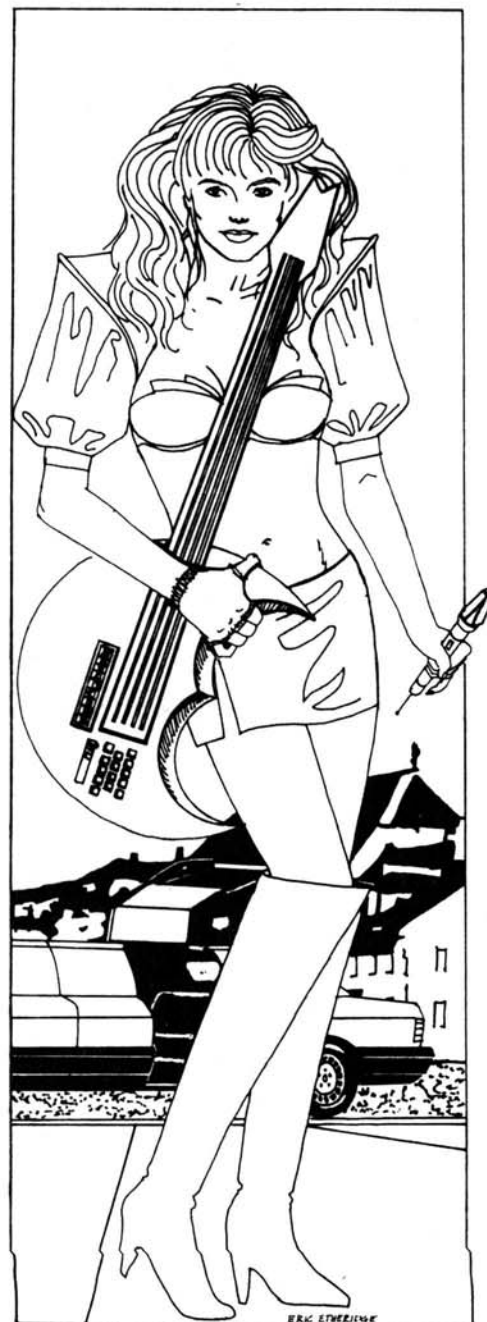
When generating European characters, remember the far more developed level of compulsory education on the Continent. Bar the most out-system of nomads and streetscum, all receive a bonus of +2 to Education and General Knowledge and +1 in another European language, but one less point each in Pickup and Career Skills.

## ROCKIN' EURO

It's only rock and roll? We are talking about emotions here, and emotions are always dangerous. They can neither be controlled nor predicted with full accuracy. We underestimate them at our peril.'

—Major Raul Wiener, Interpol, comment at  
4th European Security  
Conference, Oostende, 2018

In the US it's quite straightforward: you're with The Man, or you're against him. You're riding high on a corporate mealticket, with wall-to-wall media coverage and a stretch limo inclusive, or you're an indie—maybe the shining star of the week, maybe an insignificant nobody scrimping to save for a new amp, but at least with your morals intact.



**'It's only rock and roll? Watch us rock and roll those euroscum into the Atlantic, kid!**

**—Papa Manuel, interviewed  
in Rock Europe**

In Europe, though, it all gets a bit more complicated. There are the big entertainment corps, of course, and the underground/independent scene, too. But there are also EC World-Service and EuroVision; big boys, churning out an endless stream of sanitised europap/europop, national styles, languages and cultures synthesized into bland, lowest-common denominator muzak/music chock full of the sort of messages the eurocrats want their people to hear. How good life in Europe is, how well-run, how content everyone should be. Sign on with the EC Entertainments Service and you won't get the glitzy life of a corporate megastar, but you'll be safe and comfortable; even when you can't cut it on the vid circuit any more, they'll find you a cosy little job taping jingles or filling a chair in morning chat shows.

National governments sometimes have music and entertainments industries, usually arms of their media services. The BBC's *Britannia* label, for example, is pretty much an independent medium-sized music corp only just beginning to branch out into braindance. But *Deutschestimme* has a rather dubious rep for its role in Berlin's drive for renewed political dominance in Europe. Under its single-minded director Dr. Gabi Volle, in the past five years it has been signing up bands with overtly nationalist messages, from the comparatively subtle *Gewalt* to Arbeit MacFrei's neo-fascist chromatic rock'n'stompers *Sturm 39*.

As always, though, the real heat and life is on the indie circuit. Three times the Intercops have tried to catch *Brown Brown Fox*; three times a mob of crazed fans have pushed them back, with fifteen year old girls pulling powercutters on riot armoured snatchsquaddies, and twenty year old bank clerks pulling molotovs out of lunch boxes. And while no one's tried to arrest T K Philippe, yet, it's not because he's well liked. Just how do you arrest a punk-retro poet whose latest lines appear as virus programmes writing themselves over public info databases? Rather more innocuous, pirate

laserdisks of the afro-go-go dance group *Rub-a-dub* change hands for over 75eb apiece, but the six have shrugged off every offer to sign up with a corp.

Indies in Europe try to stay self-contained. Even the smallest one-synth-and-an-axe outfit will have a couple of solid friends lined up who know something about disk-cutting or sound digitising. Subversive solo artists, street poets and actors are especially big: less backup, fewer people into trouble, more mobile in case of a quick shift. Cynics say the EC is happy to see a few daring street happenings, an innocuous safety valve to blow off a little steam. But much less often since last year's Schwabing Riots when *Vulkan Underground*'s fiery poetry aroused a labour exchange queue to violence, triggering a night of rioting and looting. That *Vulkan* was shortly after sprung from the Rottweil Penitentiary suggests either some pretty chill organisation, or sympathisers on the inside.

S O L O S

So, you're a street samurai, a triggerboy, a go-gunner, chipped beef. Lean, mean and wired to the max. You've dodged tracers in Panama, traded APs in Night City and kicked ass in LA. From when you first flicked steel in a back street in Baltimore to your tour in the Cat Cultists, you've been in the thick of whatever buzz is going down. The Euros are crying out for you, right?

Wrong. In the US solos are bred by the street, clawing their way up from the gutter, learning their tradecraft in a dirty, vicious slice of social evolution. In Europe they learn it at school.

Selected, usually after degree-level education, eurosolos are then trained, equipped and groomed for operations Europe-style. A tour as a security op in a domestic posting to get some basic experience, a little cyber and a tour as a corpcop in a North African facility for

The Amnesty Massacre, 1997

Every rocker has the date 1997 etched in his or her skull, but it means most for the euro crowd. When nery officials tried to arrest Rockerboy Manson because his lyrics got a little close to the knuckle, the fans rioted and the final death toll was estimated at over 500.

Those news pix of MetroPolice gunships screaming out of the smoke, rotor to rotor, gunpods blazing, have been played on a hundred vidprogs, made into posters for thousands of walls. People remember. (And yes, when *Akka Merkur* used that title for their platinum album, everyone knew what they were on about)

So in Europe rockers have had a real taste of what state power can do, and are more hostile to the EC than the corps. They're also more worried about getting innocents caught up in the crossfire. Live gigs tend to be more careful, the lyrics more coded, the street poets' message less explosive. The aim, after all, is just to start people thinking, to buy the disks and tune into the pirate radio and vid stations where the word is really being pumped.

Every now and then a pirate station bounces its signal off the wrong comsat, gets traced and shut down. One source of subversive disks gets ten at the nearest max-sec penitentiary. But there are always more ready to step in, and most European rockers do their own promo work, or help cut disks, or generally get involved not just in the message, but the nuts and bolts of its distribution.

They have to be.  
It's them or The Man...



**Working for the BIG corp**

The EC is increasingly indistinguishable from a huge grand-daddy of a megacorp. It certainly holds true here: promising recruits are talent-spotted at university and vocational school and brought onto the strength of EC and national solo forces: EC security units, governments' secret services, etc.

**Cybercircle**

A network of top eurosolos who hone their skills and gild their reputations by competing in (usually) non-lethal contests of skill and wit, hunting and then challenging randomly-selected rivals to first blood. The Angels, on the other hand, are in a different league entirely. Who are they? Are they really based at Crystal Palace? Ask them...if you can find them.

**Sure, when I'm hunting, metal comes in handy. And a big gun, but as long as it's reliable—the specs don't tilt the scales. No, the real edge, the one that counts, that's in my skull. Don't be a squat; course I'm not talking boosterware. I'm talking smarts. Think about it, deadmeat.**

— AP, bounty hunter



some blood and adrenalin experience. A spell as a bodyguard or security advisor to get a handle on the political aspects of the job, then proper wet work: extractions, assassinations, whatever.

Pension plans, corporate insurance discounts, the works.

Not everyone is happy with life as a corporate, card-punching killer. Sometimes they can't stomach the corrupt arrogance of the corpscene. Sometimes they just don't get on with authority. Sometimes they're lined up for sacrifice in the corporate good ("Hell, Dieter, nothing personal, it's just that we're way, way over budget this quarter.") and don't see the upside. Sometimes they just don't like wearing a tie.

After all, there is still lots of room for the independents. 'Deniable' ops: working for 'personal' clients; crime: the market's there if you know how to play it.

For one thing, this tends to mean having a contact, a midman, or an agent. In the big leagues it's still seen as somehow unprofessional to deal direct with the triggerboys rather than through a cutout. Silly, maybe, archaic, almost certainly, but for some reason Europe doesn't seem to think it needs to change its etiquette just for you..

It also means subtlety. A stylish, graceful chromed cyberarm may be OK if you don't mind advertising your trade. A polychrome optic is downright cool. But a heavy, open-frame cyberleg with an obvious autopistol 'holster' is crass, and just asking for trouble.

If you're in Europe, you should also remember that the police exist and people still have a quaint attachment to the law. If you're the type who keeps getting into fights, consider investing in some non-lethal jelly rounds or a can of gas. Failing that, get chipped for e-law.

After all, the archetypal eurosolo is no borged-out cybergrunt or bare-chested soldier of fortune, nor even an Edge-gripping adrenalin junkie. They take their cue from the near-mythical elite of the Cybercircle and the Angels: shrewd businessmen, educated aristocrats of combat, honourable and cultivated artists of death. It's a model very few live up to, but it hangs over every serious 'establishment' solo's head. Even the triggerboys handling the really heavy work who've got time in Naf or Britain keep their shirts on, and their metal arms shrouded in synthiflesh.

And there's a flip side. Solos who consciously reject this model and the mannered ways of war in Euro are likely to be the filthiest, meanest scum around. You might not want your sister (or brother) to marry one, but they've got their uses, too.

If you're hiring muscle or looking for work, there's no end of places to go. At one end are the big boys. Global guns'n'mercs combine **Militech** has offices all over, and a subsid called **Direct Security Services** handling small scale work in Europe (body-guarding, extractions, etc). Given its Athens base, it's no surprise that DSS subcontracts a lot of work to aspiring foreigners. If you like a little finesse with the firepower, there is always **Arasaka**, riding high on the news that it has secured the contract to replace the Luxembourgish army outright for a five year trial period. A lot of Europeans still prefer to look to other Euros, though, and **Heckler & Koch Security Services IG** still finds a ready market for its predominantly German and NCE mercs. Americans need not apply.

Of course, governments have muscled into the merc scene. The **French Foreign Legion** will hire almost anyone, to do any job, but they have a reputation for brutality and leaving a lot of collateral damage behind. The British **Special Air Service** is good, and much more

selective, but correspondingly more expensive. If you really don't have much spare cash, though, you could always try the Turkish government's **JanissarCo**. Turkish troops may be poorly equipped, badly disciplined, scarcely trained and barely motivated, but they *are* cheap. Very cheap:

Then there are a lot of small operators. Along with **Trauma Team™** (big in Germany and Italy) and **REO Meatwagon** (Germany, Spain, Portugal), there is the **SOS Recovery** network that unites a lot of smaller companies with city, regional or national franchises. A typical one is **Au Secours**, which holds both trauma service and private police franchises for all of Paris. A team in a Dassault **Aigle Aero** guarantee to respond to a broken trauma card or SOSBooth alarm within d6+2minutes. Au Secours is always looking for competent solos with a command of French and full work visas.

**N E T R U N N E R S**

Netrunning in Europe is conditioned by the EuroNet that links centres in the EC, Scandinavia and European Russia in an advanced, complex telecom grid, albeit one rather more regulated than its North American counterpart, and dominated by government and corporate traffic.

NetWatch is strongly represented in the EuroNet, and in each main city the three largest e-corps are licensed by Interpol to carry out their own security ops. These corps get bounties, so there is a constant pressure for their netops departments to become profit centres. Hacking also isn't so much of a way of life in Europe (if for no other reason than the deterrent effect of the security of the EuroTheatre kingdom), and indies are more likely to be known and recorded by NetWatch. Finally, the Interpol's Third Directorate has its own police role protecting EC databases, riding shotgun on many primary EC systems and datalinks.

**SOSBooths**

SOSBooths can be seen in most major cities, armoured cubes some 2.5m a side, topped with SOS's distinctive white hand on blue. Up to 4 people can shelter in one and, on placing a card in the internal slot with enough credit to cover the area's charge, the armoured door will swing shut and seal. They will then be in direct radio contact with an SOS dispatcher, and can request medical and/or security services from the local SOS franchise holder. The booth is armoured to 40 SP, and a rescue can cost anything from 1,000 eb, plus the cost of ammo and med services.

**Dassault-Futures Aigle Aeromobile**

French-built rival to the AV-4, widely used in Europe and exported to South America and Africa. Slightly lighter and faster, instead of miniguns (which tend to chew up the architecture something rotten), an **Aigle** in Europe will probably be armed with a twin-barrel 7.62mm MG in a TV-aimed chin-mount and 4 tear gas and smoke bombs on stub wings. A tail-mounted defence pod auto-deploys heatseeker-scrambling magnesium flares and ECM in case of attack. It has a crew of 2 (pilot and commander/gunner) and can carry another 5 fully-armed grunts and/or medics. Performance: Max Airspeed 575 kph; Operational Radius 600 km; Armour 35 SP; SDP 85

**Note:**

One snag: in some of the largest, oldest corps and government offices it is a mark of prestige to still use paper documents rather than keep everything on computer. These Euros!



**"What, you mean alter the data?  
Actually change it? When I'm not meant to?  
Oh no, I wouldn't do that."**

**"No, I suppose you wouldn't. Still, at  
least it keeps you mundanes out of our part  
of the Net. Do me a favour."**

**"Yes?"**

**"Go away."**

**— Overheard at Thirtieth  
ComputerFest, Leipzig, 2019**

US netrunners may be surprised at the mediocrity of many but their top European counterparts. 'Running isn't such an artform this side of the world, and a lot of the undoubted security of the EuroTheatre kingdom is due not so much to the quality of the security as the quantity. Intercop runners are especially stolid, many just rookies, sent out to log on some time in the real world before coming home to sysop a Brussels mainframe. If a 'runner can't outwit, outrun or, if it comes to that, outfight one then he really should get out of the Net and stick to cheating at *DataDemon*. Indeed, this is one area where there are some genuine opportunities for foreigners to break into some lucrative jobs.

'Runners face real dangers in the neighbouring SovSpace and Scandinavian Bloc nets which, for separate reasons, are no friends of the hacker. The Soviets lag in interface tech and, having invested a lot in finally developing a national Net, get pretty paranoid about the idea of experienced Western 'runners, hacking since nursery, playing tag through the *Gosupravset*' (State Administration Network): they have enough trouble coping with home-grown chicanery and wheeler-dealing. Since one of the main pillars of the Scandinavian economy is no-questions-asked banking and secure black data storage, they don't plan on losing their reputation for discretion.

The Scands pay top rates to get the latest counter-intrusions software, the hottest deck jockeys. The Soviets, on the other hand, realise they can't hope for finesse and put their faith in black programmes to fry international hackers and, for internal security, high-powered *Bloodhounds* and rapid-response teams of humourless policemen in jetchoppers.

**T E C H I E S**

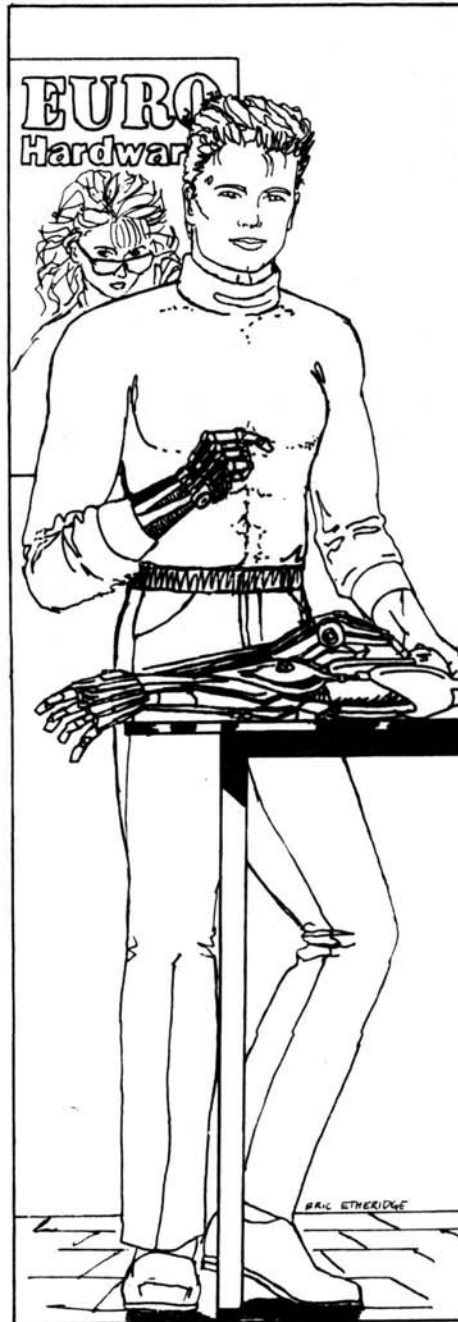
The twenty-first century is the scrounge and tinker age, in Europe as anywhere else. More so, in a way, since a lot of European household tech lags behind its US equivalent, so techs usually also pick up a profitable sideline retrofitting Japanese microprocessors and American control systems into domestically produced hardware.

Another growth area is power-piracy. Shortages caused by the MidEast Meltdown were bad enough, but since 2016 the EC and the main national governments - with large, often majority holdings in all the big power firms - have been using supplies to turn the screws on the corps, pushing up prices and imposing random power cuts and 'dribble downs'. Power is, well, power - and techies are the natural people to turn to if you can't or won't pay. Maybe he can tap into a corporate supply, or get you an override coder giving you priority access to the grid as if you were a police station or politico's mistress.

Either way, the techie makes some friends - and hopes to avoid making some very bad enemies. A couple of years ago the main private power corp - *Elektrizitätswerkverband IG* - was incriminated in the deaths of a round dozen power pirates, all fried by electricity. And they say corps don't have a sense of humour.

**Let me get this right. I retroed in Ishira control systems, backed them up with Yank airforce chips. I replaced that Spanish drek with a proper interface jack just off the strat from Chiba. And you don't like the colour?**

— Mad Margriet, Amsterdam



**Dribble Down**

Despite a big investment in nuclear power, solar receptors and wind and wave arrays, Europe still doesn't produce enough power to meet its prodigious energy needs. Hence many areas are subject to sporadic power cuts and 'dribble downs' when power supplies are reduced by 10-50%. If you're rich, or corporate, you've got your own aux generator, or batteries. If you're government, you've priority. If you're just an ordinary sap in the street, your fridge starts overheating, your vid dims and if you're really unlucky all the electric doors in your house lock open or shut.

Doesn't that really burn you up? What are you going to do about it?

**New Skill: BioTech**

Basic knowledge of the hows, whys and whats of bioengineering. To actually do any engineering, the character also needs relevant Expert knowledges such as *DNA*, *Pseudohormones* or *Drug Synthesis*. Extra IP Cost = +15

## Bioengineering and you...

A tech only just coming into its own, vidlick fantasy to most, tending to be vastly expensive to set up, and requiring skills beyond most characters.

Nevertheless, biotech offers some possibilities. A set of **DIYdrug combinants** costs anything from 14,000 eb, and will provide the basis for seven full-strength doses. Worth noting is that they can be used to simulate the effects of specific addictives, and so stave off withdrawal without adverse effects, although this can only be done for two months in a row before the body develops a tolerance. The set gives a -3 to the difficulty of the pharmaceutical operation.

A flask of **bandage** could quite literally save your life. It stimulates the body's healing systems into overdrive and improves Wound State by one over an hour's fevered coma. This is, however, a very serious system shock to the body and the character must make a Stun Save or lose a permanent 1 point of BODY and REF. The flask will also cost at least 2,500 eb.

Less extreme, but with ultimately more dramatic potential is the prospect of **DNA Skills**, chemically hardwired directly into the body's memory. One day this may supplant APTR and MRAM, but at the moment a month long course costing 10,000+ eb may manage to implant +1 in a skill in which a character has no previous training. Still, it's a start...

Finally, biotechs are beginning to bring **body enhancement** out of the meatboys' backstreet chopshops and into the labs. There are discreet (read, expensive) places around Malmo, Oslo and Riga where rather less crude techniques are being refined to raise BT, REF or MA by a maximum of two points each. For 4,000 eb plus, for example, they put you through a sadistically exacting regime combining grafting, pseudohormones, metasterooids and hard training. After a month, if the biotech makes an AVERAGE skill roll, the stat will have been increased by 1-2 points (this can raise stats to 12). The character will then be discharged, but will have to continue eating a lot, taking follow-up medications and exercising at least an hour a day for three months or the effect wears off in 1-6 months. This is a very tough, very uncomfortable programme, and the character must make an AVERAGE CL check every month to keep going, modified by half either his Resist Torture/Drugs skill or a supportive friend's EMP.

Note that having lots of metal already grafted onto your meat does raise the danger of tissue rejection. Each 5 HL means -1 to the biotech's success roll: body enhancement and bioware just don't mix

## M E D T E C H I E S

Where Europe does shine, though, is in biotech. This is at the heart of the unique techniques of the clinics which minimize the danger of cyberpsychosis with a sophisticated battery of synthetic antirejection hormones, chemical paraDNA and psychosomatic stimulants, and the new generation of 'DIYdrugs,' which allow the user to mix basic components to customize effects and durations to meet the whim of the moment.

Hence, in Europe *Medtechies* work alongside *Biotechies*. Meds are basically mechanics - they'll plug in the cybernetics, patch over the bullet holes, replace your retinas with ones that aren't already familiar to every police and corpcop computer in the Net. Bios, on the other hand, work on this new frontier of technology and specialise in getting your body to do things for you. You don't inject nanoids - you get the body to build its own.

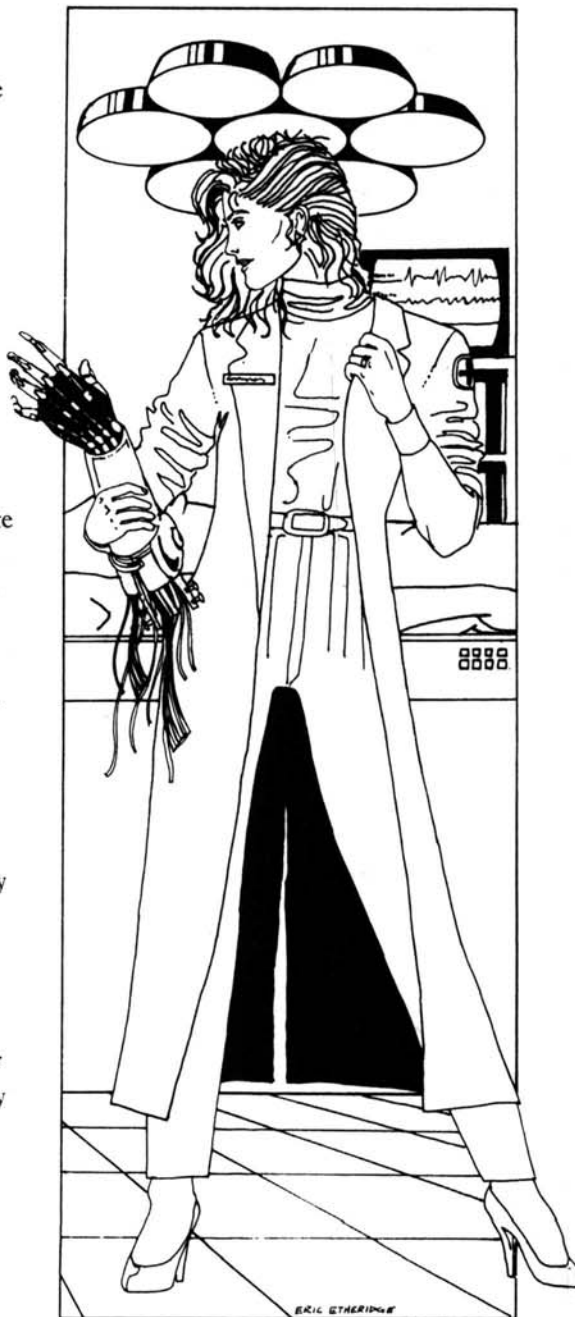
Frankly, they can do a hell of a lot: stimulate a body to heal in half the time; grow new retinas; whip up some unique reedrugs guaranteed safe, nonaddictive, and out of this world. They need resources, though: a lot more than other techies. You can't just bio-engineer DNA skills in the back of a Yugo Marakovka range truck; you don't fit a pseudohormone lab in a nylon carryall.

In many ways, in fact, biotechies don't really fit into the disposable, use'n'move ways of the true cyberpunk. They need labs, sterile conditions, stable power supplies. So most are wageslaves, clocking in with a government, corp or mob. Those few making their own living out on the streets have to be very good, very well connected and very lucky.

What's biotech? You want it in a word?

Wassa matter, when they stuck that plug in your skull, they forget to put some brains there? Still, I'll skillssoft you, rattledome. Magic, that's biotech.

— Mr Sad-Bad-Mad, Rogue biotech  
(deceased)



## M E D I A S

Like Rockers, Medias in Europe are caught in the DMZ between indies, corps, national governments and the EC nets. The EC's EuroVision, and EC WorldService, have big budgets and a clear mission to 'educate and inform': in other words push the line of how rosy life can be under the eurocrats. Whether on the newsspots, with their oh-so-subtle bias, to the rather less sophisticated entertainment shows, the euromedias' job is simple: keep the lid down, keep the masses quiet. Sure, at the margins there are all sorts of opportunities to use your initiative and creativity, and the pay's tops, but some day you've got to ask yourself if this is what you became a Media for?

National services vary widely. The BBC, while strictly still state-controlled, is self-financing, and loves nothing as much as a good, meaty expose or multi-auto pile-up. As long as it's not too close to home, that is: the Martial Law Authority Censor makes sure of that. Germany's ARD and France's Voix Francais, on the other hand, are much more firmly under government grip, and are currently fighting their own battle of the airwaves to spread their nationalist messages.

The megacorps are much less dominant in Europe than elsewhere, although London-based WNS is obviously something of an exception. In part, it's because the governments and the EC try to keep them out, in part because the majority of euros really are bovine enough to be quite happy with the bland EuroVision fare. While Network News 54 has offices throughout Europe, these are largely news gathering rather than broadcast centres. On the other hand, Madrid-based Outlook (a subsid of satellite giant WorldSat) is definitely making an aggressive bid for a share of the market with a much-hyped mix of violent trivid import series and surprisingly hard-edged investigative journalism.



**Nah, forget it, story's a washout. Si, sixty dead, but they're all foreigners.**  
— Claudia Arnaldi, ReteVerona

## Note:

"And we'll have full coverage of the Bordeaux Flower Festival later in this bulletin, but first, reports are coming in of yet another massacre in riot-torn Washington..."

## Quote

"And in this episode, Dieter and Manuel go into the toy cupboard where they meet new friends Madeleine Mouse, Ettore Emu and Aristotle Antelope, just in time to foil a plot by wicked Chuck the Tin Soldier and Masayoshi the Thief to steal all the honey..."

## Who are the cops?

**Austria** has copied **Germany's** example, with a network of regional (*Länder*) *Polizei* responsible to a parallel national command structure while the *Staatsgrenzschutz* (State Border Police) also provide heavy support. In

**France, Italy and Spain**, local police (*Gendarmerie, Polizia* and *Policia Nacional*, respectively) are supplemented by paramilitary forces which also participate in serious crime ops (*Garde Republicain, Carabinieri, Guardia Civil*). Since the last coup in **Greece**, the police have been reorganised on military lines, with a barracked *Gendarmerie* able to call on the army in an emergency.

Most of the remaining EC nations share the same basic structure, with local forces responsible to local authorities, supplemented with national police forces which possess a paramilitary arm, and handle serious crime.

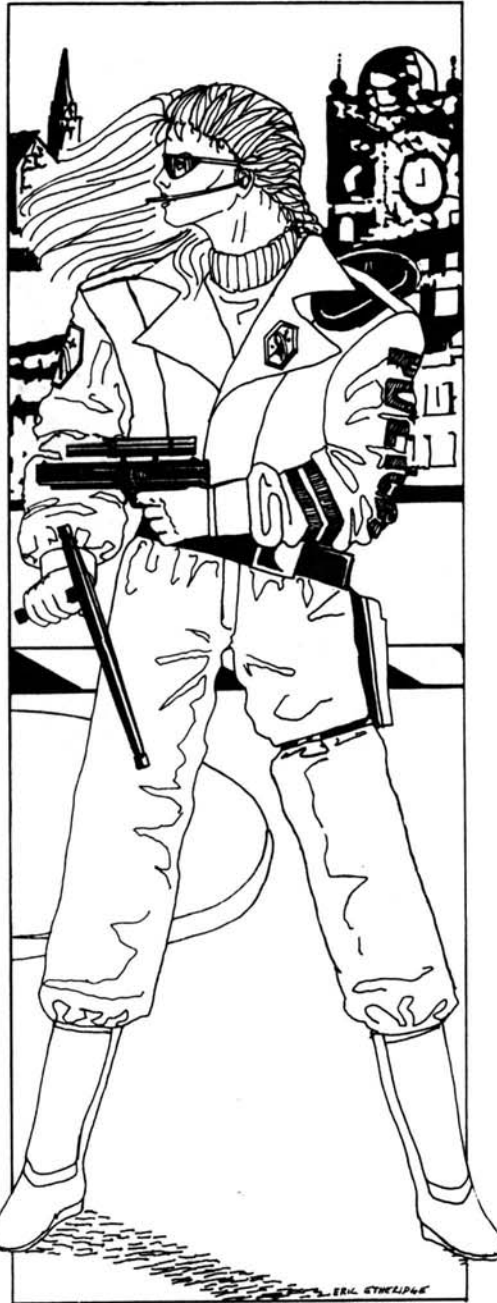
The main exception is **Britain**, still under martial law. Urban Martial Law Authorities have their own barracked, paramilitary police forces, responsible to the local Military Commandant, whose troops may be called on to assist the police. Outside the towns, Authorities use a mix of very local *Emergency Militias* and army units to control the countryside. The *National Police Force* is a very small service that mainly confines itself to coordinating ops, almost wholly dominated by the ARMINTAC and DIS.

## Jelly rounds

Every mainland cop uses gel rounds more often than the real thing, shells of a hard, resilient synthetic that delivers a vicious, stinging, but rarely lethal impact for crowd control. Usual damage rolls are made to decide if a hit penetrates armour. If any damage does, the gel round only inflicts one point of real damage, but roll for stun as if it had done the full amount of damage the roll indicated. Jelly rounds come in all calibres, while gel baton rounds are also produced for shotguns.

Serve and protect? No, I don't think that's out of date. Why?

—Lt. Jules Ben Ali, Bordeaux



Most of this has been bought from independents, and that's definitely where the real talent and initiative lies. Find yourself a friend with a comsat uplink dish, or a 'runner who can bleep your stuff direct into the digitised groundlines and into people's homes. Remember the public's right to know? Well, that's up to you.

## C O P S

If US cops believe in heaven, it's probably a bit like Continental Europe. No inner city DMZs; streets with lights that work; citizens who believe in the law enough that they sometimes even call them; corporate cops who don't have an absolute license to kill. Sometimes you don't even need to carry an assault rifle.

Look again, blinkerboy: not *quite* that beautiful. Sure, a lot of the main metroplex centres are clean and well-patrolled, but in the poorer parts of southern Italy, Spain and Greece, the sullen discontent of a permanently disenfranchised underclass at the goldenkid aristocracy can flash into vicious, bloody riot. When the *Guardia Civil* patrol the slums of Cadiz or Zaragoza, they do so from inside an APC, armed and armoured for war.

Besides, Europe is rich, and money breeds temptation. The France/Belgium/Luxembourg industrial triangle is knee deep in corporate spies, security, conmen and parasites, while the northern coast of Europe is periodically washed with the blood of customs police and the smugglers who bring in designer drugs and black cyberware from Scandinavia. Given the money involved, it's no surprise how many big-time criminals are linked with the structures of power: not one mafia, but many, each with its own interests, clients, patrons, turf, rivalries, alliances and enmities. Then there's always terrorism, alive and well and living

underground in Europe. And don't forget those foreigners. The USA in particular is involved in all sorts of penetration, sabotage and destabilizing ops against the EC, and even the Japanese are prepared from time to time to help out their zaibatsus with a little covert action.

Whatever sort of cop you are, though, you'll have to cope with the rather more genteel pace of Mainland Europe's streets. Accurate firepower becomes a useful addition to smarts and competent police work, not an alternative. And there's the need to coexist with Interpol, which tends to scoop up many of the major crimes. Some Badges get on well with their better paid relatives and even hope to be transferred to the e-cops one day. Others resent them and may even hinder their investigations. Where do you stand?

**E U R O C O R P S**

Of all roles, that of the corporate in Europe is most like his, or her, US counterpart's. Standardized procedures across globe-spanning combines; a world steadily shrunk by telecomms; a common corporate culture spread by regular cross-transfers of execs; all have served to create a pretty homogenous corp world-view. This is particularly true in the *auslander* megacorps and those genuinely global firms that have outgrown their parochialism, like EBM and Biotechnica.

There are distinctive elements to Euro bizlife, though. One is the resistance of the EC and national governments to the 'privatization of authority,' so much a feature of the States and the Far East. Interpol is determined, for example, that some day it will prove the experimental long-rod penetrators the USAF used to attack *Mir XVIII* were supplied by Dornier Aerospace GMBH, OrbitAir's chief rival in 'it-squared' (IT<sup>2</sup>, 'interface transport and technology').



**Taking sake**

Since the 2015-17 trade war, relations with the Japanese corps have been strained. Hence an increasing trend towards the establishment of local 'front firms' owned by holding companies in turn controlled from Japan. It is easy to find yourself 'taking sake'—working for the Japanese, without even knowing it...

**Of course I believe in business ethics. And competition. I love my Kinder, I want them to live in a better, saner world. But if that Nacktschnecke thinks he's going to get that government contract, he'd better have been born bulletproof.**

**— Jurgen Mandel, VP,  
Bremen Shipping IG**



**My word is my bond, but...**

Corps get the media hype, but - as ever - real power tends to stay with the money men. Always check who owns whom.

Take the First Corporate War, when EBM took on OrbitAir. The conventional wisdom is that Swiss-based *WeltGeschäft Bank* was just EBM's intermediary in the abortive leveraged buyout of ailing Transworld. But WG is a major shareholder in Dornier, which would benefit from its rival's humbling. A week before EBM's move, a WG VP was closeted in top-secret conclave with EBM's Head of Finance, and it was the bank's *unsolicited* offer to extend existing eurodollar credit lines and underwrite a proxy sale of Nihei Industrials stock that convinced EBM CEO Ulf Grünwalder the time was right.

So who used whom?

Some combines have close links with governments. Dassault-Futures, for instance, is 51% owned by the Banque Nationale Francaise which, in turn, is wholly state-owned. Sometimes it's hard to see where the corp ends and the state begins. The corp hires a demi-brigade of French Foreign Legion, for example, for security, while it is widely suspected Dassault is used when the French government needs trustworthy men for black ops requiring some sort of minimal deniability.

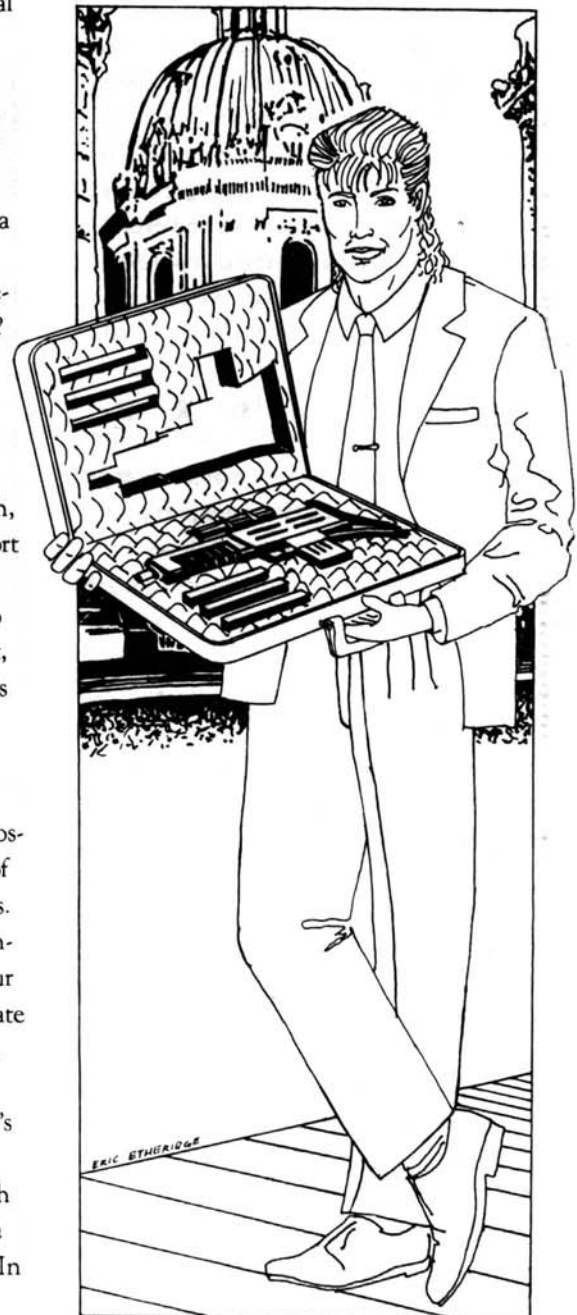
There is also smug isolationism. Where in most megacorps transfer abroad is a sign of being groomed for the top, in the e-corps there tends to be almost hysterical paranoia at the thought of 'exile', largely rooted in sheer prejudice. Naf? Wild. USA? Streetcrime. South America? Coups. MidEast? Be serious. Far East? Hard work. USSR? Beetrootburgers. Australia? Yawn.

The corps have also inherited some of Europe's rather more paternalistic approach, and play a larger role in the care and support of their employees. In part, this reflects lower unemployment rates and the need to do more to attract the best workers; in part, EC legislation that sets minimum standards for health and safety, pensions, etc.

None of this applies in NCE, though. As associate members only, excluded from a positive role in policy-making, the countries of this region are not covered by all these regs. So corp ops in the East are much more ruthlessly colonial, with masses of drudge-labour working on huge, heavily defended corporate farms and factory complexes for low wages, paid in corporate scrip for use in corporate shops. Again, consider Dornier Aerospace's factory complexes around Lodz and Brno, defended by their Control Companies, each a fully heli-mobile combat unit in 8 *Krahen* transports, supported by 3 *Adler* gunships. In NCE corps go armoured and bodyguarded,

**So, ami, what's the vector on this biz? You think I'm flatline-hungry? Dump what you heard Stateside, squatwit, you see no crimelord. I'm a bizman, a professional best friend. This just not on my menu, ja?**

**—Fat Saturday, fixer, Bristol**



but here is where they really get to hike those profit axes, without all this bleeding heart legislation.

Of course, there's another sort of corp in the eurocracy, whose shovepushing execs have much the same sort of priorities. Though the salaries aren't up to megacorp standards, how many other corps have space-to-ground missile sats, armies, their own commnet—a whole continent of their own. Power, that's the coin in which the EC can pay. Again, you could well have joined for the best of reasons, but you soon have to answer the same questions: What price the soul? That corner office with the window and the swivel-tilt chair? The EC is about control, and about status quo. Whose side you on, pretty boy?

## F I X E R S

The etiquette is different, even if the job is much the same. Rather than spending so much time meeting in dark parting lots, picking over ripped-off junk, the fixer is usually more involved with white collar criminals - netridders specializing in fiddling with cargo manifests, or moonlighting corporates with a flair for accountancy fraud.

So wear a suit.

And develop the right sorts of contacts. A European fixer soon ends up playing with big boys (megacorps, governments), who have longer arms and memories than streetmovers. Cross a government or a corp, and you'll find Europe a far harder place to hide than the States (Don't you wish you'd cultivated those smugglers who could have got you across to Britain, or that rival corp?). Too late now, though, isn't it?

Thirdly, remember the importance of language. Streetspeak is a convenient amalgam, a bastardized and eclectic variant of British

English freely adapting from half a dozen other languages and techjargons. By its very nature, though, it's generic, unable really to tap the soul and tug the heartstrings. For anyone who depends not just on getting understood, but on *how* they are understood, this is vital. So fixers - like medias, rockers and some corps - better tune in. Why not invest in some chipped languages? You'll be glad you did when you have to mediate a turf rumble... between French Foreign Legion paycops and a Spanish immigrant streetgang in some small Portuguese town before you can get your latest shipment out.

## N O M A D S

Nomads are much less of a feature on the Continental European scene than in the States or Siberia. It's richer, smaller, and still has governments that give a damn where their citizens go, plus the guts and guns to do something about it. But there are always the rootless, the wanderers, the itinerant poor who can't take those very same governments, with their rules, their cops and their ID cards.

So they hit the road, in convoys of reconditioned fifth-hand trucks, RVs and open-tops that lose themselves in the intricate maze of motorways built in the days before the Plague, the oil shortages, and the monorails, masters of a ribbon world of cracked tarmac and abandoned service stations.

But these **truckers** are few and far between, and a trucker convoy is nothing to a US pack on the move. What's more, they tend to be better behaved. Even with blackmarket SAMs and scavenged machineguns, a dozen RVs are so many tin ducks to a squadron of hi/lo jetchoppers with smartshell gatlings and cluster drones.

The real margin is at sea. There, **boatpeople** assemble in their ones, twos, dozens and hundreds. Colonies of energy-efficient sailships, inshore fishing smacks, even rebuilt freighters

### A Trucker Group: the Schwaben Travellers

Gypsies remain a thorn in the side of the Eurocrats. Traveller traditions of self-reliance, petty artisanship and wandering entrepreneurship adapted well, and this 'family' is no exception. Kids in shorts can fix the engines of any auto you care to mention; skinny girls netrun from portable decks in the backs of multicolored RVs; tanned bravos quote you rates for any hot merchandise you've got to unload, or any legal, but unobtainable, spare part you need.

The real angle is smuggling, though. Their patch is the stretch of *autobahn* (motorway) connecting Stuttgart to the Swiss cities of Zurich and Bern, empty of all but the odd car and a steady stream of automated, driverless robohauliers, ever since they opened the *Grünlinie* monorail. Stop on the outskirts of Stuttgart for a few supplies, a little freelance vehicle repairwork in Tübingen; then call on a few family members at the Rottweil Federal Penitentiary, all the time picking up orders for the sort of non-Euro goods the EC taxes prohibitively: American combat cyberwear, cheapo South American porno-MRAM, Japanese designer vat tissue.

Now it's over the Euro border into Switzerland, and the Bern/Zurich freemarkets. Buy, buy, buy... and sell, too: blacklisted data transmissions intercepted from the German commnet, a few pirated programmes, a little mid-manned industrial espionage. Nothing too heavy—the family has developed a keen understanding of just how far it can go.

Then they return. Each time, the *Staatsgrenzschutz* and Interpol know what they're at; each time, it's a frantic game to come up with new and more ingenious ways to hide or camouflage merchandise, as couriers cut off onto other routes to avoid interception, while scouts watch for the police. Sometimes a scout goes too far and gets gunned down running a block, or someone gets arrested for evasion of excise duties, and a shipment has to be cancelled when the heat gets too close. But the family, the family has always survived.

**A Boat people Group:  
New Orkney**

When the British looked for a new sea/air/ground combat training centre, the Orkney islands seemed ideal. The Orkadians were given a stark choice: go to the mainland, with a 200 eb 'resettlement allowance', or experience the thrills of live-ammo training at close quarters.

Some took their money and left, but others rebelled at the idea of trading their traditional independence for a life dodging bullets and drawing dole in some inner city slum. So they fitted up their fishing vessels and took to the seas.

They have made a name for themselves as much for their stubborn 'old worldism' (honesty, self-reliance, a refusal to have any truck with Eurospeak) as for their canny seacraft. If you want a cargo brought in out of the beady gaze of customs officers and ESA spysats, you want to speak to the Orkadians. But don't double-cross them, and don't try to get them to run drugs, if you want to avoid a well-worn knife between the ribs.

**New skill: WATER VEHICLES**

The ability to crew and pilot all sorts of water vessels, from sailing ship to powerboat.



**No, I haven't got a citizen's ID, officer. No, I haven't got a temporary aliens card. No, I haven't got a transient's visa. No, I haven't got special dispensation from the Ministry of Immigration. But officer, would six friends with big guns standing right behind you do?**

**— Sean O'Doherty, no fixed abode**

and liners bought up at scrap values when cargo catamarans and rotary sail freighters made them obsolete. Skipping in and out of territorial waters—a little fishing here; a spot of piracy there; a bit of datajacking, tapping into underwater fibre-optic cables when times are lean. It may not be a very secure life, but it could be worse, and you don't have to wear a suit or clock on.

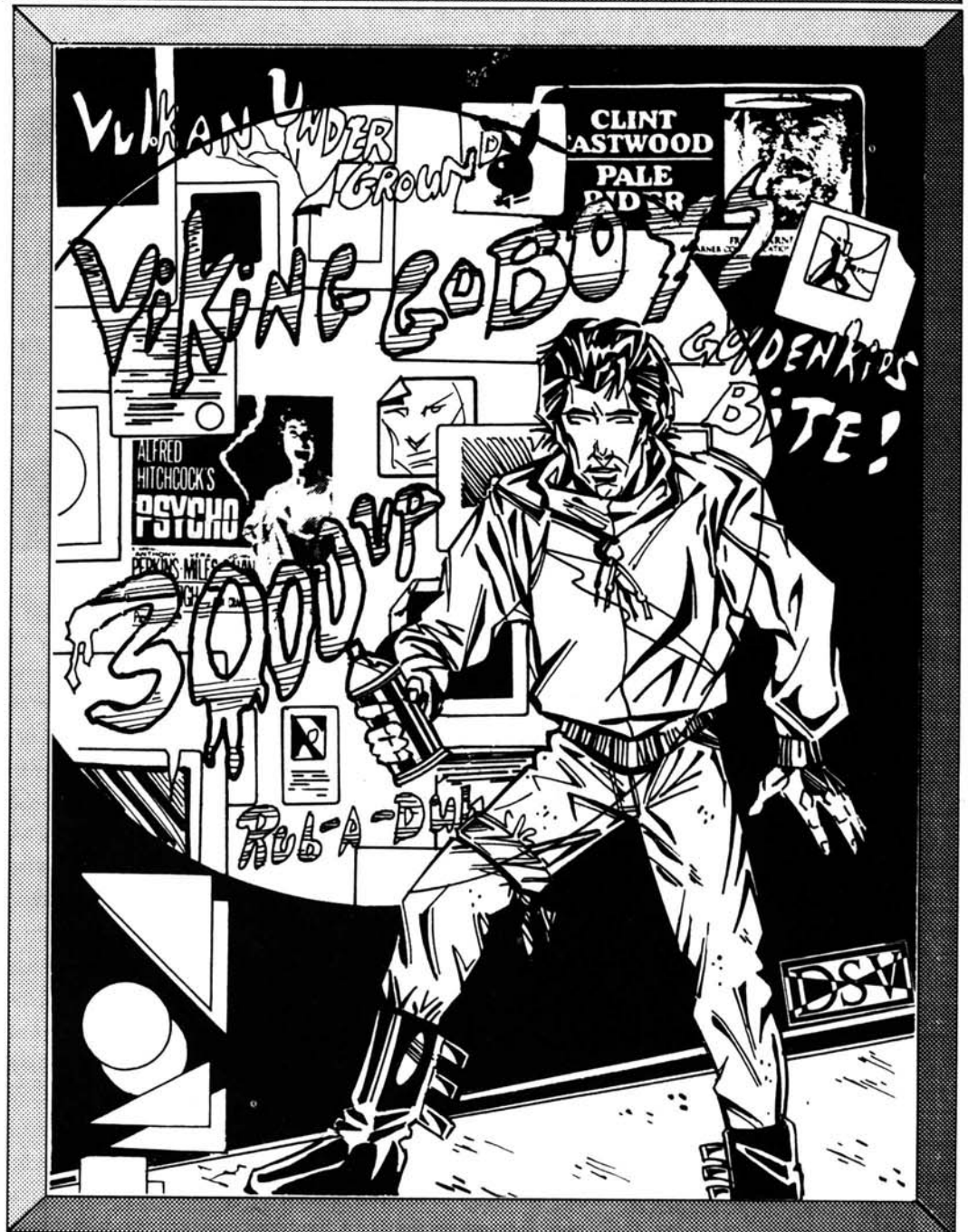
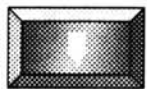
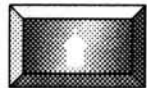
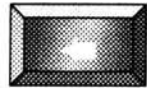
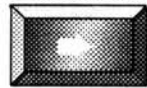
Either way, you live in the shadowy fringes of the Eurostates. At the moment you survive because you're too small to be worth squashing, but you just know that one day, you'll be too big to tangle with.

**ROOTLESS NATIONS**

The upheavals in Europe—and then the imposition of EC control—have left peoples without a land of their own. In a vicious circle, the Eurocrats are suspicious; they persecute and discriminate against them, forcing them to live by their wits on the wrong side of the law, which then 'justifies' the EC view.

The rootless include: Gypsies who still refuse to settle down into the loving embrace of the eurocracy; the Turkish descendants of 'Guest Workers' invited to West Germany, thrown out of their jobs when unification provided a new source of cheap labour; Poles, Hungarians and Czechs fleeing the poverty and environmental devastation of their homelands; North African immigrants and political refugees; the German-Italians from the Tyrol who refused to assimilate and fled the cultural repression of 2009-14 that followed the Tyrol nationalist sabotage of the n-power station near Bologna; and refugees from the seemingly endless war in Northern Ireland.

# PLAYING EUROSTYLE



So what are you, armchair cyberpunks? No, you want to get out there onto those streets, and here are three adventures allowing you to do just that. They form a sort of trilogy, culminating in some industrial-strength trouble, but they need not be run back to back. If anything, it's better to insert some other incidents between them. After all, the important thing is that once the team have Jacobsen as an agent (or some other, equivalent NPC if they don't hit it off with CJ-wing it, K?) you can throw all sorts of ops their way. (cont. in side bar page 52)

cont. page 51

The opposition is geared for a team of 5-8, including solos and, ideally, a netrunner. Tweak the opposition up or down if necessary. NPCs are given only with the skills and stats likely to be relevant.

Remember: Europe is slicker, cleaner and richer than the US of A. A little less blood, lots more smarts, loads of bucks, heaps of cool. Sure you can handle it?

### Transatlantic Travel

An Orbital Air stratliner can skip the pond in just three hours: fast, comfortable, stylish - and obscenely expensive. At 2000 eb one-way, only fly strat if someone else's paying. An ordinary jet takes seven hours NY-London and costs 300 eb, while a slowboat zep takes 36 hours for a mere 150 eb, if you don't mind sharing a 75m glassfibre gondola with a dozen immigrant families and a hundred sacks of soya.



## WELCOME TO NEW EUROPE

Ostensibly hired through middleman firm Golden Heron for a deniable corporate extraction, the team is set up in a bid to trigger corporate war. Their employers will arrange for evidence incriminating a US firm to be planted, tip off the target's former employers and then arrange for the group and target to be liquidated in an apparently legitimate police action. All good, clean fun.

### SKIPPING THE POND (ENTRY POINT FOR NON-EUROPEAN CHARACTERS)

The stratliner was three hours late, natch, then security checks took another two. And they'd all seen the in-flight movie before. But for all that, the team isn't complaining. Golden Heron paid for the tickets, and work in Euro does wonder for a resume.

The flight from Boston only takes three hours as the 'liner skips briefly into low orbit,

but still, by the time the team arrives at Madrid InterAereo it's evening, local. The customs are alert, even vaguely courteous; fortunately they had the foresight to register weapons in their luggage beforehand. Seemingly half of Madrid is packed around the information booths where the team is to meet its contact: vacationing families of wagepeons in off-the-pegs and print dresses; techs and execs on biz, with black Korean attache cases and discreet corplogo tie pins. Then everyone makes way for a couple of teenage goldenkids in silk three-pieces, with a small army of baggage-bundlers, hangers-on and -cyberoptics' target-reticules flickering behind polarising shades - bodyguards.

At the infoboosts a slight, dapper little man in chauffeur's livery comes alongside. Golden Heron ID glitters for a moment in his palm and the team falls in behind him. No fuss, no bother, just biz.

Somehow team and luggage all fit into his Nissan *Oyabun* stretch-limo. The seats are plush, the drive smooth, and the driver silent, so they've got nothing better to do than sit back and watch the city go by.

**M A D R I D**

Just as well the windows are tinted: the locals don't get to see the tourists gawk. Compared with gritty American cities, Madrid's a weird mix of archaicism, supertech and naivete. The wide roads are carefully monitored by fully computerised traffic control that switches lights, opens lanes and flares speed warning indicators all on its own. Look underneath the neon and megapixel vidscreen adverts, and half the buildings are ancient, high-windowed, open-fronted. So energy-inefficient! And vulnerable! Streetfighters in the team automatically register the lack of anti-grenade netting over the windows; the thin glass. Then they stop and remember— this is Euro.

**G O L D E N H E R O N**

Golden Heron are middlemen, a small firm specialising in matching the jobs and the 'lancers. Wetwork, netscams, bag jobs, they'll find the team. For a multi-million e-doll outfit, it's run out of surprisingly plain offices on the top floor of an aging tower block. Inside, the green LEDs of bug monitors glow in every room, and the 'receptionist' has a 10mm bulge under her jacket. If the characters are native Euros, the adventure begins with an invitation to a 'placement interview' here.

The group should be impressed: Mr Wu Xi himself, the deputy chair, opens their briefing. It's for the involuntary extraction ('kidnap' is *such* an ugly word) of Anna Huber, senior software spec for Unentbehrlich Datenverarbeitung IG (UDIG) whom Nord-Danske are eager to 'recruit' to their expanding DP arm. Nord-Danske's own people have drawn up a plan; all they want are 'deniable, untraceable resources' to execute it.

Nord-Danske will pay a flat fee of 20,000 eb (half in advance, half in escrow till delivery) and provide necessary equipment. The team will work to Nord-Danske's plan, alongside a Golden Heron liaison, and be joined by Mercy, another freelancer in ND employ: a care and restraint specialist to supervise Huber's evacuation.

Wu will then hand over the the liaison, a pale, lanky Dane in his mid-30s called Christian Jacobsen. This is the plan: Huber is permanently ensconced in an elaborately guarded R&D hothouse in Köln, but a credible bomb scare will trigger a major security alert. Emergency evacuation plans will swing into action and a well-guarded convoy will ferry her to the isolated villa where the team will seize her. Given UDIG's computer bias, the safehouse's defences rest heavily on automated systems, so netrunners to support the assault team would be very useful. When captured, Mercy will dope Huber and a tech must disable a final countermeasure - a biomonitor implant that also broadcasts homing signals.

The team will then follow a route that UDIG will arrange to be clear of police and border guards across into Belgium, where Huber will be dropped off at a safehouse in Liege. Neat and fast. Any questions?

**G E T T I N G R E A D Y**

The team and Jacobsen will be transferred to a worked-out open cast coal mine in the Basque mountains to prepare for the op. They will stay a week in a handful of mobile homes, boning up on the plan, meeting Mercy and getting kitted up.

Nord-Danske will arrange for weapons and equipment to be waiting in left-luggage lockers in Köln, along with the keys for rented cars. The team can suggest whatever weapons it wants within reason: assault rifles, smartchipped SMGs, armour jackets, grenades, but no anti-tank missiles or anything similarly baroque. Broadly speaking, factor about 2,000 eb max each for personal equipment, progs, etc.

**Fishy Biz I**

Characters who have worked the corporate scene before may spot a clue that not all is as it seems: the openness about Nord-Danske's identity, even though characters could be captured and interrogated by either UDIG or the law.

If all else fails, bring this to the team's attention by having Jacobsen mention it: "just because our employers don't seem to observe usual security procedures, I still expect professional discretion from you all".

**Playing Jacobsen**

His accent is near-perfect, his manner almost diffident, but he thinks fast and well. Play him sober, earnest, quiet but very perceptive and, if necessary, sharp-tongued.

**Playing Mercy**

Flashy, sharp, witty and wry, she fits neatly into the stereotype of the streetsharp smartgirl - and she knows it. There's a lot more to her, but she finds it useful to cultivate this straightforward image.

She seems just another happy-go-lucky gun-for-hire, but has her own agenda as a long-time Nord-Danske associate.

## Training

In a hurry? If so, you can take the training pretty much as read. Otherwise you can develop this so the characters get used to working together, earn a few IPs and get room for a little roleplaying.

Characters can be run through a variety of appropriate training programmes to prepare for the op. Solos and other assault team members could benefit from just target practice and an assault course and some competition.

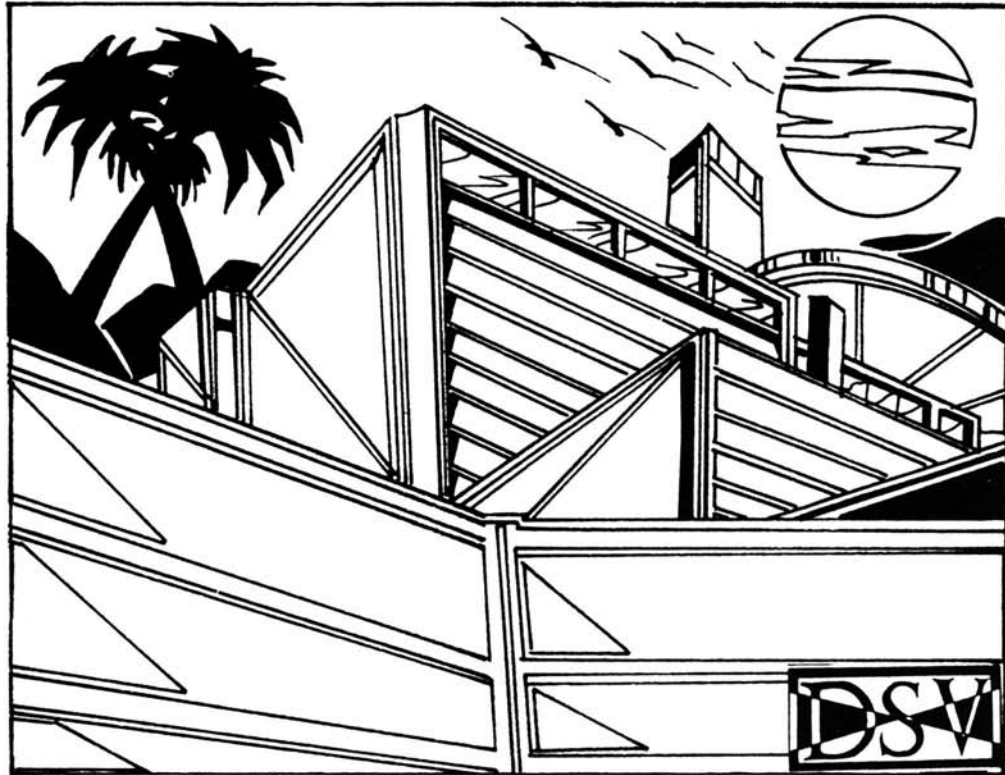
If there are enough, Jacobsen divides them into two groups, gives them paintball guns and visors and lets them take it in turns to guard and penetrate an abandoned warehouse.

Netrunners can even do some preliminary recon of the villa through the net. Give any techs the chance to practice disabling a spy biomonitor and disable capacitance wires under combat conditions.

Overall, they should gain 1D6 IPs in three relevant skills.

## Fishy Biz II

A DIFFICULT Human Perception roll will detect a slight reserve in Mercy. Isn't she rather less interested in the briefings for what happens after the snatch? A shade smug? Perhaps, if she has been getting on very well with the team (or any individual members), a little sorry? An AVERAGE roll will just pick up that 'something's not quite right about her'.

**THE OP 1: PANIC ATTACK**

When the team are in place near the villa, they ring Jacobsen in Liege by cellular phone. He dials a number triggering the fake alert. Within ten minutes, the convoy rolls out of UDIG's compound: three cars with Huber, her bodyguard Gunter Berlin and half a dozen security guards, two armoured vans each with another dozen in full alert kit, three motorcycle outriders and even an armed autogyro mounting airwatch.

But UDIG are programmers first and foremost and, like all programmers, prefer to rely on comps over meat. Once Huber is behind the villa's automated defences, all but Berlin and one vanload of guards return to Köln.

**THE OP 2: EXTRACTION**

Actually racking the villa requires a mix of skills and some clever coordination: given the defences, straight attack is suicidal. A useful initial tactic would be for a netrunner to disable or even take over the security systems. These include a continuous string of cameras

and capacitance wires around the perimeter (an AVERAGE Electronic Security roll to spoof) linked to the security station, extra cameras covering all approaches (20% chance of spotting anyone in the grounds per minute), and all sorts of burglar alarms on the villa's outer doors and windows (AVERAGE task to bypass). There is also a computer-controlled minigun (8d6 damage) overlooking the front drive, with 180° arc. This can be set to fire on any moving targets above dog-size, controlled manually from the security station or by a netrunner 'in' its control box or the CPU.

Subterfuge? The hectic evac leaves everyone confused. Characters claiming to be UDIG support staff, environmental health officers, or whoever, may get past the two guards at the gate (an EASY Fast Talk, Authority, Intimidate or Cred roll) as far as the forecourt where Berlin and three fully armed guards will check their credentials under the cover of the minigun.

At some point shooting will start. When it does, introduce the danger of a 'sour grapes'

killing - if Huber is sure to be snatched, Berlin or one of the other guards may think it better to ice her than let the opposition get their hands on her. Don't let it happen - but make the players sweat.

## MERCY'S MISSION

Mercy will hang back until the team reach Huber, then hit her with some Zombi, knocking her into a passively acquiescent trance: walking if led, otherwise just freezing in place. Her biomonitor will also have to be disabled quite soon: an AVERAGE Basic Tech roll (EASY if the character has or is assisted by someone with Med Tech +4). Each attempt takes about 5 minutes, and can be repeated until successful.

Meanwhile, Mercy will plant evidence incriminating one of UDIG's rivals, Infocomp subsidiary **Infoconsult**. Besides, the team are being set up for a hit, so she has to drop out of the mission. She will use all her wits, perhaps getting slightly wounded and insisting it's best she make her own way, maybe even pleading combat stress: it's no good, it's one mission too many, her nerves are shot to hell, she can't go on... *If all else fails, or if the team get suspicious, she will bite on a hollow tooth and fall, dead. Such loyalty.*

Dead? Not quite. Actually, she has just swallowed a drug Nord-Danske provided for just such an opportunity: **Thanomorph-43**. She will 'wake' in about 10 minutes, with no after effects besides a splitting headache.

## CUTTING FOR THE BORDER

Despite Mercy's loss, the plan still demands the team make good time to the Belgian border in the cars Nord-Danske provide: high-performance BMW 309 sedans (max speed 250 kph, 55 SDP). All are fitted for optional studding. If the players seem uncertain as to whether to follow the plan, the wail of sirens from Köln, triggered by some alarm, may persuade them.

The road is clear and easy...until the border. There Nord-Danske have arranged for the team - and Huber - to be flatlined in an apparently legal shootout. A squad of Belgian border guards have been well-bribed to ambush them, then claim self-defence against a band of murderous kidnapers. If any characters are North American, ND sees this as a clincher, knowing how prejudiced e-courts are prepared to believe all Americans criminally trigger happy. In case the team deviate from the planned route, their vehicles are bugged with location tattletales so the bad-dies can be in position.

*Cyberpunk's* a tough game, but not *that* tough. Choose some appropriate way to tip the team off *just before* the trap is sprung: a successful Awareness roll, a premature burst of fire cutting through a car in front, whatever.

There are 6 gunmen lying in hiding (+2 cover) in the woody verge of a fairly sharp bend in the road. Out of sight round the corner they have set up a road block. To smash through the barrier a car must be moving at at least 95 kph, requiring a Simple control roll and damage as for hitting a light target. Alternatively a car can try and skirt round the barrier: a Difficult control roll to avoid jamming the car against a tree.

If the border guards are caught they will, of course, know nothing: everything was arranged through anonymous cellphone calls.

## SAFE? BE SERIOUS!

If the team have any smarts, they will have given up hope of their 'safehouse' being anything of the sort. If they get to Liege, they find that the address is actually the local Infoconsult office. Of course. What's worse, it's under constant supervision by a UDIG counter-extraction team under the notoriously effective Aaron Hammer.

### Playing Berlin

A Junker revivalist who plays his part to the hilt. He dresses like a bad guy out of central casting: riding boots, high-collar shirt, military-style dress greatcoat, monocle. His speech is clipped and formal, his sense of duty exacting. 'Honour' is all: if necessary he will gun Huber down in cold blood out of duty to his employers. Not the sort of guy you'd invite to a party.

### Zombi

A very rare, very nasty drug that effectively uncouples the higher mental functions from the rest of the body. A can with 6 spray doses costs anything from 4000EB - and would usually be a NEAR IMPOSSIBLE Streetdeal, Streetwise or Resources task to acquire.

### Thanomorph

The byproduct of an early programme to create a suspended animation drug for deep-space travel. It freezes vital functions, sure enough - but in sufficient doses for anything over a week, it causes brain tissue decay. Still, enterprising types can always come up with uses, and it is a VERY DIFFICULT Streetdeal, Resources or Streetwise task to find.

Doses cost about 50 eb for a minute's duration (exact doses must be calibrated by a pharmacologist). 'Victims' can be awoken with stimulants (a nasty system shock - make a Shock Save) or medical procedures (an EASY Med Tech roll).



**Too Easy?**

Got something against the team?  
Really want to make them suffer?  
Maybe Golden Heron never really existed and was a fake created by ND solely to front the op. Jacobsen was hired, like the team, and was also set up. As soon as the mission starts, Golden Heron quietly disappears, taking the escrow cash with it. Hence the team acquire a new aim: to find out just who was behind the sting, and either to get back its money or take some suitable revenge.

How to get out of this mess? If they try to contact Golden Heron, they'll have no luck, but if they ring Jacobsen's cellphone, he'll be very brief and arrange a meet in the Cathedral of St Paul. If all else fails, he rings them: he's suddenly feeling very vulnerable. Nord-Danske have sown up another loose end by getting a client terrorist group - the 17th of July Commando - to firebomb Golden Heron's offices to slag. He has a pretty good idea of who'll be next on their list.

If the team try to sell Huber to Infoconsult, they'll find a distinct lack of interest. Apparently she's something of a fading star. Besides, for some reason their rivals UDIG are gearing up for some sort of hostile operation against them, so they've got other things on their minds than haggling with some small-time opportunists.

## CATHARSIS IN THE CATHEDRAL

Maybe Jacobsen was followed by a Nord-Danske hit squad. Maybe the UDIG heavies are on to the team, or intercepted their call to Jacobsen. Either way, the cathedral makes too atmospheric a place for a firefight to waste, so have an appropriate number of heavies pile into the team to give them a testing, but ultimately winnable fight. If UDIG are involved, remember that The Hammer is a heavy hitter, worth at least two of his men. The ideal mindlessly violent end to the adventure.

Terrified worshippers and tourists scatter every way; priceless stained glass explodes into clouds of shards; statues are chewed into rubble; the distant scream of sirens as Belgian SWAT teams begin to arrive too late to be of any use (and too late to catch the characters should they want to slip off).

Once the team get together with Jacobsen, he has the contacts to swing some sort of deal alerting UDIG to Nord-Danske's plot

and get the heat off. After all, once the story is blown, Nord-Danske have no real reason to bother killing them (though they'll quietly claw back the remaining half of the fee). Alternatively, if you're really desperate for a deus ex machina, introduce an investigating team of Interpol corpsquad cops eager to damp down a developing bizwar and prepared to trade immunity for information.

The end result should be a logical partnership. Jacobsen has contacts and credibility, but with Golden Heron barbecued, has got to go independent and start building up a stable of freelancers. As for the team, they lack the entree into European biz circles Jacobsen can provide. Most importantly: a one-year yellow card. Jacobsen has a pipeline into the Dutch visa section at Amsterdam, and can arrange these for a very reasonable fee. Perhaps his contact has a job that needs doing... The beginning of a beautiful friendship?

## CHRISTIAN JACOBSEN



**FIXER DANISH**

**INT 10, REF 8, CL 10, TECH 9, LK 6,  
ATT 5, MA 6, EMP 7, BT 5**

**CYBER:** 2 cyberoptics w/targeting, microcam, IR; interface plugs.

**SKILLS:** Streerdeal +8, Handgun +6, Drive +5, Human Perception +6, Streetwise +6, Interview +8, Interrogation +4, Resist Torture/Drugs +8, Awareness +8, Education +9, English +6, Russian +10, Japanese +7

**OUTFIT:** Sternmeyer 35 smartgun, armourjack, trauma card, cellphone

**MERCY (REAL NAME: KAY JONSTON)**



**SOLO BRITISH**

**INT 9, REF 10 (12), CL 9, TECH 6, LK 3,  
ATT 7, MA 5, EMP 5, BT 2**

**CYBER:** Kerenzikov reflexes; cyberear w/radio splice and bug detector; scratchers.

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +5, Handgun +6, Athletics +9, Aikido +6, Awareness +8, Human Perception +5, Fast Talk +6, Expert: anaesthesia +6, Stealth +4

**OUTFIT:** X-22 pistol, aerosol of GoDown KO compound, aerosol of Zombi, kit of various mickeys, armour t-shirt, switchblade, personal stereo

**G U N T E R B E R L I N**



**SOLO GERMAN**

**INT 4, REF 8 (10), CL 8, TECH 4, LK 10,  
ATT 4, MA 8, EMP 2, BT 9**

**CYBER:** Slice'n'Dice; cyberoptic w/targeting, IR; plugs; Sandevistan reflexes; nasal filters; skin woven armour (SP 12)

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +6, Handgun +6, SMG +7, Awareness +5, Melee +6, Athletics +9, Intimidate +7, Streetwise +6, French +3, Personal Grooming +6

**OUTFIT:** HK MPK-11 smartgun, Sternmeyer 35 smartgun, armourjacket, trauma card, radio

**A N N A H U B E R**

**TECH GERMAN**

**INT 10, REF 5, CL 3, TECH 10, LK 5, ATT 5,  
MA 5, EMP 5, BT 4**

Brilliant, but will never get as far as she hopes because she won't take chances: ultimately, she's a solitary, even cowardly tech.

**CYBER:** Interface plugs; 'spy' biomonitor; skinwatch

**SKILLS:** Jury Rig +10, Athletics +5, Handgun

+1, Drive +4, System Knowledge +10, Cyber Tech +10, various computer languages at +7-10

**OUTFIT:** Trauma card, BudgetArms C-13 (but she forgot to load it)

**UDIG SECURITY OFFICER**

**SOLO GERMAN OR AUSTRIAN**  
INT 6, REF 8 (9), CL 7, LK 5, MA 6, BT 8

**CYBER:** Kerenzikov reflexes

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +3, Handgun +5, SMG +4, Drive +4, Athletics +4, Judo +4, Awareness +5, Intimidate +4

**OUTFIT:** X-9mm smartgun, smartgoggles with low light, thermograph, targetting and anti-dazzle options, trauma card, radio, armourjack - on an alert also carry Sternmeyer SMG 21s

**BELGIAN BORDER POLICE**

**COP BELGIAN**  
INT 6, REF 7, CL 7, LK 5, MA 5, BT 7

**SKILLS:** Authority +2, Handgun +4, Rifle +4, Brawling +6, Stealth +2, Awareness +2

**OUTFIT:** FN FAL, Browning SelfDefender-3 (treat as X-22), armour jacket, radio

**AARON HAMMER ('THE HAMMER')**

**SOLO ISRAELI**  
INT 10, REF 8 (10), CL 10, TECH 4, LK 4, ATT 2, MA 6, EMP 4, BT 7

Clever and brilliant, brutal and remorseless, hire The Hammer when you really want them back.

**CYBER:** 2 cybersight w/targeting, thermograph, anti-dazzle; cyberarm w/ Uzi MiniAuto; 2 cyberlegs; Kerenzikov reflexes

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +9, Handgun +10, Rifle +8, SMG +8, Cho Li Fut +5, Stealth +4, Human Perception +8, Awareness +5

**OUTFIT:** Colt AMT smartgun, HK MP-2013 smartgun, armourjack, long coat, radio, trauma card

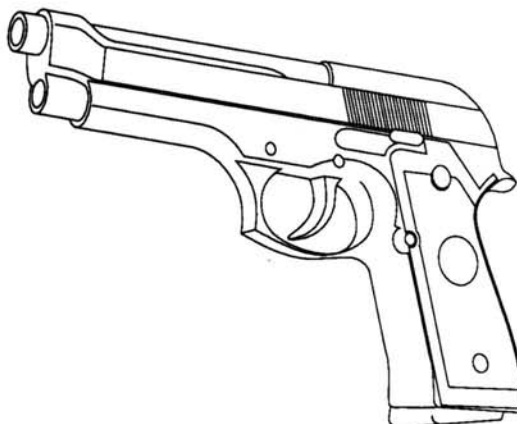
**CORPORATE NINJA**

**SOLO VARIOUS**  
INT 6, REF 7 (9), CL 9, LK 5, MA 7, BT 8

**CYBER:** 2 cybersight w/targeting, lo-lite, anti-dazzle; interface plugs; cyberear w/ radio splice; boosted reflexes

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +5, Handgun +6, SMG +6, Wrestling +5, Drive +5, Stealth +4, Intimidate +5, Awareness +3

**OUTFIT:** Armour jacket, trauma card, radio. UDIG Counter-Extraction Team are armed with MP 2013 smartguns and X-9mms, while Nord-Danske assassins carry smartchipped, silenced Uzi MiniAutos and Beretta 97 pistols, with one also carrying an FR-F6 sniper rifle, with Rifle +5 skill.



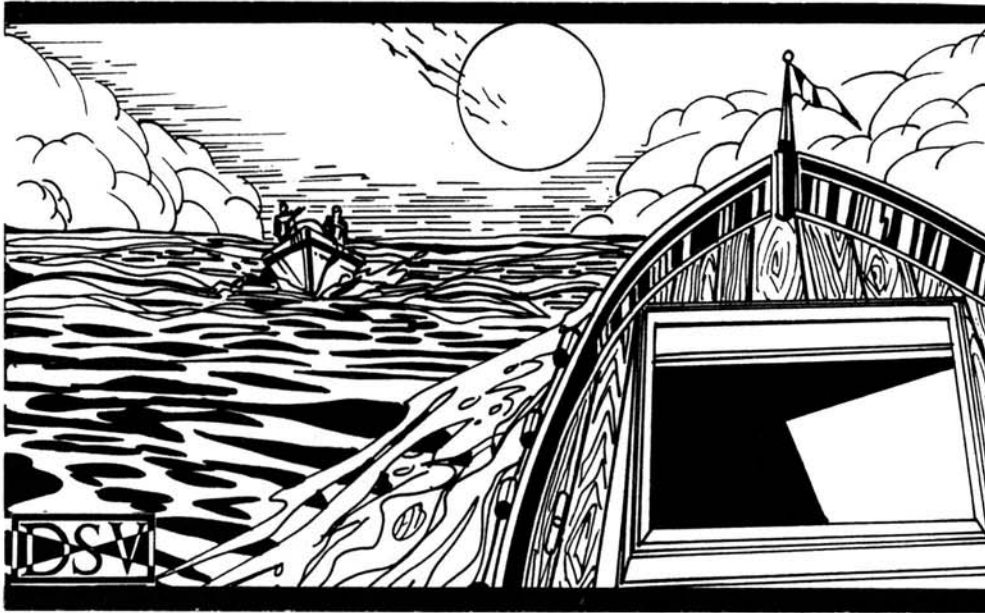
**Note**

**Beretta 97P • 2 • J • P • 2d6+1 (9mm) • 18 • 2 • VR**

The latest development of the 92, an advanced pistol with integral under-barrel laser sight, much used in the EuroTheatre.

**FR-F6 RIF • 4 • N • P • 6d6+2 (7.62) • 10 • 2 • ST**

A modern French sniper's rifle, with bipod, computer-assisted laser-scope and sound suppressor.



## G O I N ' C R U I S I N G ...

Working in Europe, the team will have had to develop some sort of a midman, a contact - probably Jacobsen. After a while, and perhaps following a few smaller jobs, he will be able to put some more substantive work their way, locating and raiding an unmanned robotanker in the Mediterranean being used as a smuggler meet to retrieve some stolen hardware.

This will involve four key segments: developing a contact with some rather bizarre nomads, negotiation to find the identity of the ship, netrunning or detective work to locate it and some quick, neat solowork. This scenario can be thrown in as a quick link or filler or, fleshed out with some of the options, as a more substantive adventure.

### T H E B R I E F I N G

"Our principal is a small Greek 'tronics firm whose R&D plant was gutted in what seemed an accidental fire ten days ago. After the emergency services had finished, though, it became clear that the accident was nothing of the sort, and one of the techs presumed dead had absconded with their latest gizmo, a satellite tracking system.

"Their own security found the tech without too much trouble, but he had already sold it to an anonymous midman-smuggler. All he knew was that the midman already had a buyer lined up, and would be meeting on an unmanned robotanker in exactly two weeks' time.

"This is out of their security's league, so they turned to us. They are offering a flat fee of 5,000 eb plus another 5,000 eb up front for expenses in return for their black box - whatever state it's in."

### T H E C O N T A C T

The first problem is that there are any number of robotankers plying the Med. But Jacobsen has the answer - the Happy Boys of Sudden Destiny. This community of African boat-people nomads has made a speciality out of keeping tabs on all the comings and goings in the eastern Med, and if anyone can identify the ship involved, they are the ones.

Jacobsen will give the characters a phone number to contact and then leave negotiations up to them. He doesn't know much

#### Jacobsen's cut

Jacobsen has the contacts to line up the job in the first place. He handles liaison with the principal. He's always on hand or a phone call away to handle the team or provide advice. So what is he, the Samaritans? No, he's a business man. So, he takes a bizman's cut, a straight 35% of the fee (that's 3,500 eb, this time). And that's fee, not profit. If the team end up spending all their e-bucks on bribes and hardware, that's their look-out.

If you want to play this section long-hand, here are just a few suggested characters and incidents to throw in.



#### The Ice Man

A midman who specialises in matchmaking, and a total cyberjunkie. Almost all his sizeable income goes into metal and atrauma treatments, but still, he's forever weaving across the fringes of cyberpsychosis. His eyes are silver bubbles, his face a pallid corpse white, his hands delicate silver-laced cybers; he wears white beneath a silver cape, making him look like a starved vampire. His voice purrs without emotion through a voder box at his throat. Everyone treats him with kid gloves, since for all his machine-like carriage, he's forever hair-triggered. A scary guy.

#### I don't know you

The characters won't be known in the area, and always risk being identified as undercover cops, rivals or, worse yet, journalists. This could lead to anything from some pretty severe questioning to a hasty ejection from a bar to the flash of monofilament knives in an alley...

more about them than that, though he has been told they are rather pushy and eccentric. Expenses come first out of the float, then the team's pockets.

You can run this as complex as you want it. If you're in a hurry, the characters can just ring the number and get straight through to the Happy Boys. They will check the team's bona fides, ask all sorts of weird questions, then finally agree to a meet. Alternatively the number will just be for a professional contact, a so-called matchmaker. She will charge a few hundred to give them a name and the address of a bar, where they will meet someone who knows someone... This way the players could find themselves working through several layers of contacts in some Med-side city (Marseilles? Genoa? Cartagena?), but this has to be at the Ref's discretion. Either way, they must eventually get themselves a boat and be waiting at particular map coordinates off Cyprus in two days.

## THE HAPPY BOYS

The Happy Boys' ethos is a bit like Nietzsche meets beach party. While merry and open, they are constantly pushing, challenging, playing every sort of dominance game conceivable. They will keep the team waiting, set all sorts of ridiculous conditions on their boarding their 'flagship', quote astronomical fees, try and change the terms of the deal after it has been struck, etc. The harder the team fight their corner, the higher their stock; the more concessions they win, the more the Boys demand.

That 'flagship', incidentally, is quite a sight. One of the old 'flotels', floating residential units used by North Sea oil rig workers has been towed into the Med and refitted in a surreal mix of ultratech and Rube Goldberg. A modern rotary sail towers over the superstructure, computer-controlled to make the most of any winds. Arrays of solar cells fan out from the sides like flapping wings. Strings of coloured lights trail along the side of the ves-

sel, and a salvaged meteorological balloon is tethered to the bow, lifting the microwave antenna to a height of 50m.

What sort of challenges? Here are some ideas, but if you can come up with some that are more annoying, off-beat or evil, use them.

**Outta my way!** A big, burly Boy tries to push past a character on a narrow walkway - unless the character meekly surrenders his or her ground, this effectively becomes a fight for who manages to push the other back.

**Vy govoritni po-Russkyi?** A Girl sidles up to the team and starts addressing them in all sorts of foreign languages. Can they answer back? Can they reply in one she can't speak? If she 'wins', she just strolls off, with a smug grin...

**Gambling man?** Just a friendly little wager to pass the time. Only a couple of e-dolls. Well done! Lady Luck's certainly your input today, friend. Come on, let me try and win back some of my stake, man. Let's just jivvy up the pool. K?

**Give me a hand, ami.** A crewman asks a character to help him out with some not too difficult but certainly tricky task - perhaps requiring a DIFFICULT Athletics check, or, more likely, some Juryrigging. If the character fails, every crewman in sight falls about, helpless with laughter.

**That's mine, you thief!** A Boy suddenly starts shouting that one of the team is a thief, that his or her shirt, gun, gadget, bracelet or whatever is the Boy's. An ugly crowd will begin to gather. Time for some creative Intimidation, Cred, Charismatic Leadership or Persuasion...

The spokesperson(s) will be brought to the Big Boy himself, Darius November, and have to do a lot of Fast Talk/Streetwise/Intimidation/etc rolls to keep the price down and negotiations short. The fee will probably be around 1k eb. Other Boys (and Girls) will hassle the rest of the team. If their challenges are not met, they get more and more extravagant, demanding and cocky. This should not get dangerous - at worst, expen-



**Angel Franklin**

Punk poetess and off-and-on pirate radio DJ. Freedom's her thing and she's against The Man in all his forms - EC, corps, national governments. The characters will have to make sure they present themselves as champions of the underdog, not corp lackeys, but if they do, she's an invaluable contact for the counter-culture set. She hears about everything, knows everyone and gets invited to all their parties. A 1.5m bundle of energy.

**Quid pro quo**

Sure I gotta number. Only I can't remember it at the mo. You see, I've got this problem. S'only a little one, but it's on my mind and while it's timesharing my circuits, all that other data's just backed up offline. What, you think you can help? The contact wants a favour - and coincidentally it's something the characters can do. The best option is to focus it on something that requires the skills of whichever character has had less to do so far. Some netrunning, perhaps, or some investigative journalism (never call them smears). Be creative...

**Gutterboys**

The lowest of the low, their shanty slum is built in that old car graveyard. The cops keep saying they're going to move in and clear it up, but have been too busy shaking down foreigners and cashing their bribes this year to get down to it. What a shame if the person the team needs to speak to is in the middle of that violent, stinking hell. What a real shame if it's the night the cops finally decide to have their fun...

**THE CLEVER BIT**

sive - but infuriating. Yet if the team hold their line and win a decent share of all their challenges, the Boys will be delighted and true to their word.

Ultimately the Big Boy will be able to tell them that the only ship it could be is the *Mantle Voyager*, a Haitian-registered robotanker run by a shady Greek import/export firm called Freight Service International. Exactly where it is, though, he doesn't know. Au revoir!

So, how to find out more about the *Mantle Voyager*? FSI are in the phone book, run from a small suite of offices in the low-rent dockside part of Thessaloniki. The team may choose to visit in person, or through the net. Netrunning is easiest, and will reveal that the ship is due to be some 100km south of Mallorca on the day in question. What is the real giveaway, though, is that the ship will spend the whole day at a standstill, and its automated

## How the fratz do they know?

It's not actually that *difficult* to build an intelligence op like the Happy Boys'. You need contacts at every major port to keep you posted on which ships arrive, which leave, what cargoes they load and, critically, how much fuel (after all, it's cheaper to load the safe minimum, so if a ship seems drastically over-fuelled for its planned trip, it might be planning a detour). Then you need on-line access to the main databases: *Lloyd's List* (for official movements and plans) and *Global Maritime* (for performance stats - know how fast a ship can go, and you've an idea of where it can get to). Perhaps some netjocks to crack into roboships' systems. And, of course, a reputation for paying well for usable info. Add all this to two decades' experience and a Zetatech mainframe and you've got it.

Simple, no?

This does mean it would be *possible* for the team to go it alone. Possible, but hardly easy - their best bet would be to break into the Mediterranean Maritime Control network (based in Sicily) which correlates logged course plans and real-time data from spysats to ensure smooth maritime traffic control and vector search and rescue services should they be necessary. A runner able to mimic a S&R station *might* be able to get data on a specific ship, using a custom-written Stealth programme with the equivalent of a superrealistic ICON, Pseudo-Intellect and Movement, of Strength 5+. But that's only after narrowing the search down to one or two ships: a NEAR IMPOSSIBLE Streetdeal task to pick up the word on the streets, Library Use to isolate an appropriate ship owned by a small outfit, etc.

control relays have been disconnected. Most ships can be redirected from the centre, but the *Voyager* is out of contact, running on a preprogrammed course tape.

A personal visit will bring much the same information, albeit with the need for some judicious bribery, sneaky cunning or gratuitous violence. All FSI ships' courses are also kept on hard copy, and security is slack. The manager (Menelas Martis) is the only one who knows anything about the clandestine sideline in smuggler meets, and he is out of town and uncontactable. He's actually on the ship, since Martis is none other than the midman to whom the tech sold the gadget.

## THE VIOLENT BIT

The players will have to come up with ways to get at the ship. A cabin cruiser 'in distress'? A rented chopper? Whatever they do, they will end up on board the huge robotanker, a hull 365m long and 47m wide. All the cargo holds and belowdecks are locked under customs seal, but there is a small aux control shack at the prow and over 17,000 square metres of gantry-strewn deck. Just before the team sets out, though, Jacobsen gets in touch. Could they do what they can to find out to whom the gizmo is being sold, and pick up any data chips or the like they may have? If questioned, he'll be distant and gnomic: 'just in case'.

On board are Martis with three heavies and his contact, a Petrochem corporate (Luc Ferrard-M'boya), and his two bodyguards. Martis came by air, and the pilot is not due to pick him up until night, but the corp's chopper is still parked atop the ship. The heavies will probably not last long, but the Petrochem ninjas are another matter. Play the fight against them for paranoia and tension, slowly working through the rusting railings and towering gantries of the deck; a burst of fire here, a fleeting flicker of motion in the corner of the eye.

Ferrard-M'boya isn't up to that much in a fight, but he's game. If and when he's finally flatlined, he'll make a vain attempt to destroy his pocketcomp, trying - but failing - to throw it into the sea. If the team can't spot a hint this big, they had best go and become janitors, or something. Even though the ninjas are clean, and their boss isn't carrying anything as obvious as a corporate expense card, he made an amateurish mistake in wearing his Petrochem-logo tie. The highest Awareness character in the team will spot this giveaway.

## THE AFTERMATH

When the shooting stops, there probably won't be any of the losing side left alive, so let's hope that's the bad guys. The gadget will be there for retrieval - perhaps a little damaged, but the principal doesn't mind, the idea was to deny it to a rival.

Jacobsen will be delighted to receive the pocketcomp. If the team try to poke around first, they'll soon discover it contains heavily encrypted data and nasty defences (see next adventure). Even if the code is broken, all that is revealed is a string of apparently meaningless coordinates. Jacobsen will politely, genially, elegantly but inflexibly decline to say what's so special about the data. "Not yet, not yet."

## DARIUS NOVEMBER

## ROCKER AFRICAN

INT 9, REF 6, CL 10, TECH 6, ATT 4, LK 6,  
MA 6, EMP 7, BT 5

Aggressive, capricious, whimsical, jovial, Darius is a social animal, a Happy Boy writ large.

**CYBER:** openframe cyberarm

**SKILLS:** Charisma +6, Handgun +4, Melee +4, Awareness +7, Teaching +6, Interview +5, Seduction +6, Fast Talk +6, Human Perception +7, Streetwise +5, Intimidate +4, Wardrobe/Style +4

**OUTFIT:** gold-plated Colt 38 Detective, personal stereo, cellphone, pocket TV

**TYPICAL HAPPY BOY/GIRL**

**NOMAD AFRICAN**

**INT 6, REF 8, CL 6, TECH 6, ATT 4, LK 7, MA 5, EMP 6, BT 6**

**SKILLS:** Family +3, Handgun +2, Melee +2, Athletics +3, Brawling +4, Water Vessel +5, Awareness +3, Gamble +6, Fast Talk +4, Human Perception +4, Streetwise +3, Intimidate +3, one or more specialised skill(s) +3-+6

**OUTFIT:** switchblade, personal stereo

**MENELAS MARTIS**

**FIXER GREEK**

**INT 6, REF 5, CL 6, LK 8, MA 7, BT 2**

**A shy, weasely little man, a smile like the flash of a monoknife.**

**SKILLS:** Streetdeal +3, Handgun +3, Water Vessels +5, Awareness +3, English +3

**OUTFIT:** armour t-shirt under suit, cellphone, laptop, Dai Lung Cybermag 15

**MARTIS' HEAVIES**

**SOLOS LEBANESE**

**INT 2, REF 6, CL 8, LK 4, MA 5, BT 10**

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +5, Handgun +5, SMG +5, Brawling +7

**OUTFIT:** armour t-shirt, Uzi, LeRoi Maxi-10, fighting knife

**LUC FERRARD-M'BOYA**

**CORP FRENCH**

**INT 7, REF 4, CL 7, LK 4, MA 8, BT 4**

Cautious and fastidious, but clearly a man on the up, from his biosculpt looks to his monogrammed orbital ore signet ring.

**CYBER:** interface plugs; skinwatch; cyberear w/ wearman, phone link

**SKILLS:** Resources +5, Handgun +4, Pilot Gyro +5, English +5, Arabic +5

**OUTFIT:** cellphone, pocketcomp, Militech Avenger, trauma card

**PETROCHEM HEAVY**

As UDIG Security Officer from last adventure, but armed with Beretta 93R2 smart machinepistols. One also has an Arasaka 12 autoshotgun.

**Off the peg**

The FSI system is impersonal, scarcely protected, typical of the sort you can just pick up complete at a cheap office systems supplier's. It is a type 4 standard layout (p.155, **VFA**), just a bland collection of bare cells, with simple typewriter (workstation) or filing cabinet (datastore) ICONs. It has one CPU, a strength 2 Data Wall and a strength 2 Code Gate. The only defences are a Watchdog at the Gate and a Krash in the boss's (useless) private database.

**There go the expenses...**

Equipment and transport always eat into those profit margins. Hiring a simple little cabin cruiser for a day will cost 200 eb, plus choo. Any bullet holes cost extra, both for repairs and silence. A chopper will cost at least 1k eb, plus avgas and perhaps plus pilot.

**That chopper...**

No one's really going to be that dumb to try and make a break for it in an unarmoured helicopter in the middle of a firefight, are they? Well, Luc might, and if he makes it to the bird alive and has thirty seconds to warm the engines up, it will take very little to shoot it down during lift-off. A nice touch if you feel a game session just isn't complete without at least one technicalour explosion...

Needless to say, if Luc crashes and burns, he had left his portacomp behind in the rush...

If the team have a larcenous streak, of course, they may try and appropriate the helicopter for their own use. An Osaka AeroMechanicals 212 retails for just over 100,000 eb, after all. Of course, the fact that registration codes in the hull, flight recorder, rotors and hardburned into the flight computer are on record both in Interpol and Petrochem computers might dissuade them. If Jacobsen finds out, he'll take them to pieces with icily obscene exactitude, then try to persuade them to junk it. Hiding the codes would require either a major and time-consuming tech-job, or netrunning into both relevant registration data-bases. But then, it is worth 100k...

Selling it is another danger area. Unless the team have already developed a resource-rich and reliable contact, they won't get more than 5-15k eb, and risk leaving a trail for vengeful corp-men to trace...

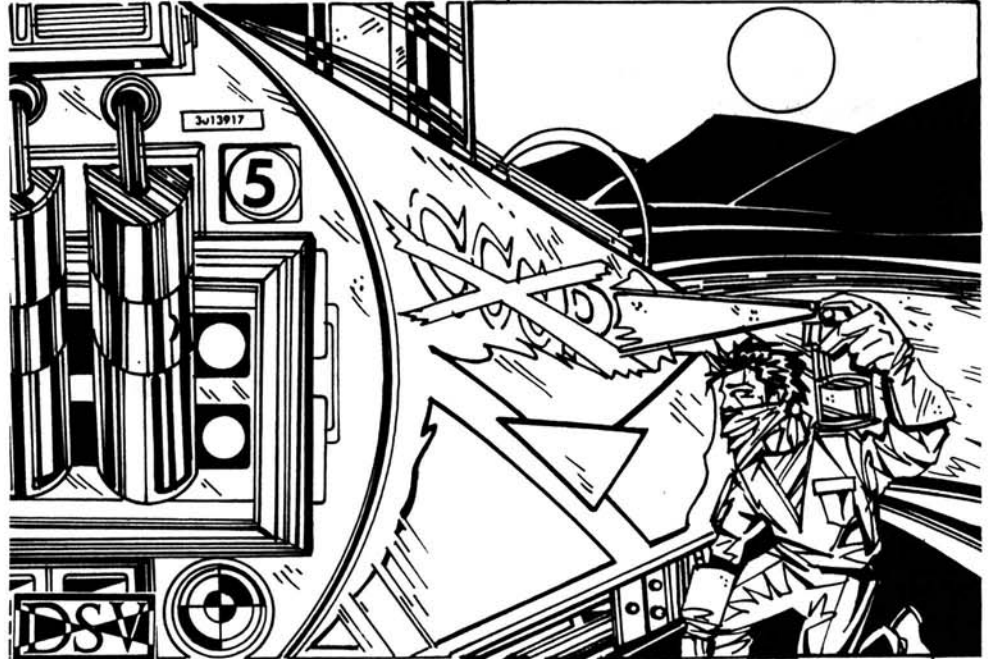


**Nudges**

No cash on the table, no clear idea of the scenario, not even a cash float for expenses; the characters may be a little wary of getting involved. They might want to consider whether they think Jacobsen is likely to be selling them a line, how well they'd get on without a midman, or indeed, how happy he would be if they decided to go and catch a vidflick, instead. If the team includes any medias, Jacobsen will also add that it will make one helluva story, one monster story. What else could induce them to get involved? Were Jacobsen's pad mysteriously firebombed, this could suggest there's some truth in the matter. Then, when the team get a phone call demanding the portacomp, followed up by some warning sniping, they might feel either their honour is at stake, or their skins depend on getting to the bottom of things. Incidentally, when Jacobsen is lying low, he does it well. Any attempts to trace him (from where the parcel was posted, through his bank account, etc) will be futile. It may, however, attract the attention of other, nastier people who are also on the hunt.

**Hypo**

Class: Utility  
 Strength: 8  
 MU: 4  
 Like a high-power **GateMaster**.



**B U G S I N T H E S Y S T E M**

So why was a Petrochem suit after a satspot system?

An unholy alliance of Petrochem and KGB hardliners want to feed misleading crops can data into Soviet spysat telemetry just before the forthcoming EC-Sov talks to fix next year's grain quotas. How do arch-apparatchiky and ultra-capitalists find common ground? Simple. When Europe's harvest is good, grain prices fall below the fixed Community Exchange Programme rate, so it's worth Moscow's while ordering very little in advance through the CEP and just buying what they need on the open market. Every ruble of hard currency saved helps push the reforms that little bit further.

Fooled into overestimating Europe's coming harvest, the Kremlin would order much too little CEP-grain and face mass hunger when it can't afford to make up the shortfall. Hunger

that would bring people onto the streets and justify the KGB's calls for 'a return to law and order'. Hunger that, in Petrochem's eyes, would finally break Moscow's grip on the Ukraine, the last unexploited opportunity for an agricorp. Besides, Petrochem still remembers its bloody defeat in its dust-up with SovOil in the South China Sea. Bad blood.

All sound a little complex? Don't worry, there will be lots of gratuitous violence. This is *Cyberpunk*, remember?

**WHERE'S THE MIDMAN?**

Quite soon after the last adventure, Jacobsen suddenly drops out of sight. He won't answer his cellphone, none of his contacts know where he is, and if anyone checks out his pad, he's obviously just packed up and gone. The next day a courier brings the team a parcel posted the day before he vanished, containing

the 'comp from last episode, a microdisk and a standard vidchip of the home movie sort (playable on any vid) with a message from him:

"Yes, I've had to drop out of sight for the moment. I think I'm safe enough, but I've got to keep moving. There's some heavy biz about to go down, and I'm afraid you're unlucky enough to have an invite. This is *important*.

"You'll have to trust me - I hope you feel you can. I already know you're good, and I can just hope you're good enough. You remember this 'comp? I think it contains raw data being used to insert some virus into a system through the comsats, or take over an orbital battlesat, or something like that. All I do know is that this is *big* - too big to take to the authorities. I'm not sure who I can trust beyond you.

"It's got to be stopped- and it's up to you to do it. Crack the data in the comp, it should be satellite telemetry, then take that to a suit called Mohammed Badjaoui, Professor Mohammed Badjaoui. He's at the Sorbonne. He knows me as Bjoern Darlgard, and he owes me a favour. The disk, well, the disk is something I scrounged-it might come in handy later. Probably blew my cover, so use it sharp, K?

"Look, I know you're not the Red Cross. There should be cash involved, but I can't yet say how much. But this *has* to be stopped. I've got to go - be careful. See you."

## CRACKING THE CODE

If one of the team is a netrunner, the next step is easy, but otherwise it should be fairly straightforward to find a hacker-for-hire to break into the portacomp. Its datastore is coded and protected, and the operation is effectively like a netrun into a pocket system. *Inside the net, the mystery disk manifests itself as containing a sophisticated and specialised British antivirus prog, still experimental and provisionally labelled Hypo.*

Running inside the 'comp is similar to the net, but the atmosphere is different. Where the net is immense, an entire universe manifest, the 'comp is cramped and claustrophobic, shadowy and gloomy. Not a 'black, star-strewn void' but a structure of pale green walkways and platforms in flat, total-darkness.

Somehow the netrun must succeed. If all else fails, fudge matters or allow them to hire a better 'runner, hotter icebreakers. The secure memory store contains strings of telemetry data, and can be printed out or copied to the 'runner's deck.

## P A R I S

Still, the telemetry itself is not much use, and Professor Bedjaoui's expertise will be necessary. He's easy to contact, the head of the Sorbonne's Department of Orbital Dynamics. The name Darlgard will provoke a reaction, and he will demand a face to face meeting where he'll agree to analyse the data, but first will require a favour.

In fact Badjaoui is a member of the eco-terrorist group **Terranostra**. He has been given a mission but, at 57, is a bit too old for such excitement, and will induce the characters to do it for him. He'll sound them out and, if he thinks it safe, will be honest about it. Otherwise he'll present it as something to do with departmental politics.

Exactly what the mission is depends on how involved and dangerous you want to make this segment of the adventure. A few suggestions:

**Blowing the whistle:** A waste disposal firm has begun cutting corners, sending its tankers of toxic pollutant straight through Paris instead of along designated (and far longer) routes. Tail a lorry convoy until a suitable place (say, passing the Ministry of Public Health, or near the company's head office on the outskirts of the city) and blow one off the road. That'll make a mess too big

## Something in the air

Bad luck, the day before the Daewoo-Norco chemical refinery south of the CPC had a serious accident. It should shut down, but with an order for the MLA to complete, it was awarded a waiver from the (already lax) pollution laws. For the next fortnight, the plex is overlain by foul-smelling grey-brown mist that thickens at night into noxious smog. Queues at the streetcorner oxyvends stretch round the block.

Cheap Indonesian face masks are selling as fast as they can be uncrated (20 eb), but are no more effective than a handkerchief over the mouth. When it drizzles, as it so often does, the water burns in the eye and on the skin. Everyone is tetchy and uncomfortable, and Tactile and Olfactory Boosts make life particularly miserable. Smoggy shadows also provide all sorts of dark, unseen opportunities for the criminal element, too. Hope those wounds don't get infected.

## Culture Shock

Remember: Continental characters will be unused to the everyday violence and casual mayhem commonplace in Britain, and even British or US characters will have lost some of their edge if they've been living it up over the Channel. The best way to hit them with a little culture shock is consciously to speed up the pace of play. Have them hassled by some heavily armed police, set upon by a gang of boosters, caught in the middle of a shootout between rival gangs, and that's just getting to the airport carpark; when they get to their hired car it's jacked up on blocks and some kids are beginning to remove the wheels...

Skat-snatching is big, this month. Now that skateboards are back in fashion, juvie gangs like to sidle up to a target, snatch something, then skat. Wouldn't it be terrible if the comp data was snatched. Doesn't bear thinking about...

for any cover-up, though it might also get all those gendarmes and corpcoops a bit peeved.

**Can we help?** A small recycling outfit has been targeted for buy-out by industrial giant RecyCo. Convinced the big corp is just after a cover for dumping waste in Central Europe, the owner/manager refused. Now she's facing some heavy duty intimidation and could do with some equally heavy duty guardian angels; not just fighters, but techs (to locate and neutralise a sabotage device) and cops (to get the gendarmes to do their job).

**Catch the pigeon:** A courier with a vial of an experimental weedkiller is passing through Paris tonight. But Terranostra has discovered the 'weedkiller' is actually a new defoliant eco-war bioagent due for trials in Central America. It must be stolen so that a counter can be devised, but the courier is only in Paris overnight: flying in from Stockholm at DeGaulle airport, dinner, overnight at a classy hotel and the morning stratliner to Miami.

**Bad boy:** Michel Ponfilly, one of the Ministry of Public Health's chief environmental inspectors, is on the take and it's time he was taught a little lesson. He might even survive it. What's it going to be: violence; sabotage to his car; a quick netrun to re-write his credit record into the red; a hard-hitting bit of investigative journalism?

If pressed hard, he will ultimately agree to help even without the team carrying out his mission for him: he owes 'Darlgaard'.

The telemetry is targeting data to lock a specialized uplink transmitter onto a satellite. He can't be wholly sure which uplink, but it is clear it is for one in Northern Britain and would scope into a Soviet sputnik (Kosmos-8755). The problem is that without details of what sort of uplink system would be used, he can't be more precise about its location.

This requires a specialist, and Badjaoui knows just the person. Dr Susan Lei is retired now, living in the Cheshire Plains Conurb, but 'If

she can't crack it, try prayer.' He will pass on the address, then cordially hope never to meet the team again. If they seem likely recruits for Terranostra, though, he will pass their names on to his control. One last thought: "Oh, by the way - you do realise this is Russian-source data? KOSMOSOV's signature and format are very distinctive."

**A VIOLENT INTERLUDE**

The team's progress hasn't gone totally unnoticed. Some Petrochem troubleshooters have followed them and will try to delete this little annoyance. They don't rate the team that much, though, and hence aren't using top notch triggerboys. Instead they will sic a puppet Parisian streetgang on them, hoping to make it look like just another crime statistic.

The gang, the **Sans Culottes**, are a working-class revivalist meatboy group, modelling themselves loosely on French Revolutionaries. Dressed in tattered smocks and big boots, their idea of fun is to gang up in a middle-class area (the rich can afford too much security) and 'level', stomping random victims and stealing all their goods. Being meatboys, the chance to scrag someone with cyber is an added bonus. They really shouldn't play grown up games, though: the team will be set on by a group of equal size, and it won't take too much to break them. If one is captured, he can be induced to admit that orders came from their 'patron', an unnamed Petrochem operator, but there the trail ends. Enough of that, they've got a plane to catch.

**SUNNY CHESHIRE**

The Cheshire Plains Conurbation doesn't feature on many tourists' itineraries. Most of the smart bits are corporate territories, and the Liverpool Combat Zone is dangerous enough to train troops for Northern Ireland. It's dirty, hard-edged, violent and squalid, and any US characters will probably feel quite at home.

But Dr Susan Lei lives in New Canton, the colourful and bustling Hong Kong refugee community enclave. Largely left to its own devices, it has an effective internal administration based around local community councils and residential militias, albeit one increasingly coming under the control of the British Triads.

Dr Lei lives in a large, comfortable flat in New Canton's outskirts. An elegant, collected woman in her early 60s, she will eventually be persuaded to help the team. Have the spokesman make a roll of EMP + Credibility or Persuasion + D10. A result of less than 5 means she refuses; 5-16 that she will require her usual consultation fee of 500eb per day; 17+ and the situation intrigues her and she will do it free, out of boredom.

If the team fails, or cannot afford her, or try to intimidate her, the flat is raided. The main plate glass window is suddenly shattered as two stun grenades hurtle in, then two black-clad men swing through on monomer lines, machine pistols in their hands. Bang, bang. If Lei dies, her trauma card will save her, while if the two triggerboys die, they will have nothing to identify them. If one is captured, the team have two rounds to interrogate him before a safeguard command in his skull is triggered and his head explodes in a puff of ick. Whoever it is that doesn't like the team, he's not nice people.

In fact, it's the hardline KGB element, scraping the barrel to find trustworthy men. The most the team will have the chance to get out of the gungel is that he's Russian and a tech, not a solo, before he's gone. But if nothing else, the incident will persuade Dr Lei that the sooner she cooperates, the sooner the team will be gone and the sooner she won't be a target.

She takes the team to a comp centre where she has an account and starts feeding in the telemetry to be processed by a programme she has written and perfected over the years. For about ten minutes the machine hums and

grumbles. Just as Lei says it should be finished in five more minutes, the 'intrusion' alarm winks on - someone has broken into the system and is beginning to wipe the data.

If the team includes a netrunner, he can jack in ASAP to catch the baddie in the act. Again, he's an also-ran, a KGB agent selected for his loyalty to the hardliners (rather than his ability), and will soon break and run since he's already critically decimated the data. The 'runner can follow him back to *Obshchizdentorg*, of which more below. Failing that, since the *Chekist* is using a direct public phone line, a techie can try to use the link to trace it and will again come up with *Obshchizdentorg's* number. If all else fails, Dr Lei activates the computer's videoboard: the raider isn't using even minimal caution or masking, so the team can simply watch him withdraw and return to *Obshchizdentorg's* base icon, the location of which they can then extrapolate using a streetmap.

## OBSHCHIZDENTORG

Well, that telemetry data's gone, but there is this new lead. *Obshchizdentorg*, the 'General Goods Trading Company', is a cover outfit for KGB illegal ops in Britain. Its manager is a hardliner, so the offices have become the base for the plot.

A visit on the ground reveals a low, squat octagon, almost windowless and secure behind layers of electrified razor wire, well-paid British mercs and Russian security specs, automated camera/gun posts and other, hidden defences. Consider it impregnable. In the net it looks much the same, a featureless octagon of black glass, with extravagantly tough data walls. Notable is a long tube of the same black ice, a secure datalink that stretches into the distance. In fact it leads to an unmarked exchange in Stockholm and thence to another, well-policed one in Moscow.

### Stun Grenades

Many are still the old, 'flash-bangs' that explode in a loud and brilliant explosion, but these are the 'clean' sort, essentially minute voder boxes/arc lights that burn themselves up in a half-second *son et lumiere* that would stun a *Blood and Ice* audience, but without the shrapnel so dangerous in space or pressurized aircraft. Both types have a 6m blast radius, and anyone affected must roll a Stun Save. Anti-dazzle eyes/goggles or ear plugs each make the roll one easier.

### Scubbing the files

It's actually very hard to totally wipe a file. Sharp operators may come up with a way of undoing the damage done, first by using Hypo to destroy the self-replicating micro-viri the enemy runner used to ruin them, then Re-Rezzing the whole. The location of the upstation, Bowness, could then once again be determined, though this time with netrunner support to ensure no re-run of the attack.

### Going to the authorities

Are the team really this unimaginative, this cowardly, this upright? Anyway, forget it - Petrochem has spread a thick lubricating film of eurobucks to keep the op running smooth, and the team face at best being hauled up before the Emergency Powers Magistrate and a 100 eb fine one piece for wasting his time.

## Note:

**The Street:**

'Oh, the KGB. Yeah, got it on good auth, know a guy who's output was, something, forget what. Anyway, they're too heavy just for legal biz. Only time their Sovs come out, they're tooled like they're headed for Afghanistan. And once one of their mercs got a bit, you know, talkative. They found him face down in the River Mersey. Hey, weren't they in the screamsheets a while back?..'

**The Cops**

'Yes, we know all about them. KGB, no question. Still, it's best to have them where we can keep an eye on them. Anyway, they seem to have been deactivated now, they're just messing about with some flim-flam misdirection. Sponsorship, something like that. No, can't remember what, it was in the papers, but I remember they kicked up a fuss and refused protection. More fool them. Look, I've got work to do.'

**A Corp Contact**

'No, I don't think I've heard of them. They can't do much trading. Anyway, the Soviets are in deep freeze at the moment, saving all their hard currency before the grain talks with the EC. Until that's over the Russians don't seem to be able to go use a payphone if it would cost hard currency.'

**The Screamsheets**

SOV BOFFINS DIG FOR SQUEEZE RELICS IN CORP-CORP SPONSOR DEAL

A team of Soviet archeologists are to venture into the Sellafield Contaminated Waste Exclusion Zone to excavate a ruined house of Bowness in a bid to recover antique Russian icons owned by a resident at the time of the Melt Down. Team leader Professor Georgii Sliun'kov told CPCEN, 'We are very excited. This is a unique opportunity to rediscover our national heritage.' The expedition is being jointly funded by the megacorp Petrochem and the Soviet firm *Obshchizdentorg*.

— CPC Evening News



So there aren't many options for direct action. But there is always the information front, tapping the streetwhisper. If necessary, Lei will suggest checking the screamsheet back-indexes. There are essentially four main sources of info (see sidebar).

Coincidence? Hardly. Any Briton with Education +4 or better, or otherwise the character with the highest score, will remember something else. Before the accident which left much of England's north-western coast deserted and mildly radioactive, Bowness was the site of a satellite communications station. Bingo!

By the way, if they ask Lei about Kosmos-8755 she'll say she's pretty sure it's an economic resource sat—monitoring grain fields, probably.

**G E T O U T !**

The team may decide to leave straight away. Dr Lei will do everything to encourage them - while they're around, she's a target. She'll give them a brief summary of the 'Squeeze', the Sellafield Contaminated Waste Exclusion Zone, then bid them gone.

If they check, they'll realise they're being followed. A team of *Obshchizdentorg's* British mercs have been assigned to keep tabs and, if possible, flatline them. Play it by ear. They can either be used to keep up the pressure, introduce a bit more meaningless violence or impart a little information. If spotted and captured, for example, the team leader might admit they were meant to ensure the team don't go into the Squeeze. If that's not enough of a clue you'll have to use sky-writing.

**GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN?**

The Squeeze is a restricted zone, forbidden to unauthorized incursion by land, sea and air alike. The air and sea exclusions are handled as part of the overall control of Britain's frontiers, with over-the-horizon backscatter radar, laser rangefinders, IR imagers, etc, and enforced with the high-tech toys generals like to buy themselves for Christmas: particle beams, hypersonic swarmjet missiles, net-vectoring transonic interceptors. The land perimeter, though, is left to the army-rejects and indentured convicts of the Restricted

Zone Perimeter Patrol (REZOPERPATROL), much less of a challenge.

Hence overland is by far safest and easiest. The easiest route is to drive up the S-2, the new multilane Strategic Highway that leads from Bristol up through the CPC to Carlisle, past the Squeeze, and on to Glasgow. As a military road, it is relatively safe and well-kept, and the team won't be taking it far into Scotland, so they probably won't have to worry about the Scottish National Army's guerillas. The other real alternative is to take the lev or fly to Carlisle, now really one big army and airforce base, and pick up the S-2 there. The team better not take the southern sliproad onto the S-2, though: that goes past the huge Churchill-Montgomery Air Base, from whence fly the high-alt hogs that have been carpet-bombing Ayrshire of late. Security there is tight and paranoid.

If they infiltrate into the very south of the Squeeze, the team probably won't even face the additional hassle of getting across the NOREASTURBMARLAUTH / SCOTSMARLAUTH border. Easy.

## T H E S Q U E E Z E

Getting into the Squeeze overland isn't too much of a challenge. Quite frankly, the 'Razors' don't get much work since sightseers are few, and the only people penetrating the perimeter with any frequency are the badlanders. Maladjusted nomad gangs hiding out from the authorities, draft evaders, criminals and misfits, they roam the Squeeze, scavenging in abandoned towns and slipping out for a bit of piracy, trade or simple banditry when the mood strikes them. But they tend to know either when to bribe the Razors or how to sneak past them.

Penetrating on foot requires an AVERAGE roll against the highest Wilderness Survival skill or INT in the team: EASY if on foot,

DIFFICULT if in ordinary, non-off-road cars. A Razor patrol will be a squad of 6 in a Land Rover. They may be ordered out of the way with Authority or Cred (AVERAGE), persuaded with Fast Talk (DIFFICULT), or bribed. Alternatively they may be bullied away with Intimidate (DIFFICULT), lots of guns, or simply blown away, but in this case by the time the team want to get out rolls to avoid patrols will be 3 harder, and result in meeting an armoured van with ten men and a pintle-mounted LMG.

## N O W W H A T ?

The team may have unravelled some of the story, but most likely they've just got some suspicions and guesses. What they do next is up to them. Partly. If they just rush off to the mothballed satstation near Bowness, they will find themselves up against a very tough group of dug-in Petrochem heavies and KGB Spetsnaz ('Special Forces'). Unless they're seriously heavy-duty, the team will get chewed. You could let them try this first, then bug out, or you could throw them a clue that they might need help while they're on the road. They'll come across a battered group of badlander scouts, too tired and wounded to be anything more than suspicious.

'We heard some rinky-dink archeologists goin' to Bow and thought hey, man, let's have some fun, but, frack, those guys were heavy, I mean really packing, they got Jax with some kind of rocket, and then poor old Skunk got more holes in him than, well, something really full o'holes, and we thought, fratz, man, so much for a good time, and turned tail, but Kay went down when they took out her bike, an' I got this hole, and, fratz, don't rumble with archeologists, I say. Agnes is going to skin us, she'll be hot as thermite. Fratz.'

The team may well decide some crazed badlander cannonfodder is just what they need to

### Bribery

The going rate for a Squeeze patrol is 1,000 eb - to know this is an AVERAGE Streetwise task for British characters only. Bribes of anything below 400 eb are an IMPOSSIBLE Streetdeal task, 400-700 eb VERY DIFFICULT, 701-900 eb DIFFICULT, 901-1200 eb AVERAGE, anything more EASY. If a bribe is refused the characters have one more chance to offer a higher figure and roll again before the Razors think about target practice.

**Note:**

Spokesman has +6 or more **Wardrobe & Style**, **Intimidate** or **Leadership**  
+1 each

Spokesman has **CL**, **ATT** or **BT** of at least 8  
+1 each

Spokesman is a **Nomad** or **Rocker**  
+2

Spokesman is a **Corp**, **Cop**, **MedTech**, **Tech** or **Netrunner**  
-2

If bribe offered, value less than 3,000 eb  
-4

Bribe 6,000 eb plus  
+3

Bribe offered in the form of guns, fuel or drugs  
+4

Bribe promised  
-4

Team provided medical assistance to wounded scouts  
+1

**The heavies**

The Petrochem gunsels are local talent, streetscum sharpshooter. Play them as individuals first and foremost, with all the tricks and ploys of a hundred brawls and wetworks. The Sovs, on the other hand, are soldiers. Perhaps a little less streetwise, they have been trained and have fought as a group. Play them as a team and, given their radio splices, a formidably coordinated one at that.

Exactly how many of each should depend on the strength of the team, and whether they have badlander support. The basic number is ten Petrochems and a squad of eight *spetsnaz* (plus *Karaev*): this would be quite enough to decimate the badlanders given the use of emplaced MGs, cover and mines.

While the team will probably have surprise, play the baddies as smart as they should be.

bring things to a satisfactory conclusion, and could easily persuade the scouts to bring them to their gang's camp.

Alternatively, they may have sneaked up to the station before the badlander raid. They will see that the defenders include a number of obviously skilled solos, and that various capacitance wires and traps have been set up. The station has been reconnected with the power grid. They'll then see the scouts whooping and roaring in on their motorbikes, and being cut to pieces, half fleeing back in the direction of the team. The same option becomes available, or alternatively, the incident will have allowed the team to get an accurate count of the numbers of bad guys, the location of the traps, detectors and gun posts prior to an attack of their own.

**BADLANDER PARTY**

If the team goes along to the badlander camp they'll find a small abandoned industrial unit, now fire-gutted and roofless, packed with badlanders of every age, colour and manner sitting in groups round camp fires, engaging in friendly bouts of eye-gouging or polishing their motorbikes. The only constants are the leather jackets, studded with all sorts of badges, buttons and trinkets and the (at best) nodding acquaintance with personal hygiene.

Dominant, though, is their unlikely leader, former convent-girl and convicted mass-murderess **Agnes Dei**. With her long necklace of broken trauma cards, distinctive dental work, black stetson almost totally covered with painstakingly sewed-on spent bullets, and her habit of muttering under her breath in Latin when at rest, she is a bizarre, barbaric and unnerving sight. But she has an undoubted force of personality, and it is in dealing with her that the team's chances rest.

She's whimsical, suspicious, bloodthirsty and loyal to her people, roughly in that order.

She'll probably hear the team out, and then say that she's prepared for them to put their case 'on the podium': climbing onto a rusting nest of metal pipes and addressing the assembled tribe.

The difficulty of the task of motivating the badlanders depends on the approach: bribery, appealing to their logical or better natures or just whipping them up into a killing, vengeful frenzy. Needless to say, the latter is wisest. The basic difficulty number is 25 (20 for the last): spokesman's EMP + D10 + a relevant skill (**Charismatic Leadership** in any circumstances, **Cred** to persuade, **Fast Talk** to persuade or bribe) +/- the mods in the sidebar.

Success will get the badlanders roaring, cheering, whooping and rushing for their bikes and guns - it will be a **DIFFICULT** **Leader** or **Charismatic Leadership** roll to restrain them and get them to think of tactics or anything so sissy.

If the team fails, all is not lost. As, in the face of stony silence, the spokesman begins to dry up, a voice from the back yells, "Trial by combat!" Other badlanders gleefully take up the cry, and begin to clear an arena 5m in radius. The decision whether to attack will be decided by combat, a champion from the team taking on one of the badlanders until either one is dead or one surrenders *and the other accepts*. No ranged weapons - you can't even throw your knife. Who's feeling lucky?

The badlander champion is a roughly square chunk of malice and muscle called **Plug**. Along with a varied collection of parasites and intestinal disorders, Plug carries a range of nasty weapons, though he's also quite happy to wrestle. He will only offer to surrender if **Critically Wounded**, and will only accept a surrender if at least **Seriously Wounded**. But come on - surely the team's champion won't have too much trouble with him?

## SIXTY GUN CONCLUSION

But whether alone or with the badlanders, by stealth or by storm, ultimately the team will have to go and crack that satcom station. Remember, the day the satellite telemetry was set for is coming up very soon. This is the finale, so make it dramatic.

Certainly the raw materials are there. The badlanders can muster a dozen scouts and another forty soldiers, of whom ten also have motorbikes. There's also Agnes. On the other side are the bad guys: the Petrochem operator (Jason Winterfeather), his one netrunner (the Backdoor Bandit) and guards, the renegade KGB general running his side of the op (General Grigorii Prokof'ev), two KGB techs, and KGB *spetsnaz* under Captain Nikolai Karaev.

How do things get evened out? If the badlanders just rush in they'll be decimated by a few well-placed claymore mines and the crossfire from three machinegun nests, but not only will they take a few enemy out with them, they'll create an ideal diversion for the team to move in. If the badlanders are a bit more cautious, the effect will be much the same since there's always one who thinks an attack isn't worth making without a few good rebel yells, but they'll kill a few more heavies on the way. Most badlanders will die in pyrotechnic Hollywood style; after all, this is the team's show...

As soon as the attack has started, the Bandit will activate a programme he has written to get into the Kosmos' system and release the virus. If the team has a netrunner jacked in, let this become a vicious netfight, with the possibility that if the virus is released, the team's man can still follow it into the Kosmos and use Hypo to clean it out. Otherwise have the team come across him just as he is about to launch the virus and either have to stop him or, if they are too late, force him to use Hypo to undo his work.

Winterfeather will wait with his jock and two ninjas until the virus is launched (or until the team get to close), and then make a break for his all-wheel drive ATV parked round the back. Adequate recon by the team may have already discovered it.

As for General Prokof'ev, he knows better than to be caught in the West on a project like this. At the first sign of trouble he, one *spetsnaz* and a tech/pilot will drop out of sight. They have hidden an AV-4 in a culvert nearby (only spotted by scouts making a VERY DIFFICULT Awareness roll) and as the fighting dies down suddenly jazz up the juice and lift off and straight out to sea. Remember, an AV-4 has 40 SP armour, and can soak up 100 SDP of damage.

## DEUS EX MACHINATION

Perhaps the team will have spotted the AV-4 beforehand. Perhaps they caught the Russians en route. Perhaps they'll have the firepower at hand to blow the aero out of the sky. But if all else fails, a figure comes out of the scrub by the beach and raises a long tube to his shoulder. The *Apilas* unguided missile he's using is ancient, designed for anti-tank use, but at this range does the trick very nicely. The AV-4 fireballs, quickly quenched in a cloud of steam as it smashes into the waves.

There's another option, if the team failed to enlist the badlanders and are on the verge of being creamed—the sudden arrival of the whole gang, bikes roaring and guns blazing, followed by a battered jeep.

Either way, it's Jacobsen, albeit rather more tired and bruised than when last seen, and with a field dressing over his left cheek. Nonchalantly, he'll join the team: "Let's go home." That might itself be a problem, especially if they've already alerted the Razors. The best bet might be to persuade/pay the badlanders to take them with them. After all, as soon as the

### Turning out the lights

The team may think to turn off the power supply. This would entail using the fireman's switch in the lobby or disconnecting it externally, taking a charge equivalent to a grenade or an AVERAGE Basic Tech roll. This won't stop the netrunner - his deck has its own batteries, which can power the uplink for the time needed - but will kill all the lights.

If a netrunner tries to infiltrate the station, this is possible, though of limited value. An old design, most of the equipment is mechanical, though there are net controls for the lights, lift and fire sprinklers (-1 to most task rolls if caught in the spray) on a room by room basis. More important, though, the 'runner will be able to spot the Petrochem jock about to squirt a custom-engineered virus into the Kosmos' system as soon as the uplink dish is aligned. This virus will spread itself through the net of Soviet spysats monitoring European and Russian fields and begin gradually, subtly to shade the results to suggest better harvests all round, to mesh with disinformation being spread on the ground by Prokof'ev's allies.

### Virus Hunt

Fortunately the virus is built for subtlety over speed and takes an hour to infect each CPU. Hence the netrunner only has to get past the outer defences and hit it while still in the back-up CPU (this modular structure is typical of Soviet systems of the 2005-10 Five Year Plan, as anyone with Systems Knowledge +4 or better knows). The virus has a strength of 5, but can only be attacked with Hypo or GateMaster.



## Enfield-Ubichi LastChance

**SHG • 0 • J • C •**  
**4d6(12ga) • 1 • 1 • UR**

A dangerous and depressingly popular variation on the polymer one-shot, a fibreglass tube 45cm long containing little more than a shell and a spring-loaded firing mechanism. Beloved of all sorts of hoodlums, lowlifes and hitmen.

fighting's over the survivors begin scavenging for parts, goods and ammo. A couple of old badlanders even wheel out an ancient solar cell-powered cryofreezer and start picking over the bodies for any useful parts going begging. The team could always attach themselves to the gang next time they slip out of the Squeeze to sell their booty.

## S O , W H A T W A S G O I N G O N ?

Jacobsen will explain that all along he's been a deep-cover KGB agent—loyal to Gorborev—who got a hint a plot was being hatched some time back. Unsure of who he could turn to (how far *did* Prokof'ev's plot go? Who else was in on it?), and lacking any hard evidence (even in 2020, KGB generals are not arrested lightly), he - Aleksandr Sergeevich Batenko - needed a tool, and one he could use at arm's length, just in case. So he found one, the team. So what has been the importance of the previous jobs? First, he had to test and temper the team. Second, he had to make sure his bid was there at the right time so he could make sure Petrochem didn't get hold of the new sat-tracker. Without it, the plotters needed a satcomm station, limiting their options. Pretty chill, eh? Smooth and sharp, nein? Take this as your last lesson, then, squatwit—that's the way the streets go in Europe.

Now he's off, back to Mother Russia and, he reckons, the Order of Lenin, at least. He'll leave the team the keys to his safe deposit at the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro in Milan which contains some currency (3,000 eb), a Zeiss-Sopelem lasermike (overhears conversations in rooms by bouncing a laser beam from a glass window or similar and 'reading' the modulations), a totally unmarked, untraceable X-9mm and a case of six small platinum bars worth 500 eb each. He'll also have no further use for his Saab 2115 (max speed 180 kph, armoured to 35 SP, studded).

Besides which there's Hypo. The disk is copy-protected, but there should still be some way to turn an honest—even dishonest "e" buck from it.

Eventually he'll thank them nicely then leave. He's not sentimental, he's a pro. But who knows if the team will meet him again, and whether having something pleasant written in their KGB files could ever come in handy?

## PROFESSOR MOHAMMED B A D J A O U I

**TECH FRENCH (ALGERIAN-BORN)**

**INT 10, REF 2, CL 8, TECH 9, ATT 8,  
LK 9, MA 1, EMP 8, BT 3**

Shrewd and cautious, genuine idealism masked beneath a fussy facade.

**SKILLS:** Jury Rig +5, Driving +4, Awareness +2, System Knowledge +4, Education +9, Expert: Orbital Physics +10, Expert: Astronomy +9, French +9, German +5, Spanish +5, Teaching +10, Disguise +3, Basic Tech +6, Human Perception +8, Library Search +4

**OUTFIT:** Well-worn suit, pocket comp, trauma card

## S A N S C O U L O T T E S G A N G M E M B E R

**NOMAD FRENCH**

**INT 3, REF 6, CL 6, LK 5, MA 6, BT 9**

**SKILLS:** Family +4, Handgun +2, Melee +5, Athletics +4, Brawling +6

**OUTFIT:** Clubs. One punk, the leader, will also have an Enfield-Ubichi Last Chance and have taken muscle treatments to build to BT 11.

## Sambo

The Soviet army's own martial art, a hybrid of wrestling, judo and plain nastiness. Moves: Strike +2, Kick +2, Throw +3, Hold +2, Escape +2, Sweep +2, Grapple +2. Difficulty 3. Sambo is also designed to be used with weapons and can double as Melee skill.

**DR SUSAN LEI FBCS****TECH HONG KONG BRITISH**

**INT 10, REF 6, CL3, TECH 9, ATT 7,  
LK 6, MA 3, EMP 7, BT 1**

Formal and courteous, yet not unfriendly, a cerebral type, addicted to all manner of puzzles and conundra.

**SKILLS:** Jury Rig +3, Drive +3, Awareness +2, Education +10, Expert: Astronomy +8, Expert: Satellites +10, Russian +4, Spanish +4, Interview +5, Basic Tech +5, Human Perception +8, Library Use +5, Maths +8

**OUTFIT:** Slightly dated yet expensive formal clothes, pocket comp, trauma card

**KGB ' HITMEN '****TECH RUSSIAN**

**INT 8, REF 5, CL 6, LK 5, MA 4, BT 5**

**CYBER:** Cyberear w/radio splice, sound editing; plugs

**SKILLS:** Jury Rig +5, Handgun +5, SMG +4, Athletics +4

**OUTFIT:** Armoured vest, TechAssault II, Avenger pistol

**KGB ' RUNNER****NETRUNNER BULGARIAN**

**INT 8, REF 7, CL 5, LK 10**

**ICON:** A dark shadow-like figure, silver chains around neck and waist. This guy needs counselling.

**SKILLS:** Interface +4

**OUTFIT:** Cheap generic Yugoslav cyberdeck with Codecracker, Worm, Killer II and an Imp with Killer II and Flack

**OBSHC HIZDENTORG MERC**

Use UDIG Security Officer from Adventure 1, with level 1 Kerenzikov reflexes.

**BRITISH RESTRICTED ZONE PERIMETER PATROL (REZOPERPATROL)****SOLO BRITISH**

**INT 2, REF 8, CL 9, LK 4, MA 7, BT 8**

Rejects from the army, vicious, bored and too dumb to be anything but brave.

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +4, Handgun +4, Rifle +4, Melee +3, Drive +2, Brawling +4, Awareness +4, Wilderness Survival +4, Intimidate +3

**OUTFIT:** SA-80 rifle, flak vest, helmet, radio, IR goggles, flashlight, knife. A squad of 6 also includes a driver with Drive +5, Basic Tech +4, an X-9mm instead of an SA-80 and a 4x4 Land Rover (SP 20, SDP 75, Max Speed 165 kph, Man. Speed 50 kph)

**SA-80**

**RIF • 2 • N • P •**

**5d6 (5.56) • 30 • 20 • VR**

Standard British assault rifle since the late '80s, a bullpup with integral optic sights. Designated L-70 in British army service.

**Astra Style-6**

**P • 1 • P • E • 1d6 (5mm)  
• 6 • 2 • UR**

Ubiquitous (and cheap) Spanish polymer one-shot firing 5mm fragmenting plastic rounds.

**FN MG-6**

**'One-on-One' HVY • 1 • N •  
P • 6d6 (5.56) • 100 • 10 • VR**

Twin-barrel Belgian military machinegun, sold all over the world and still the standard by which such weapons are measured.

**H&K P-11**

**P • 0 • J • P • 4d6+1  
(6mmRkt) • 5 • 1 • VR**

An early (1980s) rocket pistol. A pack of five 6mm rockets fits into the front of the gun, an activating battery in the grip. Useful for underwater and zero-g combat, or if you happen to be the sort of weirdo who gets a kick out of exotic guns.

**MAJOR GENERAL (KGB)  
GRIGOR VLADIMIROVICH  
PROKOF'EV**

**CORPORATE RUSSIAN**

**INT 10, REF 6, CL 9, TECH 9, ATT 7,  
LK 7, MA 8, EMP 2, BT 5**

Competent, cautious and cunning, an ascetic hardliner of the old school.

**CYBER:** Plugs; one cyberear with radio splice, ECM, microrecorder; APTR Processor (chipped for Sambo +3); Biomonitor

**SKILLS:** Resources +10, Handgun +7, Drive +3, Pilot (Rotor) +2, Awareness +7, Education +10, English +6, Basic Tech +6, Persuasion +6, Human Perception +8, Interrogation +7, Social +4

**OUTFIT:** Armalite 44, armourjack, cellphone

**KGB SPETSNAZ**

**SOLO RUSSIAN**

**INT 9, REF 10 (12), CL 10, LUCK 4,  
MA 6, BT 8**

**CYBER:** Single cyberoptic w/ target, IR; single cyberear w/ radio splice, ECM; Soviet +2 Sandevistan-style boosted reflexes. Captain Karaev also has a cyberarm with hydraulic ram and HammerHand, a combination able to deliver a 2d6+1 punch (and don't forget the +8 from his martial arts...punch through a brick wall, anyone?).

**SKILLS:** Combat Awareness +8, Handgun +6, SMG +6, Rifle +6, Heavy Weapons +5, Athletics +7, Sambo +8, Awareness +5, Stealth +5, Resist Torture/Drugs +5

**OUTFIT:** MPK-11 smartgun, smart Sternmeyer 35, metalgear jacket,

combat knife. One man in each 8-man squad carries a rocket-propelled grenade launcher.

**KGB TECH**

**TECH RUSSIAN**

**INT 9, REF 6, CL 8, TECH 10, LK 6,  
MA 7, BT 5**

**CYBER:** Plugs

**SKILLS:** Jury Rig +6, Handgun +4, Melee +2, Brawling +3, Awareness +4, Basic Tech +8, plus specific skill related to job +8

**OUTFIT:** X-22, armour t-shirt, tools and other related equipment

**JASON D.  
WINTERFEATHER, JR**

**CORPORATE AMERICAN**

**INT 10, REF 6, CL 10, TECH 10, ATT  
9, LK 3, MA 2, EMP 2, BT 2**

Calculating and impersonal, the corp's corp. His MBA's from Harvard, his fortune from insider dealing, and if he wants charm, he'll buy a chip.

**CYBER:** Skinwatch; Chipped for Handgun +3

**SKILLS:** Resources +10, Handgun +1, Driving +5, Awareness +4, Stock Market +5, Education +9, Russian +3, French +5, Japanese +5, Interview +5, Basic Tech +7, Human Perception +6

**OUTFIT:** C-13 with a full clip of custom-built titanium-core softnosed slugs (damage 4d6+2), armour t-shirt, cellphone, laptop computer, trauma card (NB: no Trauma Teams in the Squeeze)

## THE BACKDOOR BANDIT (K Y E U N G S A N)

### NETRUNNER KOREAN

**INT 8, REF 9, CL 8, LK 9, MA 6, BT 6**

Confident, cocky, in it for the challenge, in it for the netride.

**ICON:** A chrome peacock with large gold talons.

**CYBER:** Plugs, wearman

**SKILLS:** Interface +8, Handgun +6, Animal Kung Fu +2, System Knowledge +7, English +6, Cyber Tech +7

**OUTFIT:** Zetatech Parraline 5750 with videoboard, loading a Balrog (Raffles, Worm, Killer V, Speedtrap, Dragon), Succubus (Killer IV, Hydra, Aardvark, Replicator), the special virus, Invisibility and Brainwipe; Astra Style-6, armour t-shirt, trauma card

## PETROCHEM NINJA

Use previous Corporate Ninja archetype, but with all skills +2 greater, and with Beretta 97 smartpistols and Ronin smartrifles. The machinegun nests are armed with FN MG-6s.

## A G N E S D E I

### NOMAD BRITISH

**INT 8, REF 8 (10), CL 7, TECH 4, ATT 8, LK 10, MA 8, EMP 7, BT 7**

Aggressive and autocratic, Agnes is a creature of wild (and often dangerous) whim. Inspirational in a way no sane leader could be.

**CYBER:** Kerenzikov reflexes, BigKnucks, Vampires (Sharkgrins), cyberarm

**SKILLS:** Family +9, Handgun +9, SMG +6, Melee +8, Athletics +6, Brawling +6, Motorcycle +7, Awareness +9, Sing +6, Human Perception +5, Streetwise +7, Latin +5, Expert: Roman

Catholic ritual and theology +6, Leader +9

**OUTFIT:** H&K P-11, MAC 10, leathers, armour t-shirt, fighting knife, motorbike, personal CD

## B A D L A N D E R

### NOMAD BRITISH

**INT 4, REF 7, CL 6, LK 8, MA 8, BT 7**

**SKILLS:** Family +4, Handgun +4, SMG or Rifle +4, Melee +5, Motorcycle +6, Brawling +7, Awareness +5, Stealth +4, Wilderness Survival +4,

**OUTFIT:** Antique 9mm pistol (treat as a Cybermag 15), knife, leather jacket and trousers. Scouts have motorbikes, MP 5 subguns and binoculars; Soldiers have metal helmets (SP=15) and either SMGs or Stermeyer Stakeout 10s; One in three also have Rippers.

## P L U G

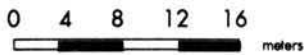
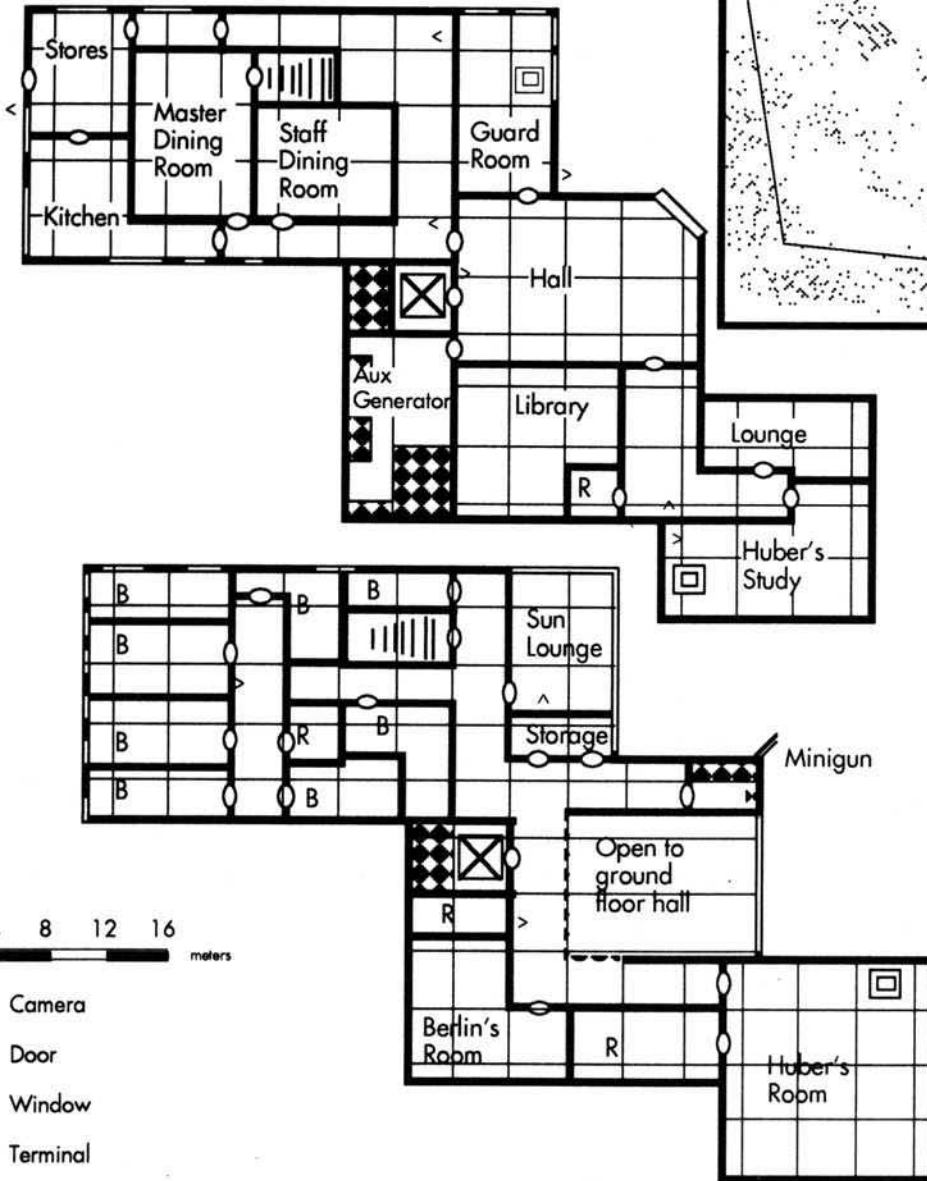
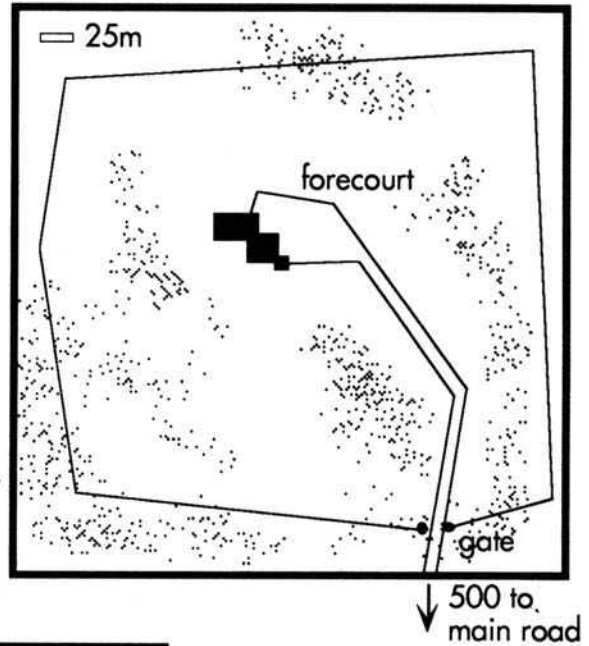
### NOMAD BRITISH

**INT 2, REF 8, CL 5, LK 6, MA 5, BT 10**

**SKILLS:** As Badlander, but Brawling +9 and Melee +7.

**OUTFIT:** Length of heavy chain (3d6 damage), knife, a bigger knife (d6+1 damage), policeman's truncheon wrapped in barbed wire (d6+2), leather jacket and trousers, replica German WW2 helmet (SP=14) with spike welded to the top (can butt for d6-1 damage)

# UDIG Safe House



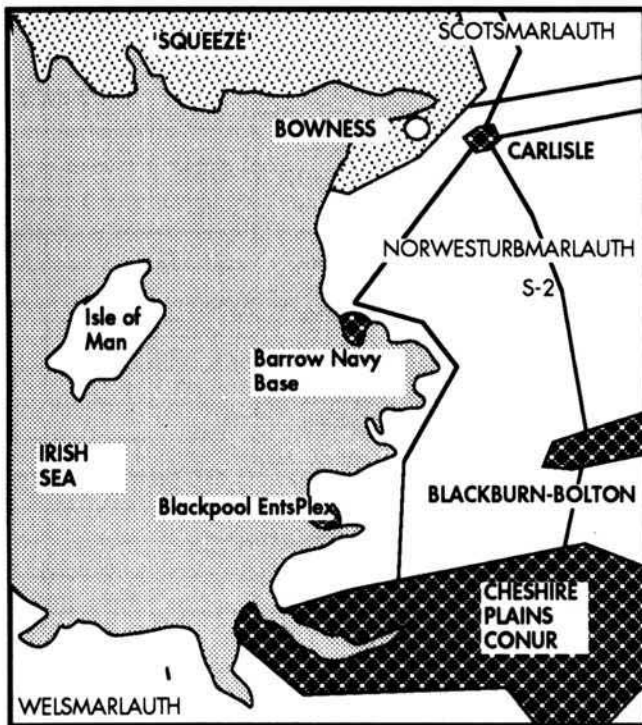
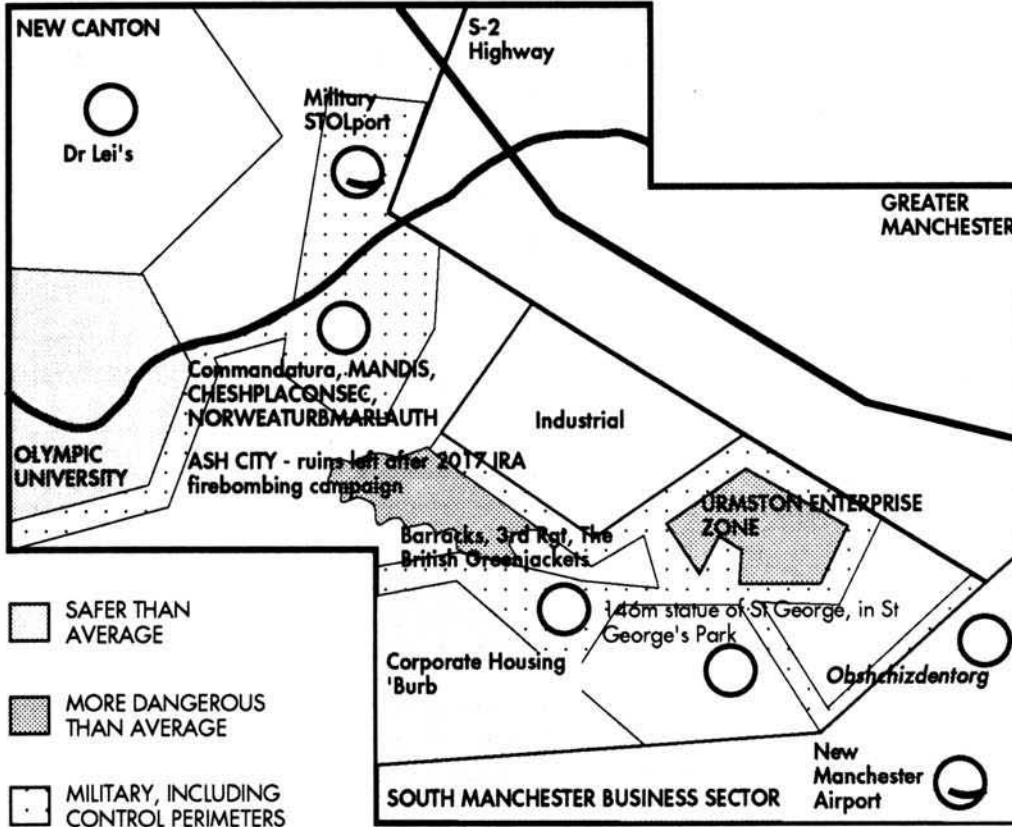
- > Camera
- O Door
- | Window
- ☐ Terminal
- ⊗ Lift
- ⊠ Machinery
- R Rest Room
- ⋈ Balustrade
- B Bedroom
- ||||| Stairs

The villa is a perfect example of 2000s retrogothic, all thick mockstone slabs and tasteless gargoyles. Despite its heavy-set appearance, it is built of thermally efficient plastic and resin composites which burn and puncture quite well. Walls have 15 SDP, and if ignited burn slowly but persistently, giving off choking black smoke.





# Central Districts of the CPC



# North-East England





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