

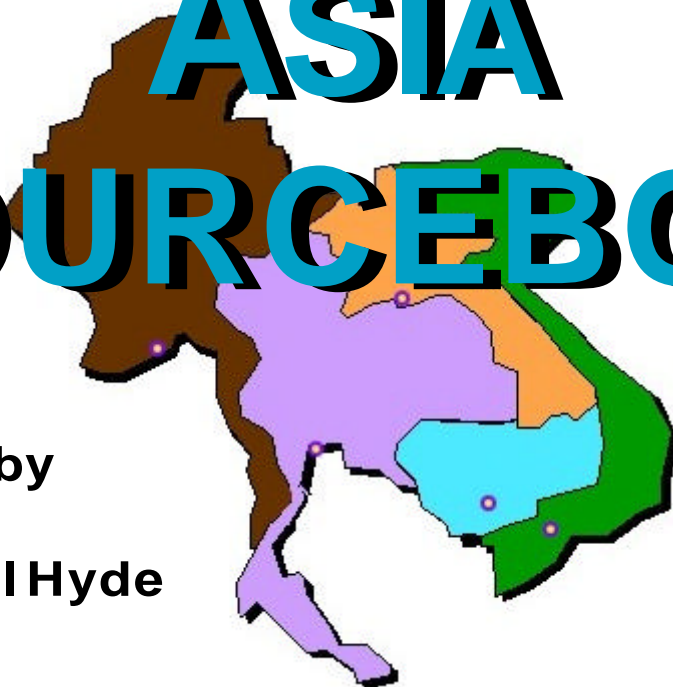


MILLENNIUM'S  
**END**  
v 2.0

# SOUTHEAST ASIA SOURCEBOOK

by

Neal Hyde



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# **SOUTHEAST ASIA SOURCEBOOK**

A Resource for *Millennium's End*

Written by Neal Hyde

Additional Material by Chris Parke and Ryan Pendergast

Edited by Chris Parke and Ryan Pendergast

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Special Thanks to Charles Ryan for the *Millennium's End* universe and to Dann Ernstsen for arranging publication of this sourcebook.

Illustrations borrowed from various *Millennium's End* game manuals, the *Twilight: 2000* game module Bangkok: Cesspool of the Orient, and the *Rolemaster* game genre book Black Ops.

First e-Printing

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# **SOUTHEAST ASIA SOURCEBOOK**

by Neal Hyde



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# FOREWORD

This sourcebook was originally to be printed by the late lamented Chameleon Eclectic Entertainment in 1997. I proposed the sourcebook to Charles Ryan and he commissioned a 70,000 word book. The work took longer than I intended and before I could finish it, CEE became insolvent. I finished up some of it and put it aside, sorry for the loss. I discovered millenniumsend.com in 2001 and resurrected the work, but shortly afterward had a hard drive meltdown that I believed had claimed the files. It wasn't until 2003, when cleaning up a variety of computer-related junk, did I find that I had backed up an earlier incarnation of the files onto disk. They are yours now.

The *Southeast Asia Sourcebook* is taken from my personal experience living in Thailand working with Cambodian refugees, melded with the world setting of *Millennium's End*. I hoped to present a holistic, all encompassing feeling that gave an experience as thick as Bangkok's summer heat. Also, I wanted to provide a launching point for players in the great city of Sydney.

A note to the graphics: none were created for the book, but I used maps that were readily available from the Web and various atlases when writing and I believe that most players will be able to discover the real-world locations listed.

Enjoy.

Neal Hyde

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# INTRODUCTION



The dim light of a naked bulb reflects off a stained concrete wall as a Burmese political dissident waits, listening to the boots of her torturer as they echo closer and closer. That same night, in the back room of a Bangkok go-go bar, a Chinese youth grabs a red-hot iron coin, searing his flesh with an allegiance to a criminal organization older than most nations. In a jungle camp on the Thai/Cambodia border, a fourteen-year-old slaps a magazine into her automatic rifle; already a veteran, she will lead her squad in an ambush that will push a corrupt regime closer to collapse. Meanwhile, in a faceless government building outside Hanoi, tired old men conclude that a bitter war to secure food for their country is less dangerous than the prospect of a hungry peace.

For most Westerners, Southeast Asia is the other side of the world. It's exotic, ancient, and dynamic. It's lush tropical jungles and the darkest of urban hells. It's the ultimate contrast between the haves and the have-nots. For visiting operatives or those based out of Sydney, Australia, Southeast Asia is where adventure can still be found on a planet that is running out.

Although definitions of Southeast Asia differ, for the purposes of this book, it is limited to the nations of Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Others possible entries could be Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Borneo, and The Philippines. Those locations are being left out as there is more than enough information to fill a single sourcebook from just the five countries mentioned above. Also included in this book is a complete description of the Sydney, Australia office of BlackEagle/BlackEagle.

Like other sourcebooks for the *Millennium's End* system, *The Southeast Asia Sourcebook* is primarily for the GM. However, the first chapter has been formatted as an introduction to Southeast Asia and should be read by both players and GMs. Chapter Two, *BlackEagle Sydney*, may also be read by players if their campaign is to be based there for any length of time. Chapters Three through Five contain more specific information regarding the governments, militaries, criminal underworld, insurgencies, businesses and other items of interest to the players but should be read only at the GM's discretion.

This sourcebook is more than a collection of unrelated geographic references, character studies, and occasional scenes. It is a real world of hugely diverse peoples and places that are interconnected and form a total environment for characters and GMs to explore. To create this, a holistic approach has been adopted so that the region may be viewed as a whole. Like topics are grouped together so that they may be compared and contrasted. Examples are given as often as possible to both provide material to be immediately used by GMs as well as to be a template for others of the GM's creation.

Although this book is based on the fictional world of the *Millennium's End*

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role-playing game, as much of the real world as is possible has been intermixed. Some of the people and places mentioned do exist but have been tweaked to fit the *Millennium's End* time line as well as references in other publications in the *Millennium's End* series.

The first chapter begins with the physical setting of Southeast Asia and is a basic introduction to the geography, ethnography, and nations of the region. Larger cities and important areas of interest are highlighted and explored in depth. This chapter also covers the people of Southeast Asia and their languages and customs.

Chapter Two covers the BlackEagle/BlackEagle office in Sydney, Australia as well as some background on that city. The office, personnel, security, and current history are given. This is an excellent background for a campaign based out of this office or for visiting player characters.

The governments and laws of Southeast Asia are explored in Chapter Three. One of the things that makes Southeast Asia so dangerous is the state of near constant conflict between individual countries as well as internal insurgencies, ethnic strife, and criminal empires. How these nations deal with their citizens and outsiders varies from place to place. Smart players will want to know their environments and use it to their advantage.

The economic boom of the eighties has turned to bust with the worldwide depression but this hasn't shut down business as a whole. With increased pressures to perform and generate profits business ethics have become an oxymoron and the Japanese philosophy that "all business is war" reigns supreme. Dirty tricks, industrial espionage and sabotage are common. Six businesses listed in Chapter Four are part of the cutthroat competition. They range from the small-time entrepreneur to the corporate conglomerate with power to effect entire nations.

Chapter Five deals with the other side of the law, the criminal empires and insurgencies that are often so intermixed that it is difficult to tell them apart. Opium from the Golden Triangle fuels vast empires and ancient syndicates as well as providing rich pickings for small-time gangs and pirates. While some fight for money, others wage war for freedom from oppression, ideology, racial bias, or simply power. These insurgents may be freedom fighters or terrorists, depending on whom you talk to, but they are major players in the region. BlackEagle/BlackEagle Database information reveals to players what is known while Real Scoops provide what is true to the GM.

Finally, the appendices deals with the people, places and things that make Southeast Asia different from the rest of the world. Specific examples are given to flesh out the generalities given in the first chapter. There are also NPC stereotypes and fully fleshed out NPCs and material for GMs to mold and create from as they wish.

Throughout the book are sidebars containing information about particular facets of Southeast Asia and the Golden Triangle. These anecdotes and snapshots of life in Southeast Asia give greater depth to the region in addition to providing stats for game play.

Players can immerse themselves in the world of Southeast Asia or merely dip their toes, but they'll never be the same again. They will be faced with struggles for freedom and unspeakable oppression, power without conscience and endless compassion, abject poverty and wealth beyond avarice, ecological

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ruin and, possibly, a ray of hope for the future. The people, places, and events described in this sourcebook do not exist in a vacuum. They are interconnected in a human ecosystem that will act and react to the events of the game. The characters will, in their own way, change the world around them depending upon the choices they make. For the sake of the future, they must be the right ones.





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# SOUTHEAST ASIA



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# CHAPTER ONE

# WELCOME TO

# SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asia, as found on a map, is a large peninsula to the east of India and south of China. Its northern tip is the foothills of the Himalayas and it stretches over thousands of kilometers of jungles, forests, grassy plains, swamps, rivers, and ivory-colored beaches to the island nations in the south. The first known peoples came here from China and were fleeing genocide at the hands of tyrannical rulers to the north. Fueled by vast natural resources they founded empires to compare with the mightiest in the world. Today, Southeast Asia is a center of the worldwide storm of civil and economic chaos. Its people look into the future and see the dark clouds of conflicts already underway and even greater ones to come.

This chapter covers the bare bones of Southeast Asia and is a brief introduction from which a more complete picture will be given throughout the book. It is not intended to provide all the answers for every nook and cranny of the region, but an overall feel and sense of place from which individual details emerge. Southeast Asia is like a mural in a Bangkok temple; the impression comes not from a single carved figure, but from the total image to the viewer. This chapter lays the groundwork from which the image can be assembled.

## **THE LAND**

Geographically, Southeast Asia is amazingly diverse. Most people think of it as a vast steaming jungle plain and much of the area qualifies for that description. However, there is much more - temperate forests, dry desert-like zones, and of course, the artificial climates of the modern cities. As a rule, the further north you go, the more mountains and fewer people you encounter. To the south, fertile plains and plateaus provide the annual crop of rice so important to the teeming masses of the region. Most people live in the southern part of Southeast Asia, in a fertile crescent running from Yangon in Myanmar, through cen-

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tral Thailand, across Cambodia, and terminating on Vietnam's shores facing the South China Sea. North of this crescent is an area where Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos meet—the world famous Golden Triangle.

### ***The Mountains***

The northern latitudes are so mountainous and steep that they provide a natural barrier to invasion and communication. This band of sharp geological uplifting covers northern Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam and is the tail end of the same mountain chain that contains the Himalayas. The hill tribes that have survived there for centuries have only recently been introduced to the outside world and new technologies. Rain forests cover the lower elevations and temperate forests rise on the mountains. Less than seven percent of the red, sandy soil is arable and much of that is dedicated to growing opium, the region's largest export crop. Despite being close to the equator, temperatures can fall to near freezing. Roads are few and often available only during the dry season. During the rainy season most minor roads become rivers of mud. Transporting goods in and out is usually done the old fashioned way - on the back of a porter or a mountain pony.



### ***The Flatlands***

From the eighteenth parallel south, the land becomes flatter and more arable. The water runoff from the northern mountains comes tumbling towards the oceans, creating huge swamps such as the Mekong Delta and the mouth of the Irrawaddy River. Although vast tropical jungles covered the flatlands for centuries, most of it has been destroyed by slash-and-burn agriculture and natural resource extraction. Those areas that remain are like small islands of ecological diversity. However, even these refuges are being squeezed by increased demand for building supplies and the search for land on which to feed the people.

### ***The Coasts***

The coastlines of Southeast Asia are usually narrow strips of sand and rock that quickly become hill terrain, making entry into the central areas difficult. They are usually tropical in climate but there are exceptions. Central Vietnam has a climate more akin to the Baja of Mexico than the Amazon, and the western coast of the Mergui Peninsula can be cold and windy like the Pacific Northwest. Rocky islands topped with green foliage just offshore attract tourists and pirates alike.

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## ***Rivers***

All the rain that makes Southeast Asia a tropical jungle heads to the sea in some of the largest rivers in the world. The Mekong River is the most prominent with its headwaters in the northern highlands, it meanders about, creating the border between Laos and Thailand, through eastern Cambodia and finally exiting in the Mekong Delta. Other massive rivers are the Irrawaddy in Myanmar, the Chao Phraya of Thailand, and the Tonle Sap in Cambodia, each of which run through a capital city. Rivers are common everywhere and can vary in depth and danger from season to season. It's no surprise that with traveling by river has been the norm for centuries, a fact BlackEagle operatives shouldn't forget.

## ***The Weather***

Weather in Southeast Asia can be summed up in two words - hot and wet. With the exception of the mountain highlands the area is possibly the warmest and most humid place in the world where people live in large numbers. Travelers stepping off the dry, air conditioned environment of jetliners have described the change as something akin to a physical blow. For example, Bangkok temperatures hover between 35 and 40 degrees (C) (roughly 100 degrees Fahrenheit) and humidity levels of ninety-eight percent are not uncommon.

The average rainfall in the region varies between 75cm and 150cm, approximately twice that of Miami. The Dry Season (meaning rain only every other day) runs November to February and sometimes as late as March. During this time temperatures are more tolerable but rarely dip below twenty degrees (F) (roughly 70 degrees Fahrenheit). The Rainy Season runs April through October with heavy monsoons opening and closing the season. Flooding is an annual experience and a recognized part of life to the natives but recent weather has been extreme, even by these standards. In 1998, an off-season monsoon struck coastal Vietnam and tore through central Southeast Asia, killing thousands and wrecking the rice harvest.

## **THE PEOPLE**

There are a lot of nuances and differences among the peoples of Southeast Asia. From the mountain hill tribes of Myanmar and Thailand to the swamp dwellers of the Mekong Delta, dress, language, and beliefs can change from kilometer to kilometer. Specific areas have their own peculiarities and many are discussed in the relevant section of this book. However, for every difference there are a dozen similarities and even more coming to be as the modernization (and some say the Westernization) of the region continues.

Ethnicity plays a greater role in Southeast Asian affairs than it does in America and Europe and people identify strongly with their heritage. Its primary ethnic group, i.e. Thais in Thailand, Vietnamese in Vietnam, governs each nation. In addition, there are literally hundreds of smaller ethnic groups such as the Shan, Wa, Chin, Chams, Hmong, Rhade, Montagnard, and more. For the most part, these groups are not in the mainstream of society and live separate from the general population. Often, they are persecuted and attacked by the dominant ethnic groups. Some struggle for independence while others work to join the mainstream.

The exception to the rule of ethnic minority exclusion is the Chinese. They have managed to both maintain their separate identity and still join the mainstream. Ethnic Chinese are heavily involved in business and commerce, owning

### ***The Mekong Delta***

The Mekong Delta is where "The River of Evil Memory" meets the South China Sea. The delta is a broad jungle swamp. Only twenty percent of the land has been cleared for agriculture. The rest remains virgin jungle, too forbidding and difficult to clear to make the effort worthwhile.

The people of the delta are mostly ethnic Cambodians who wish to remain as independent of the rest of Vietnam as possible. Small villages dot the swampy jungle and exist free from government interference, primarily because they are too small and remote to bother with. This lack of enforcement makes the delta a favorite site of pirates and smugglers.

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as much as half of all businesses within any given city in the region. This remains true even in rural areas. A negative aspect of this inclusion into the general population is that they are visible targets during civil unrest and are often made scapegoats for economic problems. Chinese shops and homes are always among the first to be sacked and looted during riots.

### ***Ethnic Conflict***

Even between the major ethnic groups there is considerable animosity. Although they are shrouded in nationalist language, the roots of many modern conflicts are ethnic. The Burmese and the Thais have been at each other's throats since the Burmese massacred nearly a million Thais in 1767 and the Thais stole the sacred Emerald Buddha from Burmese-occupied Laos a few years later. During Burma's tenure as an English colony, English troops spent most of their time and energy keeping the two forces apart. There is currently an undeclared war simmering between Burma, now Myanmar, and Thailand with daily skirmishes and cross-border raids.

Relations between the Thais and the Cambodians have never been particularly warm. King Rama I, the same who acquired the Emerald Buddha, also acquired large parts of the fading Khmer empire. Today, Thailand's military allows the Khmer Rouge to establish bases on the Thai side of the border from which they attack government forces, destabilizing Cambodia. Thai soldiers shoot Cambodian refugees fleeing the conflict and those who do make it into Thailand are forced into squalid refugee camps. Due to its weakness, the Cambodian government has been able to do little more than lodge protests with the United Nations.

The Cambodians and the Vietnamese have a running quarrel over who owns the fertile Mekong Delta; most of its population is ethnic Cambodian and it was a part of the Khmer empire but the Vietnamese occupied it at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The occupation of Cambodia by the Vietnamese to expel the murderous Khmer Rouge in 1979, although relatively benevolent, was humiliating for Cambodian national pride. The Vietnamese troops have withdrawn and Cambodia is still very dependent upon Vietnamese assistance, but the old tensions are still there.

### ***Clothing***

One way that ethnicity has been expressed is in clothing, but not as sharply as before. The average farming peasant - the majority of the population - is desperately poor and wears simple pants or cloth wraparound and long-sleeved shirt. The head is covered from the tropical sun by a straw hat or checkered cloth wrap. Footwear, when available, are usually sandals made from native materials or old tires (known to Westerners as "Ho Chi Minh sandals"). Bright colors and loud prints are popular, particularly in countries that have been under communist rule as these fabrics were not available for a long time.

City dwellers dress according to their financial situation. Tailored silk suits and Italian leather shoes are common in business districts throughout Southeast Asia. In other, less affluent regions, pants and shorts are common as are T-shirts with American sayings and logos. Traditional dress is usually worn only on holidays or special events such as weddings or funerals. Ideology also affects fashion; older communists still cling to their drab pants and tunic popularized by communist party chairman Mao Zedong of China.

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### ***Customs and Politeness***

Civility costs nothing but making the wrong impression can be expensive indeed. This is especially true in Southeast Asia, where the complex rules of behavior can seem a little overwhelming. However, the people are very friendly and forgiving to unintended slights. Some rules of thumb always apply and are listed below. Role-playing these gives a real sense of locale to a game as well as provides GMs things to do with flubbed Diplomacy rolls.

- When greeted, return the greeting in kind ( bowing, shaking hands, etc.) A traditional, informal greeting is a short bow with the palms pressed together.

- Shoes should be removed before entering a home or temple.

- The head is the center of the spirit and therefore the most sacred part of the body. Never touch anyone on the head, even children.

- Likewise, the feet are the lowest and least sacred. Do not point your feet at anyone.

- Public displays of affection or emotion are frowned upon. Keep a cool head, especially when angry, and conceal emotion at all times.

- Never insult or act inappropriately when dealing with Buddhism, a temple, or monks.

### ***Religion***

Buddhism is by far the most prevalent religion. Each culture has its own brand of Buddhism, but all revolve around the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian prince who transcended normal existence and became the deity known as Buddha. Buddhism teaches that desire is the root of discontent and that through meditation, prayers, and ordinances a person can achieve an enlightened state of happiness. Buddhists believe in reincarnation and that a person's actions in this life will affect his or her status in the next. Throughout Southeast Asia, particularly in Myanmar, there are temples and even entire cities dedicated to the worship of Buddha. People are expected to dedicate at least part of their lives to serving as Buddhist monks or nuns, usually for a year when around the age of fourteen. In every village and city, saffron-robed monks can be seen meditating and chanting.

Just as Christianity affects the Western world, Buddhism does so in Southeast Asia. The emphasis on denial of desires and emotions can most easily be seen in the social form of keeping a cool head at all times and avoiding physical contact in public. Temple attendance is encouraged but there is no single day of the week devoted to worship.

Other common religions are Christianity, native animist beliefs, and Islam, which is usually associated with the Chams, a minority group descended from Malaysian immigrants. Often these beliefs are blended together by individuals who see no conflict between them. Buddhist monks with animist tattoos and Islamic Imams wearing shamanic charms are not uncommon. The only true religious strife in Southeast Asia is between Vietnamese Catholics and conservative Buddhists in Ho Chi Minh City. The communist government suppressed the conflict but now gangs from both sides attack each other with increasing ferocity.

### ***Language***

There are four primary native language groups in Southeast Asia: Mon-Khmer, Thai, Burmese, and Vietnamese. The primary languages of the area include Thai, Lao, Khmer, Vietnamese, Burmese, and Chinese. Of these, Thai and Lao have the most in common and someone who knows one can often understand a person speaking the other. All others, particularly Burmese, are separate and must be learned individually. What language and dialect are spoken in a given area is more rooted in ethnicity than geography, but most people speak more than one language. Unlike some European countries, Asian people are generally not offended if a Westerner attempts to speak their language but does so poorly. Most will be pleased at the attempt to learn the language and will offer assistance. (See *Languages* in Appendix One)

English, French and some Russian are the dominant foreign tongues and teaching them is a major industry. Volunteers from the Peace Corps and the United Nations teach for free and there are hundreds of private schools. Thousands of American and French college students come to Southeast Asia to teach during their summer breaks, usually earning enough to pay for the rest of their education.

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## PAST AND PRESENT

Southeast Asia is an ancient land where vast empires once existed only to have faded away and been reclaimed by the jungle. The history of the region can be traced back thousands of years before Rome was built. Almost every part of it can be said to have been the dominant center at a particular time. Each successive empire engulfed the others and made itself wealthy while controlling the destiny of all within the area. The result of this cycle is found in the fierce ethnic conflicts within the region.

More recent history has been filled with turmoil and difficulty. After World War II, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian independence movements successfully fought to overthrow French rule in the First Indochina War. Native governments took the place of the French colonials but quickly became engulfed in internal squabbles. At roughly the same time, Burma was granted its independence as the British left the Indian sub-continent. Thailand had never been under the European dominance and was quick to assert itself as the new leader of the infant nations.

Peaceful coexistence quickly fell by the wayside as communist insurgencies sprang up and Southeast Asia became a focal point in the ideological battle between the USSR and the West. The Second Indochina War raged for several decades. The American phase of this war cost the lives of more than 58,000 American soldiers and divided the nation. Communist forces won in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, causing American aid to Thailand, its only remaining ally in Southeast Asia, to increase dramatically.

The brutal regimes that came to power sought to rearrange the social fabric to meet their exacting standards and refugees began streaming across the Thai border. Even with the communist victory, conflict didn't end as the communist nations fought among themselves. Vietnam invaded its neighbor Cambodia in 1979 and forced the Khmer Rouge, genocidal lunatics that had killed over one million of their own people, into hiding on the Thai border. That same year, conflicts over border territories between Vietnam and China escalated into war. Thousands on both sides were killed and it was only after the intervention of the Soviet Union that peace was reestablished.

The Cold War simmered in Southeast Asia until the 1980s when communism collapsed in Europe and Thailand saw unprecedented growth in its economy. Even hard-line communists were forced to admit the failures of their system when faced with Thailand's abundance. Slowly, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos opened their doors and economies to western ideas and cash. Southeast Asia's annual growth skyrocketed to over 10% and the quality of life improved for nearly everyone.

Ironically, while the rest of Southeast Asia was opening up, the Burmese government collapsed in 1988 and out of the ashes rose the State Law and Order Restoration Committee (SLORC). At first the SLORC was a positive force that opened up the economy and promised reform. However, it wasn't long before the SLORC brutally cracked down on protesters, killed and imprisoned thousands, and restricted travel and personal freedoms for all citizens. The SLORC is now an international pariah engaged in constant border clashes with Thailand.

The brighter future envisioned at the start of the 1990s has fallen apart after the global depression set in. Record unemployment, decades of environmental abuse, the growing scourge of AIDS and other deadly diseases, and even natural disasters have combined to make a once promising future nothing but bitter memories. The United Nations, once a powerful force for peace in Southeast Asia, is now reduced to protecting refugee camps. National governments have

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### **Women in Southeast Asia**

Although most First World nations have generally been successful at integrating women into the workforce and government, as a rule, most Third World nations have yet to do so and Southeast Asia is no exception. Women are no longer legally considered property and all nations recognize their right to vote and own property. In developed areas, women work outside the home in a few culturally acceptable roles such as teacher, nurse, and retail clerk, among others. Communist nations are much better at integrating women into the work force and the military, and women serve alongside men in most respects. Despite these advances, sexism is the norm and women who achieve a higher status must work twice as hard to earn the same respect given to a man. There is also a "glass ceiling" of social norms present throughout the region, which prevents women from achieving positions of rank and status.

become powerless to help the common person after becoming bogged down in internal conflicts and civil wars. Civil law, always tenuous in the region, is limited to select neighborhoods of the cities while the countryside is left to fend for itself against a growing tide of anarchy. Corporations, free of what little supervision existed before, now hold greater power than ever.

Despite this, the average citizen of Southeast Asia has a more hopeful view of the future than the typical Westerner. On the streets of Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City people often refer to a time 'when things become better again.' Perhaps it is because they don't have an apocalyptic view of the millennium, or maybe it's because they have endured so much and still managed to survive.

Detailed on the following pages are the major cities of the region. These give an overview of the cities, their neighborhoods, and specific locations within them. Hotels, restaurants, nightspots, and other points of interest are described.

Also included are a series of Hot Spots describing specific areas of conflict. These include the history of the violence, the deployment of troops, and the action that is occurring.

### **BANGKOK , THAILAND**

Bangkok has been Thailand's capital since 1782 and is Southeast Asia's economic center. Bangkok, called Krung Thep by the Thais, means "City of Angels". However, most residents say that angels are an endangered species, if they haven't been killed off altogether by criminals, overzealous soldiers, or simply choked to death on the gray-brown clouds of carbon monoxide produced in the city's traffic. The ornate golden spires of over four hundred Buddhist temples, called *wats*, compete for space with soaring modern skyscrapers. Seven million people are crowded into the city, most living well below the poverty line while a handful live like kings.

Modern life came to Thailand quickly in the boom times of the 1980's and the way of life changed almost overnight. But not everything changed and now Bangkok is a mix of ancient and modern. Saffron robed monks record ceremonies with camcorders, three-wheeled motorcycle taxis sit next to BMW's in the interminable traffic jams, and ATM's are as common as Buddhist shrines.

But the advantages of modern life have brought a host of new problems. The air is so polluted that many people are forced to constantly wear surgical masks. Public water is no longer safe to drink and visitors are encouraged to drink only bottled products. Street crime has traditionally been almost nonexistent but with the depression thousands of the unemployed and hungry have turned to robbery and violence. Rioting breaks out with every new set of layoff or announcement of government cutbacks. Gaunt faces and sunken eyes on people in the street serve as constant reminder that Bangkok is the center of Southeast Asia's AIDS epidemic.

Getting around in Bangkok is a nightmare on wheels. The streets are narrow and clogged with vehicles in a nonstop traffic jam. Smaller side streets are less crowded but drivers must be careful of people, children, animals, and the occasional riot. Moving about by water is common and the Chao Phraya River is clogged with water taxis, barges, and cargo ships. The inner city is crisscrossed by *klongs* (canals) but many have been paved over. The most efficient way to get around is by motorcycle, bicycle, or on foot. Of course, these options have their own dangers.

Dusit is the government center of Bangkok and Thailand. Here modern office buildings sit side-by-side with ancient temples and the home of the Thai Royal family, The Grand Palace. Outside the palace complex are fields where



pickup soccer games are always on the go. An attempted bombing the Palace by Thai communists in 1995 was foiled when the terrorist's car bomb exploded prematurely. The most constant feature of this neighborhood is the heavily armed soldiers and police carefully watching the tourists.

While the rest of Bangkok runs headlong into the future, Chinatown is the least changed neighborhood in all the city. Centered around Yaowarat Road, modern conveniences have intruded but are alongside traditional shops, stands, and buildings. This is also the home of Bangkok's Chinese Triads. Each Triad controls its own section of Chinatown and the boundaries are relatively stable but conflict between members is common

Chakraphet Road is home to a large population of Indians and this is known as Indiatown. Despite the tensions at home, Sikhs and Hindus have coexisted peacefully and Indiatown is one of the safest places in Bangkok.

However, a cell of the extremist Dal Khalsa terrorists arrived in late 1998 and are preparing to bring their war to Thailand.

Silom is Bangkok's financial district and is similar to Dusit in that it mixes the old and the new into a fusion that is peculiar to Bangkok. Silom is the home of Bangkok's volatile stock market and all of Thailand's large banks. Army checkpoints make movement through Silom difficult. Silom is also the home of raunchy Patpong road, famous for its go-go bars and massage parlors.

Siam Square is Bangkok's district of wealth and conspicuous consumption. Traditional markets compete with super department stores and the streets look like BMW and Mercedes showrooms. Even modest homes here are priced well into the seven-digit mark and are well guarded. If you have to ask the price, you should probably leave before you get thrown out.

Sukhumvit is where everybody who isn't filthy rich or desperately poor lives. Cutbacks in city services have reduced police presence, fire protection, and garbage disposal. Demonstrations occur in the neighborhoods parks on an almost daily basis but the police break up most of them before they ferment into full-blown riots. Still, some blocks are burned out shells as a result of the summer riots of 1998.

On the other side of the Chao Phraya River, Thonburi is slower and more introspective than fast-paced Bangkok. The southern half of Thonburi is more middle class than the northern half, which is made up largely of shantytowns, sweatshops and a large Cambodian refugee camp.

**Lumpini Boxing Stadium** - Thai boxing events are scheduled seven days a week, from dusk to midnight in this stadium that seats 27,000. Gambling occurs in the muggy upper levels where fights break out with almost the same frequency as those in the ring. Many underworld contacts are made here in the anonymity of the sweaty, roaring crowd.



### **Popular Vehicles**

Vehicles of Japanese and Korean manufacture are more popular than American or European vehicles. This is in part due to economics - they are cheaper - and partly due to practicality - Japanese and Korean manufactured vehicles are smaller and more maneuverable in the tight streets of Southeast Asia. For stats for the vehicles, see the *Millennium's End v2.0* rulebook or the *Millennium's End Vehicle Sourcebook*.

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**Saovabha Institute** - The International Red Cross manages this center where poisonous snakes from around the world are raised and milked for their venom. From this venom anti-venom is created and shipped around the world.

**Khao Din (Dusit) Zoo** - A world-class zoo that focuses on rare and soon-to-be extinct animals from the dwindling jungles of Southeast Asia. The zoo has several teams of zoologists who scour the region and have a tacit agreement with the government that allows them to smuggle captured specimens into the country.

**Patpong Road** - Bangkok has many red-light districts but Patpong Road is in a class all by itself. Literally wall-to-wall with brothels, go-go bars, discos, opium and heroin dens, just walking down the road is a risk to morality and hygiene. Police rarely venture here except to pick up their monthly payments.

**DEA Compound** - The DEA compound covers several square blocks of Sukhumvit and is closed to the public. Access is only through heavily guarded checkpoints (See *Drug Enforcement Administration*, page 77).

**Taskin Bridge** - This slim and ornately decorated bridge links Silom and the financial district with Thonburi. Its narrow lanes and constant jam make it a favorite ambush site for robbery and murder.

**Wat Phra Keo** - Home of the Emerald Buddha, this temple was constructed to house the priceless image after a long history of being the target of invasions and theft. The Emerald Buddha is carved from a single emerald stone and although only inches in height, is so valuable as an artifact of the Thai people that King Bhumibol's bodyguards protect it.



**Bobby's Arms** - A respectable pub, Bobby's Arms is home to American and British expatriates- everyone from business execs to mercenaries. Simple information is exchanged freely as long as you're buying, and the more costly kind can be arranged for a proper fee.

**Cat's Eye Club** - This is the kind of go-go bar that comes to mind when most people think of Bangkok nightlife. Located on Patpong Road, the Cat's Eye Club features dancers, loud music, watered down drinks, and hostesses who can take care of even the most jaded taste. Cat's Eye owner Robert Vang also sells black-market weapons from his basement wine cellar.

**Siriraj Hospital** - Not the only, or the best, public hospital in Bangkok, but its emergency room specializes in trauma, particularly gunshot wounds. The 24-hour total chaos and easily bribed employees virtually guarantee privacy on demand.

**The Oriental** - Considered the best hotel in Asia by business travelers, the Oriental started in 1876 as a

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venture by two sea captains who failed to find their fortunes in Thai gold. The Oriental has everything necessary to conduct business in total luxury. Privacy is assured and Oriental security is easily the best in business. Rooms and suites are priced to match its reputation for excess.

## **CHIANG MAI, THAILAND**

The opium capital of the Golden Triangle, Chiang Mai is an ancient city finding revitalization through the immense cash flow of the drug trade. The old city was walled against foreign invaders but now the walls are made of silence against those who wish to disrupt this most lucrative of industries.

Originally a separate kingdom, northern Thailand has been the possession of Thai, Burmese, Hmong, and Laotian kings. The people are still independent, speaking their own dialect of Thai and having a distinct culture that is a blend of traditions from the Golden Triangle.

The Chiang Mai of today has expanded well beyond the stone walls that originally contained it. It has a population of 250,000 and is the second largest city in Thailand. However, the city is still amazingly small and compact, covering only three square kilometers. It is fully modern but lacks the manic drive of Bangkok. This more laid back approach is considered by many to be the true Thailand.

Chiang Mai is built on the banks of the Mae Ping river and was originally a walled city. The walls have since decayed but the ancient city is still the center of activity. French restaurants, health spas, clothing boutiques, and art galleries have sprung up throughout the Old City. Tourists, Chiang Mai's number one legal industry, walk the streets looking for bargains between excursions to native villages and jungle treks. Getting around Chiang Mai is easy even though the streets are narrow and winding. Public transportation is available and streets are rarely congested.

Despite the amount of drug trafficking through Chiang Mai, either down Highway 110 from Chiang Mai or through Chiang Mai International Airport, there is little violence. Each opium syndicate has its holdings here and rarely do they bother each other. City officials are so completely in the drug industry's pocket that the smugglers need not worry about raids and arrest. Chiang Mai is a kind of neutral ground to the drug industry and a place where the opium lords can go to spend the mountains of money they make on modern pleasures.

**Chinese Consulate** - Everybody wants a piece of the action, even China. This consulate represents Chinese interests in business and industry. Many on the staff are members of the Republic of China's military intelligence who are active in espionage throughout Southeast Asia.

**Komevong Road** - Chiang Mai's nightlife is much tamer than Bangkok but for those seeking a seedier experience there is Commoving Road. This short side street is home to go-go bars, brothels, and other institutions offering the pleasures of the flesh. Visitors to the north often think that because of its distance from Bangkok, the chances of contracting AIDS in Chiang Mai is less than in Bangkok. Actually, it's about the same with roughly 70% of those working in Commoving Road being infected with AIDS or its precursor, HIV.

**McCormick Hospital** - The hospital features a well-equipped laboratory used by the Red Cross, the World Health Organization, and occasionally the American Center For Disease Control to identify viruses and bacteria.

## **Opium**

Opium is Southeast Asia's number one cash crop and the sole source of income for dozens of hill tribes. Anti-drug efforts spend millions of dollars and cost hundreds of lives every year. Millions of heroin and opium addicts in the United States and Europe struggle to get their next fix from a product grown half a world away.

Opium, codeine, morphine, and heroin are the end products of a long process that refines and condenses the narcotic properties of the poppy into an ingestible form. It all begins with the oriental poppy, *Papever somniferum*, a hardy plant native to Asia's high mountain areas. Poppy growers slit the sides of the immature bulbs and allow the resin inside to drip out and harden. The tacky, brown resin drops are collected and bundled together and transported on the backs of strong mountain ponies to hidden refining centers. Every kilogram of raw opium condenses down to about a tenth of its original weight in refined opium. This may be further processed with the addition of acetone, benzine and other chemicals to form codeine, morphine, and heroin. The chemicals necessary to create opium derivatives are a valuable commodity by themselves and there is an active black market for them.

This process generally occurs within the Golden Triangle, but since every country in Southeast Asia has official laws against drug trafficking, getting the drugs out of the Triangle requires smuggling. The central smuggling route is through Thailand to Bangkok where the drugs are warehoused and shipped to buyers around the world. Most drugs enter Thailand over mountain passes and jungle trails on the backs of the same ponies that carried the raw opium. Chiang Mai, Thailand's second largest city, is the undeclared opium capital of Thailand and it is there that most narcotics are split up to be smuggled by automobile, boat, or airplane to Bangkok. Chiang Mai has recently finished its international airport and some smugglers have chosen to bypass Bangkok

(con't. next page)

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### ***Opium (con't.)***

and ship directly from Chiang Mai.

Opium has a huge impact on Southeast Asia's economy and is the sole support of many Golden Triangle hill tribes. Hill tribe villages are paid only pennies for every kilogram of raw opium product they collect. The refinery workers who process and package the drugs are also paid very little and the refineries themselves are cheap and easy to create. Only the chemists necessary for some of the more delicate procedures and testing the refined product are paid much beyond subsistence levels. The major price jump occurs once the product has been smuggled to the distribution level where a kilo of heroin costing a hundred dollars to produce sells for several thousand. Heroin sales alone earn an annual income of over 100 billion dollars.

***Around Mai Restaurant*** - This four-star restaurant is a favorite hangout for wealthy tourists and newly wealthy heroin smugglers. City officials and drug lords sit across the isle from each other and enjoy the finest French cuisine outside of Bangkok.

***Tribal Research Institute and Library*** - This anthropological center is run by Chiang Mai University and is one of the world's foremost sources of information on the primitive tribes of Southeast Asia. Anthropologists here are on a first-name basis with many tribes and villages and can provide introductions and directions

***Riverside*** - A health spa built on the Mae Ping River, Riverside is very popular with the Chinese community in Chiang Mai. It is also a sort of neutral ground among Triads where deals can be arranged and conflicts arbitrated without interference. The sulfuric nature of the natural spring beneath Riverside guarantees no electronic surveillance because any listening devices in the spa is quickly reduced to junk.

***Chiang Mai Orchid Hotel*** - Despite its small size, only ninety-six rooms, the Orchid is the best hotel in town. A private suite is always reserved for opium magnate Khang Sar.

***The National League for Democracy of Burma*** - When the Karen stronghold that was home to the NLD was overrun by SLORC troops in 1995, the Burmese activists moved outside the country to Thailand. Security is tight and all windows on the orange and tan building have been bricked over. Radio Free Burma is broadcast from here and a tall red and white radio antenna rises up from behind the building (see *The NLD*, page 118).

***Kipling Gallery*** - There is no evidence that Rudyard Kipling actually visited Chiang Mai, but the owner of this fine art gallery, Alice Ko Vang, entertains customers with several stories in which he did. Actually, the gallery is a front for her real business, the buying and selling of stolen art. Many of the opium lords and smugglers have pretensions of culture and feed their egos by acquiring *objects d'art* for their private collection.

## **HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM (SAIGON)**

In 1975 the city of Saigon fell to invading North Vietnamese communist troops who thought they had conquered the south and ensured a lasting worker's utopia. Nearly a quarter of a century later, it's difficult to tell who conquered whom. Ho Chi Minh City, otherwise known as Saigon, is more alive and capitalist than ever. As the primary source of income to a cash-poor nation, Ho Chi Minh City is the de facto capital and more important decisions are decided here than in the dour official capital of Hanoi. Even the worldwide depression cannot put out the determination of the city to be known as "the Pearl of the Orient" once again.

Ho Chi Minh City is certainly the most western of Southeast Asia's cities besides Bangkok. The Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee, the reformist minded city council, had made major efforts to bring in foreign investments and have been very successful. In the fifteen years that Vietnam has embraced Western dollars, Ho Chi Minh City has shed the utilitarian look of its communist years. Bicycles, motorcycles, and trishaws dominate the streets but more and more private vehicles are appearing. Foreign tourists and business travelers are

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common and the Vietnamese people welcome them with open arms, albeit with palms up.

The city is divided into districts, each covering approximately 2.5 square kilometers. The Dot Canal borders on the east by the Saigon river, and on the south the central area that is actually Saigon. Although some areas of Ho Chi Minh City are still rural, most are very urban and an extensive network of streets and roads bisect the connect the city. Many new and modern buildings have been built, including several by Kern & Williams of Miami.

Expanded personal freedoms have allowed other, less positive, influences to rise to the surface. District Four is the district of the “five no’s”- no sewer, no water, no electricity, no jobs, and no hope. This poverty-stricken neighborhood is the home of Ho Chi Minh City’s poorest people. The narrow streets and canals are polluted and filthy. Disease is rampant and the infant mortality rate is four times the national average. Crime, once almost unheard of, is on the rise as is drug abuse, prostitution, and suicide. In Cholon, the city’s Chinatown and home to nearly half a million ethnic Chinese, organized crime Triads have had a renaissance of their own. Even religious violence has reared its ugly head with clashes between gangs of Catholics, Muslims, and Buddhists.

More troubling is a problem that virtually no one has identified - food is becoming more expensive and harder to come by. Street children and the poor have always suffered from malnutrition but actual starvation is now occurring.

***Pasteur Street*** - A name left over from the French period, Pasteur Street is where the city’s trendy come to see and be seen. Its crowded and noisy but nothing like Bangkok’s Patpong Road - all the entertainment is above the waist.

***Notre Dame Cathedral*** - Catholicism was imported by the French during the colonial period and there are many cathedrals in the city but this is the grandest of them all. In 1997 a gang of militant Buddhists stabbed two young men to death on its doorsteps.

***Xa Loi Temple*** - Near the War Crimes Exhibition is the Xa Loi Temple, a large multistory tower with surrounding gardens. Monks from Xa Loi self-immolated themselves in protest of the Diem regime in the mid 1960s and protested the communist crackdown against religion in the 1970s. Today the temple promotes freedom of expression and it has become a center of philosophy for the reform movement.

***Reunification Palace*** - The former Presidential Palace before North Vietnamese tanks burst through the gates, effectively ending the war of reunification. The palace is now important as a rallying point for hard-line communists and military veterans.

***Buffalo Blues*** - The only jazz bar in the Vietnam, Buffalo Blues has been kicking out soulful music for over



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twenty years. Booths and conference rooms allow for private conversations and the owner, Quinn Than Le, has the place electronically swept weekly. Le has connections with Chinese Triads that allow him to acquire unusual information and materials.

**Norfolk Hotel** - A cut-rate hotel popular with budget travelers, the Norfolk Hotel is owned and operated by John and Sybil Wyzanski, an Australian couple. The Wyzanski's are wanted for fraud and high-tech bank robbery in Australia and smuggled themselves into Vietnam illegally. They have continued their attacks on financial institutions around the world by long-distance hacking and take advantage of the chaotic banking laws of Vietnam.

**Independence Hall** - The residence of the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee, the *Saigon Word* newspaper describes the building as "wallpapered with bribe money", a colorful but realistic description of the rampant corruption within the city government.

**Ho Chi Minh City Botanical Gardens** - This sprawling park at the end of Nguyen Du Road is the home of thousands of species of plants. Many species have yet to be identified and are left to grow unattended until the overworked botanists can study them.

## **PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA**

Phnom Penh was founded as a religious center in 1433 on the site where the Mekong, Tone Sap, Bassac Rivers converge. The French discovered the sleepy backwater town in 1863 and declared Cambodia part of its colonial *Union Indochinoise*. The city is stamped with its French colonial past - vanilla colored mansions and broad, palm-tree lined roads remind visitors of Paris or Marseille.

But it is more recent history that has most colored Phnom Penh. In April 17, 1975 the Khmer Rouge seized Phnom Penh, marching all its occupants into the countryside for the beginning of its brutal reign of terror. The city was almost empty for three years while its citizens were murdered and tortured in concentration camps. It wasn't until the Vietnamese invasion that Phnom Penh was repopulated, and then at only about one-half its previous level. Three years of vacancy hadn't been kind, nor had the fighting between Khmer Rouge and Vietnamese, and parts of Phnom Penh had to be rebuilt. The lack of resources forced Cambodians and their Vietnamese occupier "friends" to improvise. The constant state of warfare between government forces and the Khmer Rouge have added shell craters and bullet pockmarks to the picture. Water and electricity comes and goes and these services are often out for weeks at a time after a Khmer Rouge attack.

Phnom Penh is a small city. A fifteen-minute drive in Bangkok or Ho Chi Minh City gets you more Bangkok or Ho Chi Minh City. A fifteen-minute drive in Phnom Penh gets you rice paddies and water buffalo. Despite its small size, visitors can find the maze of streets and similar-looking construction disorienting. All streets have been renamed at least once by the successive regimes and even locals have a hard time giving directions. There is no public transportation. Fortunately, there is no shortage of people willing to show visitors the way, for a small fee.

The city is roughly triangular in shape with the top point in the north and the eastern side defined by the Tone Sap and Mekong Rivers. The French Quarter with its decaying colonial mansions, faded billboards, and soldiers populate the

### **Ruins**

People have lived in Southeast Asia for thousands of years and many civilizations have risen, thrived, dwindled, collapsed and been reclaimed by the jungle. The most massive and impressive of the known ruins is the Angkor Wat complex in northwestern Cambodia (See the *Ankor Wat* Sidebar) but there are hundreds of smaller decaying structures and statues covered in vines and bushes throughout Southeast Asia. Only a fraction have been discovered, let alone studied and documented.

Ruins need not be ancient, however. Villages near mineral deposits are built and abandoned almost overnight. In Cambodia, shallow mass graves reveal gruesome testimonies to the genocide perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge. Hundreds of cannons, vehicles, and aircraft from several wars have been left to rust in the jungle.

northern tip of Phnom Penh and is home to Cambodia's elite. This is mostly members of the Hun Sen government, foreign diplomats, and a few westerners who have made their investment in Cambodia work. This is also the area where those foreign nations with diplomatic ties to Cambodia maintain their embassies. Security in this area is tighter than usual with military checkpoints and roving patrols.

The southern two-thirds of the city is a hodgepodge of neighborhoods. Buildings are one or two stories tall, if they exist at all. Large vacant lots have been transformed into shantytowns for the growing population of refugees fleeing fighting to the north.

The people of Phnom Penh are often as scarred as the city they live in. Amputees, usually victims of land mines, scoot about on crude wagons or hop on donated prostheses. Children are everywhere (the average age in the city is twelve). The lucky ones have families but there are many orphans who live on the streets.

Street crime is limited to petty theft and unsophisticated scams. Government soldiers have checkpoints at most major intersections and patrol on a regular basis, but discipline is poor and few will intervene unless directly ordered to do so. The United Nations Headquarters in the old Wat Phnom Hotel is generally a safe area, unless the Pakistani and Bangladeshi troops are on alert. Khmer Rouge terrorists have infiltrated the city and stage bombings, rocket attacks, and drive-by machine gun attacks on an almost weekly basis. Visitors to Phnom Penh are urged to review warnings posted at Pochentong Airport for recent Khmer Rouge activity but are also warned that the warnings are often inaccurate. It's an appropriate welcome to Cambodia.

**National Assembly** - Constructed in 1954, the National Assembly was demolished during fighting between the Khmer Rouge and Vietnamese forces. It was rebuilt by the Vietnamese in 1982 and has been the seat of power for Cambodia ever since.

**United Nations Transitional Authority Command (UNTAC) Headquarters**

- The UN mission to Cambodia to restore order and remove land mines is planned and coordinated from the Phnom Penh headquarters located in the former Wat Phnom Hotel. The hotel itself is a white four-story building, one of the tallest in Phnom Penh, and surrounded by a concrete wall topped with concertina wire.

**Royal Palace** - This palace constructed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century by the French was a gift of appreciation to the King for allowing them to take over his country. It was partly destroyed by the Khmer Rouge but the job was finished in 1997 when General Hun Sen turned against his co-premier, Prince Rannarid, for supposedly conspiring with the Khmer Rouge. Royalist Party supporters fled to



**Angkor**

Located 7km from Siem Reap, the Angkor ruins are one of the world's greatest archeological treasures. The Ankor complex is actually a series of temples, pools, and terraces that covers an area about as large as Los Angeles County. Some are little more than crumbling stone and brick piles. Others, such as Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom, are massive buildings that can take days to fully explore.

Both nature and man have abused the temples and the jungle has already claimed some. Many of Angkor's temples are covered in bullet holes from bored Khmer Rouge soldiers. Researchers from the Oriental Institute of Chicago and Thammasat University of Bangkok work feverishly to repair what damage they can and prevent future damage. They face constant harassment by the Khmer Rouge, mines, poisonous snakes, and worst of all, the jungle itself.

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the palace and were attacked with tanks and rockets by the Cambodian People's Armed Forces. Many were killed and those who surrendered were either imprisoned or exiled. Today, the Royal Palace is nothing but a pile of rubble.

**Wat Phra Keow** - Also known as the Silver Pagoda, this temple's floors are constructed of over 6000 silver blocks, approximately six tons in total. One of the few temples not completely trashed by the Khmer Rouge, it also contains a large crystal Buddha as well as a gold Buddha covered in over 1300 diamonds.

**Tuoi Sieng Genocide Museum** - This former high school was converted into a prison and torture house by the Khmer Rouge through which over 70,000 people were processed, seven of which survived. Bloodstained torture devices are displayed as well as large memorial made up entirely of human skulls.

**Hospital Calmette** - A private hospital run by French physician Dr. Rene Sorel, the Calmette is well stocked with emergency supplies but drugs are usually in short supply. Dr. Sorel does not speak English but has several on his staff who do.

**Quinn & Potok** - Within sight of the red stone monument to Cambodian Independence is the warehouse where Quinn & Potok restore and merchandise the country's past. The warehouse is constructed of corrugated tin and bamboo but is reinforced around the entrances. An armed guard is always found outside the structure with another on the roof.

**Restaurant Neak Somot (Sea Dragon)** - Found on Sisowath Quay Street, Phnom Penh's answer to Sunset Boulevard, Restaurant Neak Somot is owned and operated by Cambodian-American Tola Vong. Vong only recently returned to Phnom Penh from San Diego, California and can often be seen riding a jet ski on the Mekong and Tone Sap rivers.

**Heart of Darkness Café** - A small diner spot in the Khmer Area owned by Tyler Matthews, an American hippie. Matthews came to Phnom Penh in 1984 as part of "spiritual tour" and has been here ever since. He and his wives, at last count he had four, offer guided tours of Phnom Penh and surrounding locations.

## **VIENTIANE , LAOS**

When the Friendship Bridge between Thailand and Laos was opened in 1994, the communist leadership was afraid that their capitol would be inundated with foreign influences and become a bustling haven of capitalism. They need not have worried. The first busload of businesspeople that entered the city found that the Pathet Lao communists had made everyone equal. Equally poor. Equally uneducated. Equally suspicious of anyone from the other side of "The Bamboo Curtain".

Vientiane was founded in 1526 but was destroyed in the mid eighteenth century by invading Thais. The city remained nothing but rubble until the French arrived in the mid nineteenth century and rebuilt it. Although technically neutral in the conflict between the democratic South Vietnam and communist North Vietnam, Laos was a major battleground with both sides fielding large armies throughout the dense hill terrain. Vientiane was the home of the CIA-run war in Laos as well as the CIA's own airline, Air America. When Vietnam fell and American support for the Hmong and other tribal warriors faded, the country fell to the Pathet Lao communists who seized Vientiane and made it the com-

### **Getting Around**

All nations will require a current passport and all except Burma (Myanmar) will issue temporary visas upon entry (See the *Getting Around Burma* sidebar). If a person has any criminal record or outstanding warrants upon entry, they will be arrested by customs officers so it's a good idea to make sure things are cleaned up from the last assignment before returning. Customs laws vary but a good standard is that people may enter a country with two cartons of cigarettes, a bottle of liquor, medication as allowed by a doctor (doctors may have an emergency bag), and NO WEAPONS. Since most B/E operatives will usually wind up going someplace nasty and wanting their favorite firearm when they get there, that leaves three alternatives- bribing customs officials, smuggling themselves and their gear into the country, or arriving legally and obtaining supplies there.

Travel within Southeast Asia can be troublesome. Urban areas are congested columns of choking carbon monoxide and traffic rules are often ignored. Bicycles are the most common form of transportation followed by motorcycles and trishaws. Fast-paced car chases will happen only on open highways well outside the cities.

In rural areas, vehicles with heavy suspensions and four-wheel drive are a must. Roads are rutted and muddy and often impassable during the rainy season. Characters may mind up traveling on the backs of horses, mules, elephants, and water buffalo. Rivers are good alternatives but have their own risks - rapids, dangerous wildlife, and river pirates. In cities, most especially Bangkok, the polluted canals, called *klongs*, are a common form of travel. Long distances are best taken care of via train, helicopter or airplane.



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munist capital.

Vientiane doesn't have much to offer a visitor, except perhaps a case of intestinal parasites. Little has changed since the communist takeover and the city remains more a collection of villages that happen to connect than a metropolis of 400,000. There have been no improvements to the water, sewer, or electrical systems. A short-lived building spurt in the mid 1980s gave the city a handful of new structures, each with that drab look prized by Russian architects. There is no public transportation and streets are laid out according to ancient buffalo trails. Fortunately, there are no street signs to confuse travelers with information.

**Wattay International Airport** - Even travelers experienced with the third world have a hard time with Wattay International Airport. The runways are too short to accept modern jet aircraft and so all flights are on ancient turboprop airplanes, usually of Russian or Chinese manufacture.

**KM-6** - Located six km south of the city, hence the name, is the former CIA/Air America headquarters, also known as Silver City. This is now the headquarters for the Pathet Lao communist party and the National Congress but they have kept the name Silver City and those who work here are nicknamed "Silvers". This complex of buildings and hangars now has red stars hanging on every available space and the airfield provides for Laos' minuscule air force. Security is tight and visitors are not allowed without a pass, but money talks and the mere suggestion that you are foreign investors is usually enough to get you through the front gate.

**Mahosat Hospital** - The People's Hospital, Mahosat is a relatively modern hospital with staff having both western and eastern medical training. Consequently, patients are likely to receive herbal remedies in addition to antibiotics. Only half of the three-story complex is devoted to patient care. Soviet scientists used the other half was used by to conduct their chemical weapons research. When the Soviets pulled their weapons research out of Laos in the late 1980s the area was sealed off. Improper storage of some chemicals has made the area hazardous.

**Australian Clinic** - Located on the eastern edge of Vientiane is the Australian Clinic, a charity clinic run by Aussie volunteers. The best thing to be said about the clinic is that the Australians know when they have something serious on their hands and can arrange for medical evacuation to Thailand, either via bus or airplane from Wattay Airport.

**Lane Xang Hotel** - This Soviet-manufactured hotel has been redecorated with pastels and abstract art so that it looks like a set from the television show "Miami Vice". Operatives from BlackEagle's Miami office who see this may feel more at home.

**May 1 Restaurant** - A popular hangout for Soviet and Cuban visitors to Laos' workers paradise, the May 1 Restaurant serves a variety of foods, including the only pizza available in Laos.

**Friendship Market** - This unique market can be called the ultimate surplus sale and is open only to foreign investors. This 500 square meter lot is covered with the leftovers of communism- statues, monuments, desks, helmets, pre-Second World War machine tools, and the list goes on.

### **Holidays and Festivals**

Like the rest of the world, Southeast Asia has its share of holidays, festivals, and other excuses not to work. The following are important holidays and festivals. Some are specific to a particular nation or ethnic group and are so noted. Regardless, most are spent in the same way - big feasts and everybody goes to the nearest temple or public center and has a good time. All dates are for 1999.

**January 1<sup>st</sup>** - *New Years Day* (official in all countries).

**January 6<sup>th</sup>** - *Pathet Lao Day* (Laos only).

**February 7<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup>** - *Tet* (Vietnamese New Year, also everyone in Vietnam's birthday).

**February 18<sup>th</sup>** - *Cambodia/Vietnam Friendship Day*.

**April** - *Bon*, Buddhist holiday. The actual day of celebration varies from country to country.

**May 1<sup>st</sup>** - *Labor Day*. Big in communist countries, less so in others.

**July 19<sup>th</sup>** - *Martyrs Day* (Myanmar only). Commemorates assassination of Myanmar's first leaders in 1947.

**October** - *Bonn*, Buddhist holiday. The actual day of celebration varies from country to country.

**November 9<sup>th</sup>** - *Cambodian Independence Day* (Cambodia only).

**December 5<sup>th</sup>** - *King Bhumibol's Birthday* (Thailand only).

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## YANGON , MYANMAR (RANGOON , BURMA )

Perched on the edge of the Irrawaddy River delta, Yangon (no one actually calls it that, preferring the original name of Rangoon) is one of the oldest cities in the world. No one knows when it was founded but the Shwedagon Temple was begun 2600 years ago on a previously occupied site. Like the rest of Myanmar, Temples are extremely important and they litter the cityscape like convenience stores do in America.

The tranquil, pious image of the city is misleading; Yangon is suffering. Starvation is widespread. Outbreaks of disease happen regularly. Most importantly, hope for the future is dying. SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Committee) soldiers patrol the streets and secret police watch every move of the population. Giant billboards encourage the population to be grateful to the government for its "benevolent protection" and also encourage people to wash their hands regularly - cholera is a major problem.

Although the government presence is almost overwhelming, there are still those who would rather die shouting than live in silence. Demonstrations are organized by the NLD on important anniversaries and protestors distribute pamphlets and information in the marketplaces. The SLORC reaction is typically brutal with soldiers attacking the activists, often shooting indiscriminately into the crowds.

Not only does Yangon feel oppressed, but it looks it, too. Electricity and water are random events and not to be counted on. Almost all buildings pre-date the 1948 independence. Paint is expensive and in short supply resulting in the entire city looking as if it were peeling away and falling apart. Only government buildings are maintained and walls, barbed wire, and the ever-present SLORC soldiers surround these.

Yangon is perched on the muddy delta of the Irrawaddy River and is criss-crossed with canals, minor rivers, and lakes. Lake Inya provides a northern boundary to the city with the Irrawaddy River and its many inlets and tributaries on the other three sides. Unlike most cities in Southeast Asia, overcrowding is not a major problem with the exception of downtown Yangon.

In the north of the city, on the shores of Lake Inya, the Yangon Arts & Sciences University is the central core of dissent against the SLORC regime. Many leader of the National League for Democracy have come from its students and faculty, although most are currently in exile or prison.

The large, walled complex of the Shwedagon Temple is located between Ahlone Road and Shwe Gon Daing Road, in almost the exact center of the city. It dominates the Yangon skyline and is one of Buddhism's most important and impressive monuments. The temple itself is just less than 100 meters tall and is covered in gold and precious gems and the top spire contains 1100 diamonds and even more miscellaneous gems, including a 76-carat diamond. The temple is in constant use by hundreds of monks and thousands of pilgrims and worshippers each day. The perimeter of the complex is heavily patrolled but weapons and soldiers are not allowed inside.

Sandwiched between the Shwedagon Temple complex and the Irrawaddy River is Yangon's downtown business center. These tightly compacted city blocks still have a semblance of their colonial era beauty and are the home to the few major business in Myanmar. The SLORC has its offices and official trappings in the People's Government Center, right on the shores of the river. Further upriver are Yangon's port facilities. There are only thirteen berths and broken cranes and damaged docks from the 1998 monsoon compound the problem. Ships will often wait as long as a month to offload and receive new cargo.

Because the country is too poverty stricken to have a traffic problem, get-

### *Getting Around Burma*

Foreign visitors to Burma are very limited. Getting permission to enter the country is next to impossible and even then, only one-day visas are granted. Vehicles are in short supply and army checkpoints slow travel to a crawl. The 11pm curfew applies to everyone, including foreigners, and movement after that is extremely risky. Some visitors have likened visiting Burma to visiting Nazi occupied Europe during WWII.

Needless to say, assignments in Burma are difficult to conduct. Standard procedure for operatives who do go to Burma is to enter the country illegally and have a ready supply of pre-forged visas, one for each day.

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ting around is relatively easy, although military checkpoints on every block are a major inconvenience. Public transportation is virtually nonexistent and those few busses that still manage to run on jury-rigged parts are crowded to the point of being rolling deathtraps.

**Strand Hotel** - The fading glory of British colonial rule had been preserved in one of Southeast Asia's most famous hotels and the decor and politeness can make a visitor feel as if they have stepped backwards in time a century or more. The Strand is also one of the few hotels that is allowed to serve foreign visitors and is riddled with Myanmar secret police and informers. Still, it's the only place in Yangon that you can get Western food and drink, even if it is British.

**Sulang An Kyu Sui's House** - Located near the University, this is the home and prison of Sulang An Kyu Sui (pronounced *Su-lang An Kyoo Soo*), Myanmar's most famous activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner. Behind a high stone wall and tall trees is her modest home, constantly guarded by three platoons of SLORC troops. Those who linger outside the house are arrested and even U-turns are not allowed on University Avenue. For a brief time, Kyu Sui was able to speak to visitors outside the walls but that privilege had been rescinded.

**Prison No 57** - This three-story former shoe factory does not officially exist. It is not recorded on any maps and no one who lives in the neighborhood will acknowledge what it is. Prison Number 57 is where most political prisoners are held and endure a daily routine of torture and interrogation.

**Bogyoke Aung San Open Air Market** - Bogyoke (pronounced *boog-yook*) is one of the few places in Rangoon where people can congregate without being arrested. Bogyoke is a noisy, smelly, hodgepodge of just about everything available in Myanmar, which isn't much.

**Myanmar International Airport** - MIA (an ironic but appropriate acronym) has seen little change since 1948. It is located 19 kilometers northwest of Rangoon and consists of a primary and secondary terminals, an air traffic control tower, and a collection of huts and sheds for storage and maintenance. Myanmar Air, the national airline, services MIA but most of the jets and helicopters on the tarmac are military and there is a military base opposite the terminals. Needless to say, SLORC soldiers are everywhere.

**Disco American** - The 11:00 PM curfew in Yangon is strictly enforced everywhere but some places manage to slip between the cracks. Run by the son of a prominent SLORC general, young Burmese dance and drink to Western music from dusk until dawn at Disco American.

**Botataung House** - This run down two-story building is no different from the rest on Ahlone Road but it does have the distinction of being the only active safe house the NLD has in Yangon.

**Myanmar National Hospital** - Located downtown, Myanmar National Hospital is one of the few modern hospitals in the country. The well-trained staff suffers from lack of medicines and from constant supervision by SLORC secret police. Protestors injured during demonstrations against the government are forbidden treatment at the hospital and so the injured are laid on the ground outside and the doctors and nurses can treat them there.



The "wild west" of Southeast Asia, no place is more home to chaos and carnage than Northern Cambodia. The site of constant warfare and atrocities since the late 1960s, Northern Cambodia is now the center of conflict between the Khmer Rouge and the Hun Sen regime of Cambodia. Both sides are locked in a battle to the death and neither side is able to back down. Meanwhile, the area becomes a no-man's land of minefields, roving bandits, and those too terrified to leave.

Northern Cambodia is separated from Thailand by the Dangrek Mountains, a spine of low hills that run west-to-east starting from the Laotian border to Thailand's National Highway 33. From there, the border makes a curve southward to the Kravanh Mountains and down to Gulf of Thailand. The land is broad, flat, and swampy, particularly surrounding Lake Tone Sap, the dominant geographic feature of the region. Most travel is limited to the main roads but these are often damaged to the point where alternative routes must be found. There is a single rail line from Phnom Penh in the south to Batdambang in the north, whose reliability is demonstrated by the local nickname "the Train to Hell". Border crossings into Thailand have been closed for many years but Thailand's national highway 33 meets with Cambodia's National Highway 4 and travel between the two countries is not uncommon. In fact, several roads from Sisophon to Preah Vihear are kept in good condition to facilitate trucks carrying Cambodia's natural resources to Thailand.

The geography changes dramatically in Cambodia's southwest, which is occupied by the Kravanh Mountains. These steep mountains rise out of the flat surrounding ground like stone giants and are almost completely impassable to wheeled vehicles. Few villages exist in the mountains and so far no one has taken advantage of the obvious wealth of natural resources they possess. There are occasional forays by the Khmer Rouge through these mountains but as there are few people to terrorize, the patrols are more exhausting than productive.

As of January 1, 1999, fighting between the Khmer Rouge and the Hun Sen regime in Phnom Penh has been fierce throughout the region and the battle lines are very fluid. The Khmer Rouge have launched an offensive during the dry season and have made progress against government forces. Several cities, including Sisophon and Preah Vihear have been occupied and Khmer Rouge guerillas are active throughout the countryside. Intense battles have been fought outside Batdambang, Siem Reap, and along National Highway 4. The Khmer Rouge are in possession of the northern end of Cambodia, starting at the western border along the Kravanh Mountains to Batdambang, across the northern end of Lake Tone Sap. From Lake Tone Sap, the Khmer Rouge line of control runs east to Siem Reap and across the country to Preah Vihear, and finally to where the borders of Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand converge. This is not a front of units as in a normal war but more accurately reflects the point at which government soldiers cannot go beyond without risking being cut off and annihilated.

Behind the lines, towards the Thai border, things are relatively quiet but still deadly. Between the Khmer Rouge camps on the Thai border and the battle lines are roughly 500,000 Cambodians seeking to keep their lives in the face of starvation, disease, and Khmer Rouge butchery. Whole villages have fled the fighting or been slaughtered and now stand eerily empty. Those that remain are either unable or unwilling to leave, despite the obvious threat.

**Khmer Rouge forces:** The Khmer Rouge are divided into Army groups and further divided into divisions and battalions. Army Group East covers the left flank of the assault against the government and consists of approximately 7,000 Khmer Rouge divided into two Divisions stretched between Preah Vihear and National Highway 4. Most of these units are new and full of untried recruits from training camps along the Thai border. These units have seen little action and have little heavy equipment or weaponry. Army Group East is under command of General Key Sok, who is more a political figure than a military leader and is a cautious man.

Army Group Center is the largest and most active of the Khmer Rouge Army Groups and is currently leading the offensive against government forces. 45,000 trained soldiers divided into six divisions with artillery and a handful of armored

## HOT SPOT: NORTHERN CAMBODIA

vehicles have pushed the Government forces back to the shores of Lake Tone Sap. His units are divided almost evenly between the UN Safe Zones of Batdambang and Siem Reap and are attempting to drive southward through the swampy territory to seize either National Highway 4 or 5. General Sovan Santapeap leads Army Group Center and has personally conducted several battles from the front lines.

While the rest of the Khmer Rouge forces fight and die against government soldiers, the 19,000 Khmer Rouge in Army Group West under General Moen Phat (pronounced *pat*) in Pailin province west of Batdambang remain curiously detached from the fighting. Phat has fortified his defenses and has refused to answer calls by the other Khmer Rouge generals to join in an attack on the UN Safe Zone of Batdambang or assist in the offensive.

**Cambodian Government Forces:** The Khmer Rouge offensive of 1998/1999 has not gone well for the Hun Sen regime, primarily due to the incompetence of its leaders and the generally poor quality of the soldiers. Those that have demonstrated an ability to retain their coherence under fire and not flee have been pushed to the front lines time and again and not given sufficient rest or resupply. Meanwhile, vast resources are required to patrol the entire country against Khmer Rouge guerilla forces that seem to be everywhere.

The Cambodian First Army has deployed itself in a ragged semi circle twenty-five kilometers south of the UN Safe Zone of Batdambang. The Army's 22,000 soldiers straddle National Highway 5 and terminate on the shores of Lake Tone Sap. First Army has access to two battalions of artillery for fire support but the artillery is short on ammunition for their antiquated field pieces.

The Cambodian Second Army is located on the opposite side of Lake Tone Sap and has taken the brunt of the Khmer Rouge offensive and is down to 18,980 soldiers from its original 23,000. The Division is currently in the process of retreating down National Highway 4 to approximately 45km south of Siem Reap. The retreat has been relatively organized, for once, but the Division is still in a precarious position. Those units on the front lines are exhausted in both soldiers and supplies and their fire-support has already been moved out of range. The commander of the Second Army is General Heng Khong, but he was wounded when his armored car struck a mine and now each of the army's division commanders have begun issuing orders and counter-orders in a storm of chaos.

Third Army, the unit tasked with internal security and the defense of the capital, has taken steps to tighten security and increase the number of soldiers on the street. Impressment gangs have swollen the ranks of the army from 15,000 to 16,200 but all of these are raw recruits who have no training. The bulk of these soldiers are inside the capital itself but 2,300 are in Kampong Chnang with the 11th Division and the 3,400-strong 7th Division is deployed in Kampong Cham.

**Action:** The Khmer Rouge offensive is well under way by January 1, 1999 and the action has been hot and heavy. Most of the fighting has centered on the northern and eastern side of lake Tone Sap and National Highway 4. The Khmer Rouge Army Group Center has clashed with the Cambodian Second Army stationed outside Siem Reap. The fighting was fierce and although the Khmer Rouge suffered heavy casualties, the government forces began to retreat.

As the new year rolls on, more of the same is expected. Assault in the west against First Army have failed to create a breakout and so the Khmer Rouge will focus on pushing the Second Army back towards Kampong Cham. However, the Khmer Rouge are stretching their supply lines further than ever, leaving them vulnerable to a counter-attack, in the unlikely event there is one.

The wild card in the action is General Moen Phat and the Khmer Rouge Army Group West. The general has already refused to join the offensive, leaving the Army Group Center vulnerable from the west. More importantly, Phat has quietly sent messages to the Hun Sen regime that he, and his forces, would defect from the Khmer Rouge if they were allowed to retain control of Pailin Province. If this were to occur, the Cambodian government First Army could strike northward and encircle Army Group Center, possibly destroying it.



A long spine of low mountains divide Myanmar and Thailand and have been the border between the two countries for centuries. The jungle-covered mountains provide a thick barrier through which no army has managed to cross without giving time for the enemy to mobilize. Only a handful of passes exist between the nations and no invasion of one country by the other has ever been successful without holding one. As Thailand and Myanmar engage in a cross-border feud., these passes become increasingly valuable and contested. As it has been since the sixteenth century, the most contested pass is near the city of Mae Sot.

Occasional areas of timber cutting and agriculture break the thick jungle of the mountains but these are few and far between. Mae Sot located a mere seven kilometer inside the Thai border, is a city of 8,000 and is located in a narrow valley between three mountains and is accessible only by land. The Mae Sot Pocket, a small valley on the Myanmar side of the border, has been occupied by Thai troops and is also a zone of intense conflict

On the Myanmar side of the mountains, the land opens up into the Karen state of Myanmar, a gently sloping, marshy plain that has been heavily developed for agriculture. Villages and towns dot the region and are populated mainly by Karens, a Christian tribe native to the region that has been severely repressed by the SLORC regime. The area was in rebellion until 1995 when MPA troops destroyed the Karen Resistance Headquarters in Thailand. MPA units are positioned throughout the region to prevent further uprisings.

To the south of Mae Sot lies the Mae Sot pocket, a loop of the border around a damp valley that has traditionally been a part of Myanmar. Thai forces occupied the pocket in 1997 after the MPA attempted to use it to circumvent Mae Sot. After bitter fighting which demolished two MPA divisions and one Thai division, the Royal Thai Army pushed the MPA to the other side of the Dawna mountains and occupied the valley. Since then, the SLORC has placed a high priority on returning the pocket to Burmese hands but has yet to accomplish anything beyond harassment of the occupation forces.

Both sides of the conflict have been plagued by the fact that they are engaged in the wrong type of activity for which they are deployed. The Thais have been fighting a primarily defensive battle with troops reacting to MPA moves but are restricted by the terrain. The Burmese, on the other hand, are engaged in an offensive effort to dislodge the Thais from Mae Sot but are unable to bring their widely scattered units together for an assault. This fact is actually to the relief of many MPA officers, who consider an assault on Mae Sot suicidal.

**Thai Forces:** Thanks to the terrain, the number of Thai soldiers deployed in this theater of operations has been minimal. The Thai 4th Division has been located in the city of Mae Sot since 1975 and has been reinforced by a company of M-60 tanks and a self-propelled artillery battalion from the 3rd Division. Although Mae Sot has no airport facilities, Royal Thai Air Force sorties are flown out of the airport at the city of Tak, 52km away.

To the south of Mae Sot, in the Mae Sot Pocket, the 3rd Division has taken residence. The pocket was considered a strategic objective and taken in late 1997 after strong resistance. The two divisions, the 3rd and 2nd Mountain Divisions had both suffered tremendous losses and remaining elements of the 2nd were absorbed by the 3rd to form a single unit. Since then, the 3rd Division has been deployed in the valley and the subject of occasional attacks by MPA air strikes and artillery.

Thai Rangers from the 6th Ranger Battalion, based out of Tak, patrol the mountains in platoons and rely heavily on helicopters for both transport and fire-support. The Rangers have ventured as far as Kawkareik, over 25km into Myanmar, to make their attacks.

**Myanmar Forces:** Due to the dual role of the MPA to both suppress the local population as well as launch attacks against Thai forces, the Myanmar People's Army presence is considerable but widely scattered. The largest single entity, the 24th Division, is based out of Kawkareik and the nearby villages of Kaunmu and Ale Mekane on the border. The nearly 6000 soldiers in the division have been recently deployed in late 1998, replacing the 10th Division which was

## HOT SPOT: MAE SOT POCKET

failing to meet the expectations of the SLORC in Yangon. General Nye, the 10th's leader, has spent the better part of 1998 preparing his troops for the area and feels that they are the best chance his country has of seizing the Mae Sot pass. He has already conducted probes of the Mae Sot defenses and is formulating his plan of attack.

To the south of Kawkaeik the 19th Division has been deployed. This Division has been tasked with the retaking of the Mae Sot Pocket from the Thais but has yet to make a move. Karen resistance fighters remain a problem in the area and have made communication and supply difficult for the 19th.

To the north of Kawkaeik the 28th Division has been deployed. Like the 24th Division, this unit has been preparing for an offensive against Mae Sot but preparations have not gone as well as planned. The division is still only has an under strength company of artillery and not enough vehicles. Desertion is becoming an increasingly large problem. General Kyo, commander of the 28<sup>th</sup> Division, has expressed his displeasure to his troops by having ten soldiers executed for failure to perform their duties.

**Action:** The beginning of modern hostilities between Myanmar and Thailand started in this region when Myanmar forces crossed into Thai territory to strike at Karen resistance bases. The Karen bases also housed the headquarters for the National League for Democracy, Myanmar's exiled political opposition. Counter-strikes by the Thai's decimated the Burmese and both sides have sought to gain a strategic advantage ever since.

Constant cross-border raiding has cost both sides in soldiers and equipment. The Royal Thai Army has reinforced Mae Sot and the border with tanks but the armor is limited to travel on the road and vulnerable to infantry with anti-armor weapons. With the exception of a disastrous attempt on Mae Sot in early 1996 by the MPA, the lines have effectively stabilized. The bulk of the fighting and casualties has been between the infantry, usually in groups no larger than company size.

The future will be different as both sides have begun to change their strategies. The MPA 10<sup>th</sup> Division under General Nye is nearly finished preparing for the an assault on Mae Sot. His stockpiles of equipment and fuel fill a small tent city outside of Kawkaeik. He has several teams who have trained heavily in using Chinese man-portable anti-armor missiles and he plans to use these as his tank breakers. Other teams have trained in using Chinese HN-5 shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles to stop the rain of death dropped by the Royal Thai Air Force. Nye plans to make his attack at the end of 1999, when the rainy season has passed.

The Thais have also begun to rethink their defensive strategy. The conflict has been waged on-and-off since 1995 with no change in the fundamental lines of battle and no sign of a peace in the future. Some within the military's hierarchy have begun discussing the possibility of occupying the fertile valley west of Mae Sot and forcing the SLORC to negotiate a truce. So far, it has only been talk but if the border-conflict should escalate further, this plan will no doubt be raised again.

Meanwhile, the Karen resistance has been receiving training and equipment from the Thai Rangers and often accompany the Thais on long-range reconnaissance into Myanmar. The crushing defeat they suffered in 1995 has been largely forgotten as thousands of Karens slip over the border to join the fight to free the Karen state from the SLORC. At any single moment, there are a half-dozen squads of Karen resistance fighters roaming the Karen state, gathering intelligence and causing headaches for the MPA leadership.



Although not as active as the fighting in the north, the Mergui Peninsula is the site of constant sea-borne raids and guerrilla attacks. Offshore, the Royal Thai Navy and the Myanmar People's Navy play deadly games of cat-and-mouse among the thousands of islands and reefs that dot the western coast. Thai Marines stage amphibious operations against both military and civilian targets in an attempt to depopulate the area and deprive Yangon of valuable agricultural resources. Meanwhile, Myanmar guerillas destroy bridges and roads, hoping to divide the country and deprive Bangkok of a land bridge to Malaysia.

The nearly 400km stretch of land is important to both sides for the fishing, agriculture, and timber it possesses as well as being the easiest way to reach Malaysia and Singapore. The large distances between population centers and the rugged terrain make it difficult to defend with any success. The Thai side of the border is much more developed and industrialized but this presents drawbacks as well as benefits. Thai forces must take a defensive role, patrolling roads and rail lines and guarding factories and towns. Infiltrators from Myanmar stage hit-and-run attacks, sabotaging lines of communication and stealing valuable commodities and equipment. Most of those killed by these infiltrators have been civilians living along the western coastline or attacked as they traveled Highway 4. Unlike other zones of fighting, no territory has been occupied, although large areas are now empty as its residents flee to the protection of the population centers.

Terrain in this area is punctuated by a spine of rolling hills covered in jungle down the center. These hills rise to an average height of 300m with narrow valleys in between. The border follows the eastern edge of the spine, starting at the Thai city of Ranong in the south and reaching up to its narrowest point (about 8km wide) at the Thai city of Pracheap Khiri Khan, which has been the site of many infiltrator attacks against rail lines and civilian facilities that support the Thai military.

Most fighting in the area has come in the form of hit-and-run attacks staged from the sea on the western coast. The two navies have engaged in combat among the maze of islands, with the dangerous currents and reefs claiming almost as many lives as fighting. Many of the small fishing villages that used to dot the coast at regular intervals have been abandoned or destroyed.

**Thai Forces:** Two army divisions, the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup>, have been assigned to defend the area and stage limited offensive operations and are augmented by aircraft of the Royal Thai Air Force located at Pracheap Khiri Khan and Surat Thani. The Royal Thai Navy, based out of the port city of Phuket, patrols the area with vessels large and small, as well as launching raids by Royal Thai Marines.

The 15<sup>th</sup> division, a mechanized infantry division, with its headquarters in the town of Pracheap Khiri Khan, are tasked with the maintenance of National Highway 4 and the rail lines that run parallel to it. The 15<sup>th</sup> patrols Highway 4, augmenting the National Police, who perform more mundane civil law tasks. An entire brigade and a battery of artillery have heavily reinforced the city of Pracheap Khiri Khan. The Royal Thai Navy, who maintain both a squadron of patrol aircraft and A-7E Corsair II ground attack planes, has commandeered the civilian airport.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Division, also a mechanized infantry Division, is much more offensive in its character and has an attached company of Thai Rangers who operate on and beyond the border. The headquarters in Surat Thani is well behind any fighting but elements of the 12<sup>th</sup> are posted as the towns of Chumphon and Ranong, where fighting has been heavy. Thai Rangers based out of Ranong regularly go on long-range patrols into Myanmar and also engage in counter-insurgency efforts along the border. A flight of eight F16 Falcon fighter-bombers is stationed out of Surat Thani as well as a squadron of twenty-four UH-1H Iroquois helicopter gunships.

The Royal Thai Navy patrols up and down the coast from its base in the port city of Phuket. Few of the tourists who flock to the resort city know that Phuket is also home to the Royal Thai Navy's Western Command and is home port for several destroyers and coastal patrol boats. These vessels patrol against Myanmar infiltrators and raiders as well as against smugglers and pirates. Royal Thai Marines are deployed from these and other vessels in commando raids as far north as Mergui.

With the exception of the Thai Rangers, most of these units are deployed in a



defensive posture, dug in at strategic towns and villages and patrolling the outlying areas against infiltrators. The strongest defense is with the 12<sup>th</sup> Division in Surat Thani and northward along Highway Four to Chumphon. The territory of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division, from Chumphon to Pracheap Khiri Khan is more lightly defended, primarily because of the large distances involved. Units are more mobile but strung out over greater distances and rely much more heavily on aerial reconnaissance. Poor communications and the high level of traffic on Highway 4 further hamper reaction times by elements of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division.

**Myanmar Forces:** Three Divisions of the Myanmar People's Army, the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>, occupy the Myanmar side of the Mergui Peninsula and are engaged in cross-border raids and guerilla activity. Over 400 troops operate inside Thailand as guerillas and infiltrators, attacking targets of opportunity and harassing enemy forces. In addition, the fledgling Myanmar People's Navy based out of Mergui has launched operations far more successful than anticipated.

The MPA's 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Divisions have their headquarters in Mergui and stretch south and west to Bokpyin and the Thai border. Both divisions take a defensive posture, spreading their collective troops along the border and only rarely allowing commanders to venture into Thai territory in large numbers. Both the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Divisions are veterans of the area and have been in place since the onset of hostilities. They were originally much more offensive, striking at Pracheap Khiri Khan, Chumphon, and Ranong. However, they were severely mauled by the Royal Thai Air Force and the 15<sup>th</sup> Division and forced to retreat to the border. These losses have never been fully replaced and both divisions are severely under strength. Of the roughly 6000 soldiers in the two Divisions, only 3700 are fighting soldiers, the other 2300 being conscripted laborers who are unarmed and are effectively slaves of the Myanmar military. Morale is low and desertion is common.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Division of the MPA has been newly organized and is led by General Pyong Kho, an ambitious man who seeks to make a name for himself in the Mergui Peninsula. The 21<sup>st</sup> is based out of Bokpyin and it makes regular patrols throughout the southern tip of Myanmar and conducts offensive operations into Thailand. In addition, Kho has created an oversized company of guerilla fighters from soldiers within his division. These guerillas, only 400 strong, conduct most of the raids and attacks within Thai territory and have been very successful in tying up Thai military forces that would otherwise go to areas of more intense fighting. Their losses have been heavy, with groups as large as platoons being wiped out in a single action, but Kho has seen that they receive the best equipment and training that his country can provide.

The Myanmar Peoples Navy, actually a sub-organization of the MPA, has proven itself to be an effective nuisance to the Thai navy and a danger to unprotected villages. Although it has no large craft like Thailand's *Chakri Naruebet*, the small vessels and ships of the MPN have launched hit-and-run raids on villages up and down the Thai coastline as far south as Phuket. They take advantage of their small profiles and high speeds to maneuver through tight channels and hide in shallow coves. The SLORC regime in Yangon has added to its meager naval resources via an archaic but effective means - the letter of marques. Several pirates that have plagued the west coast of the Mergui Peninsula have gained a measure of respectability, at least in Myanmar, thanks to the conflict.

**Action:** Most of the combat in this region has been limited to guerrilla attacks and minor skirmishes. Villages have been torched, bridges and roads destroyed, and agricultural centers damaged. From the start of the conflict, most fighting has occurred along Highway 4 and up and down the western coastline. The town of Ranong has become an armed camp, its perimeter ringed by tanks and soldiers of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division and Thai Rangers. The town of Chumphon has been similarly fortified. Both have become swelled with refugees fleeing the violence in the countryside.

On the Myanmar side of the border, the damage has been as severe. Raids by Thai Rangers and Marines have deprived the Burmese of electricity, clean water, and basic commodities. General Kho's success with his guerrillas has failed to bolster support among the population, who blame the SLORC for their distress.

## HOT SPOT: MERGUI PENINSULA

### **National Highway 4**

National Highway 4 is the lifeline of southern Thailand and a major route of commerce for all of Southeast Asia. The millions of people living in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, and the whole of the Malay peninsula represent a vast market for the industries of Thailand, a market they cannot live without. The Highway itself is a four-lane asphalt and concrete road built on an elevated berm. There are many bridges to cross the ever-present rivers and streams that populate the area and it is these that have been the most common target of Myanmar infiltrators. Infiltrators have also set ambushes along the highway, using explosives and small arms to attack civilian and lightly protected military vehicles. Although National Police cruisers patrol National Highway 4 they are accompanied by Thai Army APCs and armored vehicles.

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# CHAPTER TWO

# SYDNEY -

# GATEWAY TO

# ADVENTURE ▼ ▼

Southeast Asia is a place for action, adventure, and danger for BlackEagle/BlackEagle operatives. There are plans to eventually open a Bangkok or Kuala Lumpur office but these have not yet come to fruition, making Southeast Asia a place where operative are very much on their own. Without the immediate availability of backup, logistics, or even friendly governments to turn to, they must rely upon their own wits and ingenuity to survive and fulfill their contracts. However, sometimes an individual cell's capabilities are not enough and they must turn to someone else for help. That help comes from the nearest BlackEagle office in Sydney, Australia.

Most contracts that call for B/E cells to work in Southeast Asia are either arranged through or coordinated with the Sydney office. All BlackEagle cell activities, L&P assistance, and communications coordination within the region is done through the office by its staff of experienced and professional operatives. The office itself is designed with both resident and visiting teams in mind and the staff is familiar with the region and can offer considerable assistance to those who find themselves in Southeast Asia and in need of help.

## **AUSTRALIA IN 1999**

The nation-continent of Australia is no different from the rest of the world at the millennium's end. The world depression has a stranglehold on the economy, crime is up, employment is down, and optimism has given way to cynicism. A drought has plagued much of the continent for three years running and each new Christmas has seen a record high temperature.

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Still, Australia is a decent place to live. Called “Oz” by its citizens, Australia has far fewer people than the U.S. spread over a larger area and boasts an equal if not better standard of living. More importantly, Australia has what can only be described as a generally more relaxed environment. Socializing is of great importance and Australia champions the rights of the individual to do their own thing. For the most part, Australia is a friendly, pleasant place to live.

Australian history is one of succeeding migrations, the first of which occurred circa 40,000 years ago when the Aboriginal people emigrated from Asia. Although the first Western explorer to find Australia in 1606 was Dutch, it was the English who established modern Australia in 1770 when Capt. James Cook landed near Sydney. Having lost America as a dumping ground for convicts and troublemakers, King George III turned to Australia and began a process of forced emigration in 1787. January 26 is celebrated as Australia Day and commemorates the landing of the first of these resettlements in Port Jackson, now known as the city of Sydney. The discovery of gold in 1851 brought droves of pioneers from around the world and by 1860 the population had reached one million. Independence from direct English rule occurred in 1901 and Australia became a commonwealth. Although it was independent, the country still retained its close ties to Britain.

When the White Australian Policy ended in 1972 a new wave of immigrants from Asia occurred. Southeast Asian refugees, Koreans, Japanese, Indians, and a host of others found a new home in the land down under. Meanwhile, the Aboriginals returned from near extinction to gain citizenship and a place in the cultural melting pot. In 1999 the population has approached 20 million with over one quarter having been born outside of Australia’s shores.

Although Australia is a modern industrialized nation, the vast majority of it remains wild and unsettled “bush” or wilderness. Eighty-eight percent of the population lives within 20 kilometers of the coast and only 3% live in the bush in small towns or on vast sheep and cattle stations (ranches). This fact, combined with the stigma of having been a convict colony, resulted in a national inferiority complex that has only recently been expunged with world-wide recognition of Oz’s uniqueness and success. This new national pride was cemented with the awarding of the 2000 Olympics to Sydney, an event the entire nation is gearing up for with an almost religious fervor.

### ***Aboriginal Peoples***

In the race to settle Australia by the western world, the Aboriginals have fared poorly. Three hundred thousand aboriginals inhabited Oz at the beginning of western settlement. Through disease, loss of land and outright genocide, that number had shrunk to a few thousand at the turn of the century. Efforts to provide citizenship and civil rights to the aboriginals began after the end of WWII and culminated in the ruling of the High Court that all unoccupied land with an Aboriginal history is the property of Aboriginal people. Consideration for Abo (short for Aboriginal) religious practices, sacred places, and culture has also increased.

For the average aboriginal, this hasn’t meant much. On average, education and economic levels are lower, substance abuse and unemployment are higher. Political and social organizations continue to seek aid but with the current economic difficulty there isn’t much on the horizon. Roughly 30,000 of the 288,000 Australian Aboriginals live in Sydney, mostly in the ghettos of King’s Cross.



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### *The 2000 Olympics*

If there is one thing that has inspired hope and pride in Sydney, it is the Olympic Games that are to be held here in the summer of 2000. Despite economic difficulties the city of Sydney is determined to show the world that it can put on a first-class show. Existing sports facilities have been expanded and new ones have been built providing much needed jobs. Kids are already hawking t-shirts and baseball caps with the Olympic logo.

To ensure public safety, the Sydney police department and national anti-terrorist teams have already begun to prepare. Their goal is to have no repeats of Atlanta or Munich.

### **SYDNEY**

Sydney is Australia's oldest and most populous city with 60,000 people living in Sydney proper and roughly four million in greater Sydney. The city is built on the low hills that surround Port Jackson, Australia's premier harbor. The harbor is busy with one third of the nation's sea traffic as well being the home of the Royal Australian Navy. The Parramatta River divides Sydney between north and south, with the southern half having the dominant business and industrial areas while the north is largely suburban. These two halves are united by many bridges, not the least of which is the world-famous Sydney Harbor Bridge, often seen with the equally famous Sydney Opera House in the background.

Sydney bills itself as the gateway to Oz, a reputation that it lives up to. Almost all of Australia's visitors begin their travels in Sydney as do most immigrants. In addition to the usual tourist stops, Sydney has a great deal to offer visitor and resident alike.

The central business district is the center of the steel and glass canyons that mark downtown Sydney. Defined roughly from the transportation hub of Circular Quay (pronounced "key") where ferries and JetCats carry people around the Parramatta River, southward to the beginning of Chinatown. Hyde Park and the Royal Botanical Gardens mark the eastern boundary and Darling Harbor defines the western boundary. The City Circle Line, an elevated monorail, rings the district. Traffic conditions are crowded and the streets are often filled with the cursing of Indonesian taxi drivers.

West of central business district, The Rocks and Millers Point mix historic buildings built by convict labor and the latest in pubs, restaurants, and discotheques. Ferrari's, Mazerratti's, and Roll's Royce's make the streets a virtual showroom. Catering to the wealthy and elite of Sydney, a private security firm, SecuriMax, patrols the streets in addition to the city's police forces. Jurisdiction conflicts between the two have flared up and neither side has a favorable view of the other. A series of drug-related torture/murders in December of 1998 shocked the city with their brutality and exposed a darker side of the neighborhood.

The western edge of the business district is now a major tourist attraction featuring the Darling Harbor Convention Center, Sydney Aquarium, a waterfront promenade, Harbourside Marketplace, and to the south, the Chinese Garden. Its a crowded place and popular with BlackEagle/BlackEagle contractees who want an anonymous meeting place.

South of the central business district, lies Chinatown. This is something of a misnomer. Although Chinese are definitely the majority population, there are also large populations of Vietnamese, Thai, Indonesian, Malaysian, and Micronesians. These ring Chinatown like jewels on a crown and add their distinct flavor to the area. Conflicts between the ethnic groups rise and fall with traditional holidays being the time of the fiercest fights.

For rougher tastes, Kings Cross is the most infamous red-light district outside of Bangkok's Patpong Road. "The dirty half-mile" of Darlinghurst Road is south and west of the central business district and it spills out for half a kilometer in all directions. In addition to the stunning variety of sexually oriented businesses, King's Cross is one of the poorest parts of Sydney. Crime is rampant, as is drug use. Almost half of the murders committed in Greater Sydney happen in the King's Cross area. Although it's not a place for children, the tenement buildings and houses are full with families who have no jobs, no future, and no hope.

Nearly three and one half million people live in the suburbs and surrounding Sydney and many of these have their own unique flavor.

The suburb of Paddington, with its Victorian mansions and cast-iron trellises, is the down-under version of New York's Greenwich Village. Called "Paddo" by locals, Paddington is about 4.5 kilometers south of the city center, just north of Kingsford Smith Airport. Formerly home to wealthy families rich from Australia's immense natural resources, the neighborhood slowly decayed until it was barely hanging on. A move to renovate the area resulted in one of the most pleasant Sydney suburbs. The Victorian-era mansions are now home to corporations, clubs, pubs, and, of course, the BlackEagle/BlackEagle Sydney office.



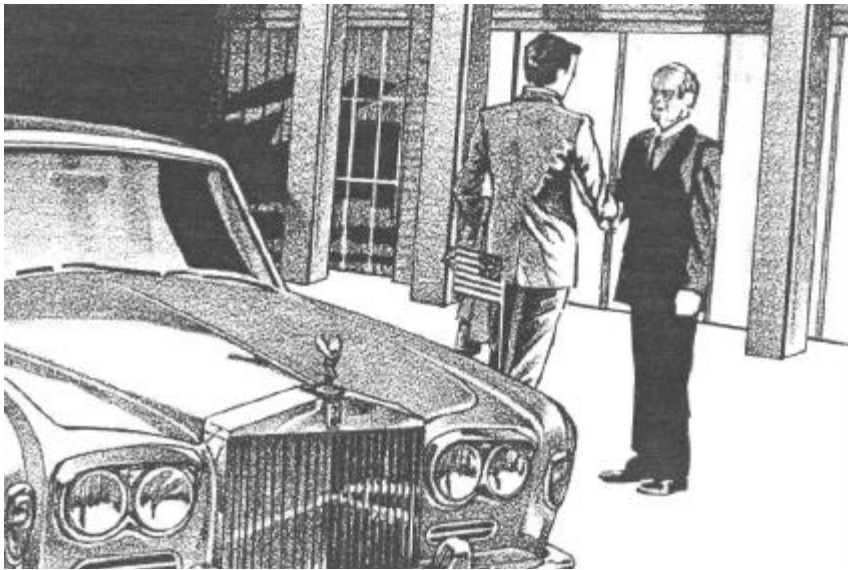
Glebe and the nearby University is a bohemian paradise featuring coffee and poetry pubs and a cluster of art galleries. Glebe has always been more laid back and liberal than the rest of Sydney. Although not the best neighborhood in town, crime is uncommon and violent crime a rarity.

On the eastern side of Sydney facing the South Pacific Ocean is Bondi Bay, home to some of the world's greatest surfing. Surf Carnivals take place during the warmer months (November through March) and pit amateur and professional surfers against each other for prizes and recognition. Many BE/BE operatives take advantage of the world-class surfing and nude sunbathing here. Bondi Bay is patrolled for sharks, another native Australian swimmer.

Although not the nation's capital (Canberra, Australia's capital, is only a four-hour drive away), Sydney is a trade and manufacturing center for not just Australia but the entire Pacific Rim. Corporate headquarters for most of Australia's big businesses are found here as well as hundreds of smaller corporations. Technology and research and development are the fastest growing industries, but the largest business sector deals with resource extraction: oil, gas, lumber, wool, etc.

Despite its self-promoted image of a tourist and business mecca, Sydney has problems. Since the depression, many people have come here in search of jobs in the oil refineries, wool markets, and chemical plants that ring the city but most are unable to find work. High unemployment and poor race relations between Anglos, aboriginals, and minorities have led to riots and an upsurge in hate crimes. Overloaded city services are breaking down- sewer, water, garbage collection, etc.-and the tax base to support them is dwindling. Crime, like everywhere in the world, has risen, but a person is still twenty times more likely to be murdered in Los Angeles than in Sydney. Still, police have adopted similar tactics and equipment as that of other cities such as Miami and Los Angeles.

***Kingsford Smith Airport*** - The gateway to Sydney and Oz for millions of tourists, Kingford Smith is one of the world's busiest airports. Many of the



runways have been artificially extended into Botany Bay, giving those with window seats the impression that their plane is about to crash into the sea. Security is professional and quiet and a SWAT team is on alert at all times. Kingsford Smith was the site of a hostage drama in late 1998 when a deranged man claiming to have a bomb forced his way onto a Qantas 747. Live television footage of the SWAT team subduing the lunatic thrilled millions of Aussies.

**Sydney Precious Gem Exchange** - Fueled by the opal trade, the Sydney Precious Gem Exchange is one of the largest exchanges outside of Europe. Millions of dollars in cut and uncut diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and opals are bought and sold here every day. As can be expected, security is high-tech, high-threat, and completely uncompromising.

**Queen Victoria Building** - This huge building occupies the entire block and is known locally as the QVB. It was formerly the city's produce center but was restored in 1986 and now houses a few shops and restaurants. A fire in July of 1998 destroyed the northwest corner of the building and those areas have been cordoned off. The worldwide depression has left many of the shops vacant and empty and the buildings many tall arches and stained glass windows give shoppers the feeling of being in an abandoned church. Squatters have taken over the damaged areas of the QVB and many refuse to shop there for fear of being attacked.

**Sydney Mint** - This is Australia's literal moneymaking facility. A museum containing displays of gold and silver coins is also on the grounds but the real action occurs behind several locked doors and under the watch of hundreds of Federal agents. There were three attempted robberies of the mint in 1998 and all were intercepted, although authorities failed to capture the would-be thief in the last attempt. Knowledge of these robbery attempts has been withheld from the media.

**Dian Chinese Restaurant** - One of many restaurants that dot Chinatown, the Dian serves delicious Cantonese and Sezuan meals. It is also the headquarters of the Shining Saber triad. The Shining Sabers are the dominant triad in Chinatown but by no means the only one. Conflict over drug territory between it and the Sun and Key triad has resulted in several murders. Because the Shining Sabers employ Vietnamese gangs to perform their dirty work, they have managed to disguise the real nature of the murders as ethnic violence.

**Sydney Football Stadium** - Rugby, soccer, Aussie football, and just about every other sport played on a field has a club home here. In addition to the modern stadium that seats 27,000, there are several practice fields located outside the building.

**Australia Boomerang Association** - This group is dedicated to maintaining Australia's indigenous weapon, the boomerang. A practice field and indoor

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court allow for boomeranging any time of the year and competitions are held monthly. Hunting trips are also organized but those attending must demonstrate a proficiency with the weapon and survival skills before they are allowed out into the bush.

**Sydney Cricket Grounds** - Cricket has a fanatical following in Sydney, more in line with that of India or Pakistan than the UK. Test matches against any of the other cricket playing nations are always popular, while one day games are invariably sold out. The New South Wales cricket side plays here against other state sides, and these match are also well attended. Crowd problems in recent years have seen alcohol sales limited to light beer (an outrage in the eyes of many Aussies).

## **BLACKEAGLE SYDNEY**

B/E Sydney is typical of the many smaller B/E offices around the globe, but its size is not a reflection of the work it does. In addition to taking care of its own cells, the office is a stopping point, safe house, armory, and temporary headquarters for any cell on assignment in Southeast Asia. Because of its busy nature and the number of transient operatives, the office has had a *laze-faire* attitude but this is changing. Due to recent events (See *The Osprey Incident* sidebar and *Neighbors*) the office has taken on a dark “siege” mentality. Sydney operatives are closing ranks and the usual practical jokes and intense competition between cells has been replaced with a deep sense of camaraderie and internal support. However, this has not prevented the B/E operatives from maintaining their reputation for a relaxed and casual approach to a decidedly dangerous business.

1998 was a momentous year for the Sydney office. The office ran seventy-eight assignments in 1998, with the majority occurring after August. When Japan fell into turmoil and the B/E office in Kyoto began having difficulties with the new government, much of its business was shifted to Sydney - including the office of the Far Eastern Theatre Head, Miromi Ohguro. In July, BlackEagle made Sydney the preferred staging point for cells with contracts in East and Southeast Asia. By November, the number of contracts being serviced had doubled and the Logistics & Procurement division’s needs had tripled. Extra space was made to house visiting teams and their equipment and the communications facilities were improved considerably. The Sydney training facility, an abandoned concrete plant on the outskirts of Sydney, was renovated to allow for multiple cells to use it simultaneously. Despite the amount of pressure placed on the office, BlackEagle Sydney has risen to the challenge and there is the promise of more legal and L&P help on the way.

With East Asia as a responsibility, the variety of assignments that come through the office is stunning. Hostage rescue and tactical assignments can be found running side-by-side with murder investigations. Although many of the contracts are in Australia, most require travel to Southeast Asia, with Thailand and Cambodia being the current hot-spots.

Just as the missions vary, so do the operatives. Twenty-two languages and dialects are spoken by various operatives including Thai, Laotian, Khmer, Vietnamese, Cantonese and Mandarin. Although the number of college graduates is slightly lower than usual, the number of experienced operatives of Veteran 2 and up is higher. The office is very cosmopolitan with the majority of operatives being born outside of Australia.

## ***The Osprey Incident***

In July of 1998, the Australian environmental group contracted the Sydney office Environmental Protection League (EPL) to investigate several incidents of illegal pollution. Investigators uncovered a large-scale illegal dumping operation in the Australian outback. The EPL publicized the information and several corporations paid millions of dollars in fines and some of the organizers went to jail.

In November, an EPL representative contracted with B/E to investigate the Osprey Nuclear Power Plant near Sydney. EPL believed that the plant was illegally storing spent nuclear material and wanted the operatives to infiltrate the plant and gather proof.

While the B/E operatives were in the plant, the environmental terrorist group Gaia’s Fist attacked. In the confusion, B/E operatives were confused with the terrorists and fired upon. The operatives returned fire, killing one guard and wounding two others. The terrorists fled unharmed but the operatives were not so lucky and were arrested. They are now free on bail while B/E legal experts attempt to formulate a defense.

The incident has captured the attention of the news media. Tabloid journalists have branded BlackEagle as a mercenary organization. The attacks on B/E in the media and in the House of Parliament by reactionary members has led to a siege mentality in the Sydney office. Reporters and photographers sometimes hound operatives. While this has merely been annoying, B/E fears that it will lead to a botched assignment.

The trial, set for March of 1999, promises to be a media event. The operatives will be tried for murder and terrorism and the prosecution will attempt to link B/E with the eco-terrorist group. B/E has hired several prominent lawyers to defend the operatives but the outcome is in question.

Meanwhile, EPL claims to have made the contract in good faith and to have no connection with Gaia’s Fist (which has denied responsibility for the attack). The EPL leadership is cooperating with B/E in investigating what hap-

*(con’t. next page)*

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### *The Osprey Incident (con't.)*

pened but little headway has been made.

What B/E and the EPL do not know is that there is a leak within EPL. One of EPL's members is actually a mole for United World Environmental Services, one of the corporations uncovered in the first assignment. When the B/E operatives informed EPL of their plan, the mole told UWES which then hired mercenaries to make the attack, disguised as Gaia's Fist terrorists.

### **The McGuire House**

The Sydney office is located in the formerly residential neighborhood of Paddington and is surrounded with Victorian-era mansions and brownstones that have been rezoned and renovated as professional business offices. Finely manicured lawns and luxury automobiles are the norm and provide a contrast to some of the more rough-and-tumble operatives. The office is located in a three-story Victorian mansion built in 1905 by an immigrant who made his fortune in the opal trade. Named after the immigrant family, The McGuire House is on the Australian National Historic Register and will most likely become a protected site in 2005. B/E acquired the property in an auction in 1994 and has remodeled and restored it to its original Victorian style.

On first glance, the McGuire House appears no different from the many other mansions in the area that now houses investment firms, corporate headquarters, and think tanks. Its three-story front is painted a light gray with red trim and it sports a dark gray-shingled roof. A turret sits in the southeast corner and vines along the wall reach up to the second story. A driveway allows access to the rear of the building. The lawn is immaculately manicured and a thick wall of bushes grows along the fence at the rear of the house. A garage and outdoor patio fill out the back of the property.

On closer inspection, the house does have some unusual features. The most obvious is the cluster of radio, microwave and satellite antennas that sprout from the rooftop. The black wrought-iron fence that surrounds the property is dotted with closed-circuit television cameras as well as less obvious sensors. Cameras are also mounted discretely on the house.

The back of the McGuire is as well maintained as the front. It is surrounded by 3-meter tall hedges for privacy and sports a concrete patio and a small sand volleyball court. On-duty operatives with nothing to do can often be found here sunbathing, playing one-on-one volleyball, and cleaning their firearms. A brick barbecue grill is also available and cookouts are common during the cooler evenings.

The garage is part of the original construction of the house and was a stable before being outfitted for automobiles. It has the same stone construction as the house but is not as well restored. The garage is used to maintain the vehicles owned by B/E such as an electronics investigation van and an armored Land Rover, as well as repair operatives' vehicles that are damaged in the course of an assignment. Sanford Jennings, a burly aborigine in his late fifties is the undisputed ruler of the garage and his word is law. He requires all operatives to sign out for any tools borrowed from the garage and won't hesitate to use any means necessary to retrieve them.

Entrance to the House is always through the rear and not the front. This is primarily because most clients prefer the anonymity afforded by this entrance as well as fitting the remodeled floor plan. The normal entrance doors are reinforced solid oak with brass handles and bulletproof stained-glass windows. The service entrance is a metal overhead sliding door leading to the loading dock that is used only when necessary.

The receptionist buzzes clients and visitors in after visual identification at the door. Linda Mather, a woman of remarkable talent and constant sunny disposition normally sits at the front desk in the reception area. The room is decorated in a Victorian fashion to match the exterior with an accent on oak paneling. A half-dozen high-backed, overstuffed chairs imported from England are arranged in a circle at the center of the room. Small tables and lamps fit snugly into the corners and give the office the feel of a parlor or smoking room. Current magazines, a daily newspaper and many oversized books featuring ex-



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otic locations and military history are kept here, more to occupy B/E operatives acting as security than for clients.

Entrance to the rest of the house is through a pair of double doors located behind Ms. Mather. The richly decorated hallway makes an abrupt turn to the right.

On one side is a conference room decorated as a library. Shelves of legal and general reference books line the walls. A large conference table and set of chairs seat eight comfortably and a large-screen multimedia presentation system is set into the shelves. Isaac Silverman and Luther VanPelt are often here to research cases and prepare legal briefs.

On the opposite side of the hallway are a set of four offices, each with a solid oak door and brass doorknob. The first belongs to the Senior Cell Leader, Sean “Stubby” Waugh. His office is personalized with mementoes of past assignments (including a genuine shrunken head from Borneo), family pictures, and his collection of knives and other edged weapons. His desk is usually covered with papers and half-empty coffee mugs. On the wall behind his desk, Waugh keeps a large American Central Intelligence Agency map of the world with red pins and sticky notes representing various cells and their activities.

The second office is that of Kim Ly, the Executive Secretary to the Senior Cell Leader and unofficial “old man” of the office. His office is a sharp contrast to Waugh’s in that it is always immaculately clean. The usual pictures and personal affectations are conspicuously absent and the desktop is always bare except for a decorative pen and pencil set. More than one rookie has mistaken the office for being unused.

The third office is that of Administrative Head Logan Vincennes. This office is by far the noisiest of the four as Vincennes is constantly on the phone or teleconferencing with clients and cell members. Vincennes is fond of plants and his office reflects it with ficus trees, philodendrons, and an assortment of flowering plants tastefully scattered around. Vincennes has removed the couch from his office, preferring to use the space for pacing and thinking on his feet.

The fourth and final office used to be the Legal Department’s until the arrival of Hiromi Oghuro, the Far Eastern Theatre Head. It was agreed that Oghuro would need to be close to Waugh and Ly and although the work being done by Legal was vital, it could be done elsewhere. Legal was moved upstairs to the second floor and Oghuro took up residency. It is considered a temporary office, but with the continuing difficulties in Japan showing no signs of letting up, the office will likely become permanent.

Oghuro keeps his office similar to Ly’s, but it has more of a lived-in appearance. There are a few personal effects, notably those from Oghuro’s days as a Tokyo SWAT commander, as well as a collection of photos of Oghuro’s family.

When he moved in, Vincennes gave Oghuro a potted fern and Oghuro tried valiantly to keep it alive. Despite his efforts, the fern died and Oghuro, not wanting to offend Vincennes, replaced it. However, he has not had any better luck with those that followed it. Oghuro is now on his fourth plant and it is rapidly withering. He doesn’t look forward to smuggling another into the office.

The hall forms a ‘T’ with another hallway leading from the service doors. At this junction are the stairs and a small elevator set into the turret of the house.

The second floor is less decorated and is dedicated office space for resident and visiting cells as well as the legal office. There is also a day room and miniature kitchen. This area is more casual in design as well as in atmosphere. Visitors are barred from any floor but the first, but Waugh’s three children sometimes make their way here searching for the office mascot, Spickles. When the children are on the floor, the crude language, profane personal insults, and

### ***BlackEagle Mascot: Spickles***

Spickles, a large German shepherd adopted as a mascot by the office, keeps his home in the Day Room on the second floor. He was found as a puppy at the concrete factory where he had been abandoned. Although he was nearly dead of dehydration and starvation, an operative nursed him back to health. The dog was smuggled into the B/E office and the other cells conspired to keep knowledge of his presence from Waugh, who is allergic to dogs. The cover was blown when Spickles (named after an ice-cream treat the dog was fond of) wandered down to the first floor while no one was looking. Waugh initially wanted the dog gone but realized the value of it as a mascot and allowed it to stay, provided clients do not see it. He often complains that the dog is more popular than he is.

Spickles has grown to become a large dog and is very friendly. Some of the operatives have taught him to sit, stay, bark on command, and chase a Frisbee. No one is sure what the dog would do if a friend were threatened but there is no argument that if Spickles did attack the results would ugly.



scatological humor is toned down.

The first door is now the office of Isaac Silverman and his assistant Luther VanPelt. It is separated from the general office area filled with cubicles by a wood-paneled wall that is an almost, but not quite completely, useless noise barrier. The Legal office has an unfinished look, primarily because it is temporary and the wood paneling is secured to the floor and ceiling by a handful of screws. Because the walls are so poor at preventing sound, Silverman and VanPelt usually don't bother to close their door. The legal office has a couch, two desks opposite each other, and a filing cabinet in the corner.

Along the south and east walls are traditional office cubicles used by the cells. As in other B/E offices, each cell occupies a single cubicle although only the first four are permanently occupied with Sydney's resident cells. Each cubicle is supposed to contain a desktop workstation, a pair of cabinets, a small table, and three or four chairs, but resident cells have been known to steal chairs, drawers, and even the computers from unused cubicles. This has led to some problems with visiting cells that are assigned a cubicle only to find it little more than a place to stand. Few cells complain as most are capable of finding their own resources (often by helping themselves to their neighbor's.)

The most often-used space on the second floor is the day room. Several comfortable couches surround a flat-screen television and VCR and a mini-kitchen occupies the far wall. The kitchen doesn't see much use as most operatives prefer to cook and eat outside in the backyard if weather permits. In the corner is a large bean-bag chair that serves as Spickles' bed. His food bowl and water dish

are next to it and all the cells share the responsibility of feeding and watering.

The third floor is even less decorated than the second and is divided into two large rooms. The first is the communications room, which is mostly empty except for a bank of computers, servers and radio and microwave equipment that occupies most of the north wall. Dat Vu, Sydney's L&P specialist, is technically in charge of this area but his expertise is limited. Instead, cells take turns manning the equipment with Oghuro and Waugh taking over when necessary. This room is usually kept dark to better read the half-dozen monitors and is also always kept cool by a squadron of air conditioners to protect the equipment from overheating. Anyone staying in the room for long periods of time will want to wear a long-sleeve shirt or a sweater. A trapdoor in the ceiling leads to the attic and the antenna array.

The other room on the third floor is primarily used for storage for equipment and has been converted into an overnight stay area with the addition of a few cots. Large cardboard boxes and wooden crates line the walls. In the center of the room are five army cots. There is a running joke among the operatives that the cots are so uncomfortable they could only have been designed by the Marquis De Sade. There must be something to the rumors because the cots have gained a reputation in B/E offices around the world spread by visiting cells. Unlike the room next door, this room is usually warm to the point of being uncomfortable. From the window to the south is a very nice view of the surrounding neighborhood.

The basement of The McGuire House has a small exercise room with a set

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of free weights and exercise machines as well as a set of lockers and showers. Because the water heater for the house is rather small and there are only a few showers available, operatives are asked not to tie them up more than necessary.

The basement also houses the L&P office as well as access to the office secure storage in what was formerly the wine cellar. Dat Vu's office can hardly be called an office and it's fortunate he doesn't mind the cramped quarters. It is usually overflowing with newspapers and magazines from dozens of countries. Vu also keeps three computers in his office running at all times to maintain communications with the offices in Atlanta and London as well as his own peculiar contacts.

The secure storage is actually a walk-in safe that was original to the house. The mechanical lock has been replaced with an electronic one and security systems have been installed but the thick metal door is imposing by itself. Weapons, evidence and valuables are stored here as well as digital recording machines, which record all phone conversations from within the House. Surveillance video is also recorded and stored here on readable/writeable compact disks, which are rotated every three to four days. Only Vu, Waugh, Ly, Oghuro and the cell leaders know the safe's combination.

The central heating unit for the house fills the final room and keeping it running is relegated to Sanford Jennings, the office mechanic.

## **Personnel**

### ***Far Eastern Theatre Head (temporary), Hiromi Oghuro***

When the military took nominal control of the Japanese government in 1998, any organization that presented even the possibility of becoming a destabilizing force was placed under watch. Although the majority were the many organizations that organized the rioting that had wracked the country, it also included religious cults, extreme political organizations, and even marching and drill clubs. Of course, the BlackEagle/BlackEagle office in Kyoto fell under this category. Although the initial interference was slight - verification of weapons permits and the like - the government also began a campaign of observation of the office. After the office smuggled corporate officers wanted by the government out of the country, the military intervened and placed the office in receivership on the pretense of tax violations. Although operations were allowed to continue, it was with government supervision. Consequently, many of B/E's less than entirely legal contracts have gone elsewhere.

Because of the difficulty of operating with observers around every corner, the Far Eastern Theatre Head, Hiromi Oghuro, has moved to the Sydney office. He is responsible for coordinating and giving assistance to cells from the other offices that have assignments in East Asia. Because of the nature of his job, he works in close cooperation with Sydney's Senior Cell Leader, Stubby Waugh.

Oghuro is physically unassuming and average-looking, at least in the blue business suit he favors at work. However, when off-duty he likes to wear a jump-suit from the Osaka SWAT team he led in the early 90's. He is a vigorous athlete and enjoys long-distance running. Although some of the operatives tend to think of him as a cold fish because of his constant politeness and lack of humor, those who have been with Oghuro out on the town after hours know differently.

### ***Senior Cell Leader, Sean "Stubby" Waugh***

Most operatives have trouble believing that Sean "Stubby" Waugh is the Senior Cell Leader on their first meeting. Waugh, who prefers the nickname Stubby,

**FAR EASTERN  
THEATER HEAD**  
Hiromi Oghuro

**SYDNEY SENIOR  
CELL LEADER**  
Sean "Stubby" Waugh

**OPERATIONS**

**CELL 1 LEADER /  
DEPUTY SENIOR  
CELL LEADER**  
Rene "Chappy"  
Chapdelaine  
CELL 1

**CELL 2 LEADER**  
Michael Chang  
CELL 2

**CELL 3 LEADER**  
CELL 3

**CELL 4 LEADER**  
CELL 4

**VISITING CELL  
LEADER**  
VISITING CELL

**VISITING CELL  
LEADER**  
VISITING CELL

**VISITING CELL  
LEADER**  
VISITING CELL

can be typically found wearing a New York Yankee's baseball cap that barely contains his curly blonde hair. His moustache comes and goes with the seasons as does his collection of Hawaiian style shirts. With short legs, he stands at just under 174cm and weighs about 110kg. Some have remarked that he looks more like a janitor than a cell leader.

Looks are deceiving. Starting at age fifteen, Stubby worked a string of jobs including bouncer, kick boxer, law enforcement, and private detective. He has a quick mind and a nearly photographic memory. In addition, he currently holds the world's record for shattering the most blocks of ice with a single blow. He offers classes to those operatives with the time and inclination in his form of martial art, Kenpo Karate, and focuses on street-fighting techniques.

Despite his rough image, Waugh is a devoted family man with a wife and three children.

His blonde-haired kids can often be found wandering the upstairs offices in search of the office mascot, Spickles.

**Administrative Head,  
Logan Vincennes**

The day-to-day management of the Sydney office falls to Logan Vincennes, a young accountant of French-Canadian heritage. His quiet style and subtle maneuvering allows the office to run as if it were a natural process that would occur all by itself. He works closely with Waugh, Oghuro, cell leaders and clients to ensure that rooms are available, schedules are met, and most importantly, bills are paid. His accented voice, no matter how quiet, is always listened to.

Vincennes came to Australia at twelve to live with his uncle after being arrested on several counts of breaking and entering in Quebec. Practically alone on his uncle's farm, Vincennes turned from crime to adventuring. After graduating early from secondary school Vincennes spent several years wandering the globe, particularly Southeast Asia. When he finally entered college at twenty-three, he had visited sixteen different countries and spoke three languages. Logan came to B/E originally to work as an op-

**ADMINISTRATIVE**

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
HEAD**  
Logan Vincennes

**RECEPTION**  
Linda Mather

**EXECUTIVE  
SECRETARY TO THE  
SENIOR  
CELL LEADER**  
Kim Ly

**LEGAL**

**OFFICE LEGAL  
AIDE**  
Isaac Silverman

**LEGAL AIDE  
(UNOFFICIAL)**  
Luther VanPelt

**L & P**

**L&P LIASON**  
Dat Tieng Vu

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erative but his administrative abilities outshone his tactical skills and he was moved to his current position.

“Logan never met a conspiracy he didn’t like,” is one of Waugh’s favorite quotes regarding Mr. Vincennes. Vincennes is a dedicated believer in conspiracy theories, UFO’s, and an assortment of monsters, including the Yowii, Australia’s Bigfoot. He claims to have seen a UFO and often spends his weekends and off-hours researching unusual phenomena.

### ***Reception, Linda Mather***

Ms. Mather is usually the first person people see upon entering the House and she tends to make a very strong impression. At 202cm and with a bodybuilder’s shoulders, Linda is also very attractive and possesses a winning smile. She prefers conservative dress when on duty but dresses down on off-hours.

Like Logan Vincennes, Linda always seems to know where everyone and everything are. She has an uncanny ability to place names with faces and will often address clients by name even before they have introduced themselves. With the help of Vincennes, Mather always keeps the meeting rooms clear at the appropriate time.

Like most of the members of the office, Linda is single. However, she has been dating an operative in a resident cell and rumor has it that their relationship has become quite serious.

### ***Executive Secretary to the Senior Cell Leader, Kim Ly***

A refugee from Cambodia and a professional soldier for all of his adult life, Kim Ly adds a remarkable touch of class to the office. In his late fifties, Ly is at an age when most men would be considering retirement. Instead, Ly is more active than ever, keeping Waugh updated with information and reminding him of his obligations. Although his English is heavily accented and he often struggles for the correct wording, Waugh and the other operatives respect Ly’s opinions and council. He is more of an *aide de camp* than secretary.

Ly stands at 165 cm and walks with a limp. His left hand is missing three fingers, courtesy of a Khmer Rouge torturer, and he has several crude animistic tattoos on his torso and arms. His hair and moustache are salt-and-pepper gray and he keeps them trimmed and neat. He has been shot multiple times and bears an impressive number of scars. However, the most obvious thing about Ly is what can be called his ‘presence’. He walks, talks, and holds himself exactly to he is; a professional soldier of the old school.

While most of the operatives in Sydney know about the Southeast Asian conflict from history books, Kim Ly was there. An ethnic Cambodian, Ly came from the Mekong Delta of Vietnam and served in the South Vietnamese Army working alongside US Special Forces teams throughout the long war. Sensing the future fall of South Vietnam, Ly and his family left for Cambodia and settled near Siem Reap in 1974. The specter of war followed him and he fought on the side of the Cambodian government against the Khmer Rouge until 1976. When the Khmer Rouge came to power he and his family were separated. Ly suffered several years of forced labor and torture before he was able to escape to Thailand in 1978 where he worked as a guide and lived in a squalid refugee camp. He returned to Cambodia to search for his family in 1981 and joined the Vietnamese-backed government militia.

In 1994 Ly was hired as guide and translator for a B/E cell providing protection for UN personnel removing land mines. During an attack by the Khmer Rouge, Ly came to the rescue of the cell despite being wounded. The cell leader sponsored him to immigrate to Australia and he has been working for BlackEagle ever since. Although his job as Executive Secretary keeps him

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## **Clients**

The following are Sydney BlackEagle office's top five clients of 1998 as determined by the total revenue earned. This list reflects the change in Sydney's status as the preferred staging office for contracts in South and Southeast Asia.

### **The United Nations - eighteen contracts**

Security of UN Mine Clearing Program in Cambodia, WHO relief missions throughout the region.

### **Drug Enforcement Administration - seven contracts**

Assistance in drug raids, surveillance of suspected sites inside the Golden Triangle, and inspection of the wreckage of a Royal Thai Air Force helicopter carrying DEA agents that was shot down over the Thailand/Cambodia border.

### **Direction Generale de la Securite Extérieur (DGSE) - four contracts**

Industrial or diplomatic espionage.

### **The City of Sydney - four contracts**

Security and investigations.

### **Staporn Winarnpreecha - three contracts**

A wealthy businessman with commercial and political ties in Thailand, Winarnpreecha hired B/E cells for security for political candidates and actions against a Bangkok street gang.

very busy, he still occasionally accompanies cells on assignments as guide and translator.

Ly still searches for his wife and children and often spends his vacation time roaming through refugee camps on the Thai border. Although he has yet to find anything, he still hopes that they survived and that they might one day be reunited.

### **Office Legal Aide, Isaac Silverman**

Isaac Silverman has only recently been brought into the office after the previous attorney was lured away by a wealthy client. Silverman had barely had time to put his wife's portrait on his desk when the Osprey Incident fell into his lap. Silverman worked long and hard to arrange bail and release of the operatives and is now working with the cell and Waugh to determine exactly what happened. Although the Osprey Incident hangs over the office like a cloud and Silverman has yet to come up with a strategy, he has proved himself to be a valuable addition to the staff through his handling of more routine legal matters.

However, the long hours have taken a toll on Silverman's personal life and he is currently separated from his wife. More often than not, he spends the night on the couch in his office. Although B/E supports employee families as much as possible, there isn't much that can be done in this circumstance.

### **Unofficial Legal Aide, Luther VanPelt**

Although not officially on the roster, Luther VanPelt is Silverman's "Boy Friday" and all-around gopher. A law student at the University of Sydney, VanPelt came to B/E on an internship program and simply hasn't left. Because of the pressing needs for legal assistance and much of Silverman's time being spent of the Osprey Incident, VanPelt gets to do much of the actual lawyer work. In addition to research and writing reports, VanPelt has had to fill in for Silverman when he is out of the office. VanPelt has had to conduct long and grueling GenNet and phone conferences, falling into his chair exhausted at their conclusion.

VanPelt has barely turned twenty-two years-old and appears even younger. He's enamored with the lifestyle at B/E and wouldn't change his position for the world. He's had a crush on receptionist Linda Mather for some time but knows that she is dating someone else.

### **L&P Liaison, Dat Tieng Vu**

Dat Tieng Vu acts as the Sydney office's source of information, secure channels of communication (mostly handled through the equipment at the office), and transportation. Vu is in constant contact with the L&P facilities in Atlanta and London but because of the distances involved often relies instead on his own private and unorthodox pool of resources. Vu's greatest value to the office lies in an almost inexhaustible knowledge of movers, shakers, and suppliers around the region. From a safe supplier of weapons in Yangon to a photo of an agricultural undersecretary in Hanoi, Vu either has it or knows who can get it. Often operatives are advised to follow a "don't ask, don't tell" policy regarding the products they receive.

Because of the small nature of the office, forensics support is farmed out to several private labs in the Sydney area, or to L&P in Atlanta or London.

Vu left his native Vietnam not more than three years ago under what Vincennes refers to as "unusual circumstances". Actually, he left under a hail of bullets from Vietnamese border troops and Vu has the scars to prove it. He prefers not to discuss his past but obviously doesn't miss his native land. Vu has had several opportunities to return to Southeast Asia and he has refused them

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all.

Although rumors to his origins are rampant throughout the office, Vu has chosen to ignore them all. At one time, there was an office pool about Vu but it has since been forgotten.

Vu likes fast cars, tailored clothes, and watches from small, neutral, European nations. In addition to nearly perfect English, he speaks Thai, Lao, and Burmese. He has a new girlfriend every week and can often be seen in some of Sydney's hippest spots. Although his salary from BlackEagle is decent, he obviously has another source of income.

Vu's real name is Tony Nguyen, and his place of birth is Lynne, Massachusetts, nearly six thousand miles from Vietnam's sunny shores. The last of six children born to parents who immigrated to the United States in the early 1960s, representatives of the American CIA contacted Nguyen while he was in college. Upon graduation with a degree in Computer Science, he entered the shadowy world of international espionage.

His assignment as a covert operative in communist Vietnam came as no surprise to him. From 1991 to 1996 he lived in Ho Chi Minh City as a civil servant and infiltrated the communist party. He rose through the ranks of the party to become an assistant to one of Vietnam's chief business negotiators. Thanks to the inside information and influence Nguyen provided, many American companies have secured valuable contracts. He also used this information to build a considerable nest egg stashed in accounts across the globe.

Nguyen's downfall began when he fell in love with a Vietnamese woman. He demanded to be pulled out along with his sweetheart but the CIA refused, citing his value as a mole inside the Vietnamese system. Infuriated at the response, Nguyen made plans for them to escape the country by his own means. After several weeks of careful planning, Nguyen and the woman traveled to the Vietnamese/Cambodian border. There, his sweetheart pulled a gun on him and announced that she was a member of the secret police and that he was under arrest. Nguyen fought with the woman, catching a bullet in the thigh in the process, and escaped.

Nguyen was further surprised to learn that the CIA had frozen almost all of his accounts, yanking his nest egg out from underneath him. However, they had not found all of them and Nguyen used this to enter Australia and acquire a false identity. He entered service with B/E and has since divided his time between working for the company and hacking into his frozen accounts, freeing his hard-earned money.

## Office Security

Security is a real issue at the Sydney office, especially since the increased attention from the Osprey Incident. In addition to the press, which has practically camped outside the gates of the office, there are at least a dozen organizations that have threatened BlackEagle in the past year. Even with this, an operative is far more likely to be killed or injured on the drive to and from work than at any occurrence at the office but that is hardly an excuse to be any less observant.

Because B/E owns the McGuire House, security has been customized to fit the unique needs of the business. The designed is by Clifton BlackEagle himself and is based on a multi-layered security plan. The physical construction of the house, particularly the thick walls (AV of 30) made it possible to remodel the building without losing any of the original flavor. The small windows common to the era have been opaqued but with a light substance that makes the windows

### ***The Blacklist***

The people and organizations listed below are on the BlackEagle/BlackEagle blacklist and contracts with them are not allowed.

### **The Khmer Rouge**

The Khmer Rouge have repeatedly threatened to kill all foreigners they capture. They made good on this threat in early 1998, executing two operatives kidnapped from a UN relief supply mission. The Khmer Rouge also attacked a UN mine clearing team with a laser-blinding device, injuring several of the operatives providing security.

### **The State Law and Order Restoration Committee (SLORC) of Myanmar**

The SLORC regime has been blacklisted for its terrible human rights record by order of B/E President Clifton BlackEagle.

### **United World Environmental Services**

UWES has been blacklisted after the corporation sued B/E for raiding its computer database and revealing its illegal waste dumping operation in Australia's outback. Several lower courts have dismissed the suit, but UWES has continued to appeal the decision. The suit is now scheduled to be brought before the High Court in late 1999.

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appear less like mirrored sunglasses and more like windows with drawn curtains. The window panes are vacuum sealed and miniature speakers from a radio set to a local station specializing in opera make them foolproof against laser microphones and other eavesdropping devices.

The exterior fence is six feet tall, made of wrought iron and reinforced every twenty feet with concrete and brickwork posts. It is more intended for decoration than security but it does have motion sensors and remote operated surveillance cameras hidden in the shrubbery planted at its base. Entrance to the driveway is through a remote-operated gate that can only be activated from the secretary's desk or with an electronic passkey. The front and back are lighted at all times and motion-sensing floodlights are mounted on the house itself.

Access to the house itself is had only through the regular and service entrances located in the rear. These can only be opened from the secretary's desk. In the past, operatives usually let themselves in with an electronic passkey but now visual identification is required. Beyond the front doors are another set of double doors that lead to the reception area, creating a small antechamber. The antechamber has remote metal and EM sensors that allow the secretary to determine if the person entering is armed. Although both sets of doors are usually unlocked when the front door is buzzed, the second set can be locked again if necessary, trapping the target in the antechamber.

A silent alarm built into the secretary's desk allows off-duty operatives to be discreetly summoned. If a client is known to carry firearms or have an armed bodyguard, an operative is usually placed in the reception area ahead of time.

The service entrance is less sophisticated but also requires visual identification. Operatives always accept deliveries outside and then haul the items inside themselves.

Inside the house, banks of hidden cameras allow visitors to be monitored without being intrusive. Linda Mathers' desk has eight small monitors with constant feeds from outside and the two entrances. The other five monitors rotate between internal cameras although they can be programmed to follow a particular subject. Other cameras around the house and grounds can be accessed on command. Any motion on the grounds will be immediately displayed on a monitor.

Because the reception desk has so many responsibilities, there is always an operative on duty when Linda is not. A silent alarm from the desk, triggered from either under the desk or from a wristband the receptionist wears, activates a twofold response. Operatives are alerted through flashing red bulbs spread throughout the house (except in the reception area itself) and activation brings every operative in the House running.

The alarm also contacts local authorities via dedicated lines to the nearest police station. A cellular backup exists in case the primary line is interrupted. Police response varies but a delay of at least ten minutes is likely. Waugh believes the police should arrive well after any action has taken place, giving the operatives time to take whatever measures they deem necessary.

In the event of an actual attack on the office, the internal structure of the house lends itself well to defense. Like the outer walls, most of the inner walls are thick (AV of 20) and offer good protection from small arms and small explosives.

The reception desk itself is armored (AV of 25) and there is a holster with a Glock Model 19 and three loaded magazines bolted to the underside of the desk. Because Linda Mather is not very experienced with firearms yet (she is taking lessons) there is also a sawed-off double-barrel shotgun nicknamed 'the



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housecleaner’.

Electronic assault and eavesdropping is also a serious consideration and the office is routinely searched with EM detectors. The sensitive antenna array is shielded, as much as is possible, against high-energy radio frequencies with a series of breakers and dampeners. Although the breakers perform well in tests, in an actual situation no one is sure what might happen.

Operatives are also asked to keep an eye out for visual observation, which has been more common recently with several news organizations having ‘staked out’ for ambush interviews and potential clues to activities within the office. Thanks to operatives paying attention, this has yet to be a problem. Some operatives take pride in sneaking up on their witless observers and playing practical jokes on them. More than one reporter has attempted to follow a vehicle leaving the McGuire House only to find the tires on his car flat.

## Neighbors

During the 1980s Paddington suffered a noticeable depreciation as residents could no longer afford the upkeep on their homes. In an effort to stave off a collapse of the historic neighborhood, much of Paddington was rezoned as a mix of business and residential sites. Many corporations, think tanks, and other groups took advantage of the opportunity and the area was saved.

Paddington is a good neighborhood, even in such bad times as 1999. Lawns are cut and gardens are manicured. The streets are kept free of trash and the trees that line the road are pruned as often as the city can afford it. There is also the Paddington Coalition, an ad hoc group of local owners that provide input and information to the Sydney city council.

The immediate surroundings of the McGuire house are pleasant. Across the street is a single acre park with trees, a walking path, and a small pond. Reporters staking out the House will often spend their time here.

To the north is the brokerage firm of Danielson & Myles, a firm that specializes in natural resource investments and futures. D&M (as their logo reads) has yet to voice any opinions whatsoever about the B/E office and is not an active part of the Coalition.

To the south is the opulent mansion housing the Somers Club, a private club with membership by invitation only. Only the social, political, and business elite can become members and even a current member must sponsor them. The mayor, several councilpersons, and several MPs (Members of Parliament) and the wealthiest of Sydney belong.

Somers Club is the single most vocal opponent of the B/E office and have been since the company purchased the McGuire House in 1994. There are rumors that Somers intended to buy the house and expand their current property but BlackEagle outbid them. Alexandra Copland, proprietor of Somers Club, regularly attends Coalition meetings and plans on campaigning as board president next year.

Copland has her own reasons for wanting BlackEagle out of the neighborhood and they have nothing to do with property. With B/E in the center of a media firestorm, the Somers Club’s other enterprises risk exposure. In addition to presenting balls, cotillions, and being a center for gossip, the Club also offers unique, and illegal, services to its clients. An on-site escort service offers high-class prostitutes and drugs of all sorts are available. Other more jaded tastes can also be met, for the right price.

## *The Warning Shot*

Because socialization is so important in Australia the pub is not just a tradition, it’s a requirement. B/E operatives have adopted The Warning Shot, a Paddington pub about two blocks from the McGuire House, as their unofficial second office. The Shot was a ‘cop’ bar frequented by off-duty police when B/E opened the Sydney office and operatives quickly took a liking to its decor and massive barbecued Carpet-bag Steaks (steak stuffed with oysters). Nowadays, the clientele is a mix of police, B/E operatives and the occasional corporate security type.

The owner, Jerry “Ocker” Nelles, an avowed noir film buff, has decorated the Warning Shot. The lights are kept low and the walls are covered with movie posters from the 30s and 40s featuring James Cagney, Edward G. Robinson, and Ocker’s favorite, Humphry Bogart. Ocker’s most prized possession is hung in a protective case on the wall behind the bar; a movie poster from *The Maltese Falcon* autographed by Bogey himself.

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# CHAPTER THREE

# GOVERNMENTS &

# ORGANIZATIONS

Like the rest of the world, Southeast Asia is divided into nations, which are further divided into states and provinces. Although the major ethnic groups of the country dominate these, the Asian people have a strong history of autocratic governments and respect for law. They represent law and order and an organized society and are the building blocks on which all ethnic groups, majority and minority, build their lifestyles. Despite the chaos that is growing at the end of the millennium, governments still have a great deal of influence.

On the international scale, defining governments as good or bad is difficult and the guidelines are murky. Individual perceptions vary and opinions of country change rapidly. One suggested guideline is respect for human life, liberty, and property but when does a government go from being orderly to repressive? The governments of Southeast Asia have often trampled human rights in an effort to prevent civil unrest, but the eventual goal has been to ensure their own survival and by doing so, the survival of the people.

The information presented here is not to be taken as gospel truth for every member of the government that players encounter. Governments are made up of individuals, each with their own motivations and desires. Not all Myanmar SLORC officials promote torture and repression and not all Thai policemen have the good of the public at heart. Each is a small part of the greater whole.

## **SITUATION REPORT: JANUARY 1, 1999**

Southeast Asia, like the rest of the world, is suffering from the problems of economic depression, political strife, ethnic conflict, civil uprisings, and actual warfare between countries. Those who wish to operate in the region must understand the situation or risk getting caught up in it.

The most intense conflict of the region is that between the Cambodian government and the Khmer Rouge insurgents. The fighting has already cost hundreds of thousands of lives and with the Dry Season offensive launched by

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the Khmer Rouge now under way, that number is sure to go up. The Cambodian government, a tyrannical regime in its own right, has the general support of the populace who have no desire to see the genocidal Khmer Rouge come back into power.

A low-intensity conflict between Myanmar and Thailand has been simmering since 1995 when troops from Myanmar entered Thai territory to attack rebel bases. The Thai response was a deadly rain of steel. After four years, the two sides still vie for position and the chance to strike at each other's weak points.

While Myanmar fights this battle, the State Law and Order Restoration Committee (SLORC) continues to oppress its own people with cold-blooded efficiency. Cries for reform from international groups and exiled political activists fall on deaf ears.

Thailand, long the only democracy in a region of communists and tyrants, is slowly moving towards a more fascist agenda. The worldwide depression has struck the economic giant with a vengeance and the military-controlled government seeks to make non-Thai Asians, *farang*, the scapegoats.

While Thailand is a well-developed industrial power, Vietnam had only a taste of the benefits of a free-market economy before the depression struck. Reformists and hardliners compete for power, each fearing what will happen if the other takes control. Meanwhile, food shortages bring an ominous shadow to the future and the military looks towards the fertile rice fields of Cambodia.

Cambodia, with its internal conflict with the Khmer Rouge is in no position to fight back. The nation that hasn't been free of violence for over thirty years looks towards tomorrow and sees no end in sight. Anarchy rules in the countryside as the nation self-destructs.

## THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

Few nations have experienced the kind of difficulties that Cambodia has faced in the last half of the twentieth century. A series of civil wars culminated in the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime, under which over one million Cambodians lost their lives. Invasion by Vietnam in 1979 forced the Khmer Rouge into flight and Cambodia enjoyed a sort of peace during their nine-year occupation. In 1991, the United Nations created the United Nations Transitional Authority Council (UNTAC) and attempted to rebuild the country. Like the efforts before it, they achieved little success. Now Cambodia is engaged in another phase of vicious fighting with no end in sight.

The current government in Phnom Penh is a republic with an executive branch headed by a Head of Government and a legislative National Assembly. The executive branch is empowered by Cambodia's constitution to apply and enforce the rules, laws, and regulations drafted by the National Assembly. This includes promoting the general welfare, enforcing civil regulations, and maintaining the national defense. King Norodom Sihanouk is the Head of State but this is a figurehead position with symbolic duties only. The National Assembly annually elects the Head of Government for the term of one year. Since 1997, the Head of Government has been General Hun Sen.

The National Assembly seats four representatives from each of Cambodia's nineteen provinces and four from Phnom Penh, an independent municipality. Each representative is elected for four years. The National Assembly meets twice yearly and for special sessions called for by the Head of Government. The constitution allows for multiple parties and in the past there have been coalition governments but in 1997, Hun Sen used his military forces to attack and drive the Royalist party and many others into exile. Sen's New Dawn party

## China

China's unstable leadership and disintegrating union has led to a decrease in the nation's ability to influence others. Leaders in Beijing created new economic reforms with the intention of creating a system of limited capitalism controlled under communist authority. They badly miscalculated. Shanghai, Hong Kong and other "economic zones" became the real centers of power before the communist party leadership even began to understand what had happened. Instead of being replaced in a bloody revolution that the party had fought so hard to stave off, the old men in Beijing simply became irrelevant.

Outside China, this translates into a complex foreign policy that is often contradictory and unrealistic. For weapons and military support, nations go to the national government. However, for high-tech items and agricultural support, most governments and corporations go to informal ambassadors of individual provinces or companies. When an official policy is handed down from Beijing, each province generally interprets it as it chooses. Often this means ignoring it completely.



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holds all the chairs in the National Assembly.

The Cambodian government has been engaged in a brutal civil war with the Khmer Rouge, Cambodian communists, since the Vietnamese military occupied Cambodia, forced the Khmer Rouge into exile, and installed the present government. The constitution that was so carefully drafted by UN advisors has fallen by the wayside and government in Cambodia resembles more of a military dictatorship than a republic. The real power lies in General Hun Sen, who has illegally retained his control of the military and the civil government. Sen has led the government almost single-handedly since the violent expulsion of the Royalist party in 1997. Military officers and New Dawn political appointees have taken control of the executive branch, replacing anyone remotely opposed to Sen. Since 1997, the National Assembly has met only when called for and acts as a rubber stamp for Sen's policies.

The New Dawn party is pro-military, fanatically anti-Khmer Rouge, and pro-Vietnam. However, there are signs that the pro-Vietnam stance is changing. Despite the dependence Cambodia has had in the past on Vietnam for nearly everything, Sen has recently cooled relations with the Vietnamese in the hopes of currying favor with the Thai government. His overtures to the Thai's have been met with skepticism and have outraged hard-line leaders in Vietnam.

The Hun Sen government has an atrocious human rights record and a reputation as being one of the most corrupt in Southeast Asia. The last free newspaper was burned to the ground in May of 1998 and Sen took control of the few radio and one television station during his 1997 coup. Other political parties besides the New Dawn Party exist but are so actively persecuted that none have made any gains in years.

Domestic support for the Hun Sen regime rises and falls with the fortunes of the military campaign but to the average Cambodian, the evils of the Hun Sen government are slight compared to those of the Khmer Rouge. Few countries have done more than lodge complaints as they do not want to handicap the regime in its fight.

### ***Cambodian Internal Security Force***

The Cambodian Internal Security Force (CISF), a paramilitary group composed of politically reliable military personnel and civilians loyal to Sen, provide an active if disorganized police force. Nightly raids by CISF death squads round up those suspected of opposing Sen or collaborating with the Khmer Rouge. Prisons once used by the Khmer Rouge to hold and torture have been resurrected, albeit on a smaller scale. In addition to those publicly arrested, thousands of Cambodians are missing and presumed victims of the CISF.

### ***Cambodian People's Armed Forces***

The Cambodian People's Armed Forces (CPAF) have been described as the "most ill equipped, maltrained, undisciplined, officer-heavy and corrupt" military forces in the world. Impressment gangs that go from village to village taking their 'quota' of young men - which generally means anyone they can grab, handle recruitment. Training is brief and rudimentary and sometimes skipped entirely before an offensive. In addition, regiments often adopt orphans, allowing them to grow up in the army. Child soldiers as young as twelve are not uncommon.

The CPAF fields twenty-two Divisions and a handful of small, specialized Regiments. These Divisions, which are undersized compared to most armies, consist of an average of 2500 soldiers. The divisions are concentrated in three

### ***Cambodia at-a-glance***

**Capital and Largest City:** Phnom Penh (1990 est. pop. 900,000).

**Population (1999 est.):** 7,600,000 with 11% urban, 89% rural.

**Official Language:** Khmer.

**Literacy:** 42% of adult population.

**Medical Facilities:** Poor.

**Life Expectancy:** Women 50, Men 47.

**Average Annual Income (1999 est.):** \$80.

**Government:** Republic.

**Economy:** Socialist, barter system.



primary areas of operation. The first is the defense of Cambodia west of Lake Tonle Sap. The second covers territory east of Lake Tonle Sap. The third is tasked with the internal security of Cambodia and is dispersed among the cities with a special military zone established for the capitol. The CPAF has only four understrength Engineering Regiments and is in desperate need of trained combat engineers for mine clearing and civil projects.

Cambodia's small air force operates primarily from Pochentong Airport near Phnom Penh. While there are twenty MiG-21 fighters in the inventory, few are serviceable, and a variety of small turboprop utility aircraft see the most use. The air force also has a single squadron of fourteen Mi-17 helicopters that are frequently leased out to the U.N. and other relief organizations.

The CPAF has advisors from several nations including "Green Beret" Special Forces soldiers from the United States and the SAS from Britain, ostensibly to provide counter-narcotics training. This aid is kept quiet by the CPAF and all the involved nations as none wish to draw attention to it.

The officer corps. of the CPAF is determined largely by political association, and leadership training is a two-week course taught in Phnom Penh. The CPAF is officer heavy and many lower officers perform duties done by non-commissioned officers in other armies. Few officers have demonstrated real leadership ability. Discipline is weak,

despite occasional attempts at enforcement.

In the field it is difficult to distinguish between CPAF soldiers and bandits. Personal equipment is a mix of civilian items and what military gear has survived from previous regimes, and is rarely found in good condition. Civilian clothes equal the number of uniforms and there is no body armor whatsoever. Common firearms are the AK-47 and the newer AKM, although there are some M-16's left over from the American presence in Southeast Asia. Theoretically, each infantry platoon is equipped with a machine gun, usually a PKM or M60, and a rocket propelled grenade launcher, recoilless rifle, or light mortar.

Transportation usually consists of ancient Chinese-manufactured trucks or some of the newer Toyota Land Cruisers taken from departing UN troops. The CPAF also possesses a formidable, if quite aged, mechanized force of 150 Soviet T-55 tanks and 160 BTR-60 wheeled armored personal carriers.

The CPAF is currently engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the Khmer Rouge. Khmer Rouge soldiers, based in camps on the Thai side of the border and covertly supported by the Thai military, launched a major offensive against the CPAF in 1993 and gained decisive victories. Since that time, however, the fighting has become bogged down with neither side able to make a killing blow against the other. In December of 1998, the Khmer Rouge launched a new offensive. Fighting rages across the country but is fiercest in the northwest where the CPAF has been forced to retreat south in the face of Khmer Rouge opposition. Throughout Cambodia, Khmer Rouge guerrilla units roam the countryside and terrorist cells have infiltrated the cities. Vast areas have become a no man's land filled with bandits, land mines, and a cowering population.

While the outcome of the civil war remains in doubt, the Khmer Rouge have recently acquired many new high-tech weapons that have turned the tide in several small skirmishes. If these weapons are used on a larger scale, the tide of battle would decidedly turn against the CPAF.

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## LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Laos has the distinction of being the least developed, least populated, and most ethnically complex of all the countries in Southeast Asia. With the communist takeover in 1975, Laos began a process of isolation and self-preoccupation. Now, a new generation of leaders has begun the slow process of waking the country and introducing it to the twenty-first century.

The one-party government of Laos has two parallel organizations: the National Congress of People's Representatives and the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. While the National Congress is the legislative body that produces the laws and oversees the administration of the government via President Nouhak Phoumsavan, the actual power lay in the hands of the communist party where leadership positions are decided. The Central Committee Chairman, Khamtay Siphandon, who is also the Prime Minister of the National Congress, heads the Politburo, the leadership committee of the Lao communist party. Currently, the Lao military dominates the government as six of the nine members of the Politburo are active or retired military officers.

Compared to the rest of Southeast Asia, Laos has a relatively tranquil government featuring smooth leadership changes and open internal debate over policy. The lack of bloody purges and violent coups do not mean, however, that Laotian politics is free from conflict. 75% of the party membership joined before the communist victory in 1975 and are determined to maintain the isolationist status quo. Attempts by the reformist minority to open the country to the world and establish free-market reforms are tolerated for the money generated but the hard-liners see them as a temporary means to an end. They point to rising crime and increased political influence of Thai businessmen as negative side effects.

The reformist minority, mostly younger Laotians educated in the former Soviet Union and China but also a few enlightened old veterans, see the world changing rapidly and believe the current regime is an anachronism. They use Vietnam and China as examples of modern communist thought. Deputy Prime Minister Khamphoui Keoboulapha, who at only 43 years of age is the youngest member of the Politburo, leads the reformists. Keoboulapha is in danger of being ousted from the Politburo by the hard-liners but this has yet to happen.

The one issue that everyone in the Laotian government agrees upon is the need to maintain the military as a force against the Meo and Hmong hill tribes in southern Laos. These hill tribes, along with many others, have waged a bitter war against the Laotian majority since before the communist takeover. During the late seventies and early eighties, the Vientiane government allowed their Soviet allies to conduct experiments in chemical warfare on the rebels. The chemicals, what became known as 'Yellow Rain' in the western press, were dropped on villages and rebel strongholds throughout southern Laos, killing tens of thousands. Despite these and other genocidal attempts by the Vientiane government, the Meo and Hmong hill tribes continue to be a thorn in their side and control large portions of southern Laos.

Another issue that is beginning to make itself known is the increased numbers of Vietnamese troops within Laos. A 1977 'friendship agreement' between Laos and Vietnam established the border between the two countries but allowed the Vietnamese military to post soldiers inside Laos. This became a major point of contention in 1988 before the Vietnamese pullout of Cambodia but since then the Vietnamese have only had a few hundred in Laos. Now, the Vietnamese have moved nearly an entire division into Southern Laos in preparation for their invasion of Cambodia. This move and the invasion itself has been covert and only those most friendly to Vietnam have been informed of the plan. However, if it were to be made public the Laotian government reaction

### *Laos at-a-glance*

**Capital and Largest City:** Vientiane (1999 est. pop. 200,000)

**Population (1999 est.):** 4,100,000 with 16% urban, 84% rural.

**Official Language:** Lao

**Literacy:** 39% of adult population.

**Medical Facilities:** Poor.

**Life Expectancy:** Women 52, Men 49.

**Average Annual Income (1999 est.):** \$145.

**Government:** Communist one-party state.

**Economy:** Socialist with limited free market.

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would be strongly against Vietnam - possibly to the point of war.

### ***Laotian Civil Police***

The Laotian Civil Police (LCP) is the law-enforcement branch of the government but is very limited in its capabilities and must often draw on the resources of the Laotian People's Revolutionary Army (LPRA, see below). The LCP has the right to arrest and detain but not to conduct trials, which are the responsibility of the Laotian Justice Ministry. LCP police wear military uniforms and have access to military weaponry but are usually armed with side arms only. Although the LCP officially covers all of Laos, it is only found in the larger cities of northern Laos. Everywhere else falls under the jurisdiction of the LPRA.

### ***Laotian People's Revolutionary Army***

Like the rest of Laos, the Laotian People's Revolutionary Army (LPRA) is backwards in technology but has a high state of morale and professionalism. The soldiers are individually well equipped and are well trained by Vietnamese instructors. The LPRA is in a constant state of readiness against rebel hill tribe attack and rotate through areas of conflict frequently, giving it a high percentage of soldiers with combat experience.

The LPRA is organized along the Vietnamese model, which follows Soviet doctrine. Regiments are heavy on manpower but have no organic artillery, anti-aircraft, or engineering assets. These assets are separate companies or battalions and are directed by Division headquarters, which prevents units in the field from directly calling for fire support or engineering assistance.

A two-year term of service in the military is mandatory for all men and voluntary for women. Training is based on the Soviet model with an initial six weeks of training and then additional training once assigned to a unit. Non-commissioned officers are selected early in training and given special leadership training.

The LPRA officer corps. is also based on the Soviet model and officer candidates receive a year of training before being assigned to units as junior officers. Officer candidacy is determined as much by political reliability as leadership skill, but the military has managed to selectively assign those with true talent to vital positions while others get more mundane assignments. The minimum term of service for an officer is four years.

The LPRA soldier is equipped with a standardized uniform but no body armor. Each soldier is issued a Chinese manufactured AKM and officers receive a Makarov PM pistol. Infantry platoons generally have a pair of PKM machine guns and a rocket propelled grenade launcher.

Transportation is handled primarily through Soviet Ural-375 heavy duty 6x6 trucks and Gaz jeeps. The LPRA has a single armored battalion featuring about a dozen each of Soviet T-55 main battle tanks and PT-76 amphibious light tanks, as well as two dozen BTR-60 wheeled armored personnel carriers.

The LPRA maintains an air wing armed with only a handful of operational MiG-21 fighter craft. More numerous are the twenty-one Mi-17 'Hip' helicopters that are frequently armed and used as assault transports. Although Laotian airspace is jealously guarded, shadows created by the mountains make it relatively easy for aircraft to move undetected.

Southern Laos has been the home of the Hmong and many other hill tribes for centuries. Although the modern conflict is on the surface one of ideology, it is really about tribal independence and ethnic tension. The tribes themselves





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are not unified but together are enough to deny the LPRA freedom of movement. LPRA units can occupy an area but are subject to constant harassment and guerrilla warfare.

Recently, the incredible sums of money generated by the opium trade have begun to have an effect on the conflict. The hill tribes have long been the primary producers of raw opium and have agreements with various opium lords who purchase their products, including Khun Sa and Yeo Chelin. These opium lords have made covert gestures to LPRA military leaders, offering huge “contributions” in return for less harassment of opium producers and less vigilance in the border patrols. In some cases, the LPRA has even provided protection for the huge opium convoys in the Golden Triangle.

## **UNION OF MYANMAR (BURMA)**

The official title of the country is an oxymoron of epic proportions. Since its inception as a nation independent of its British colonial rulers in 1946, Myanmar has been wracked with ethnic conflict, civil unrest, brutal military dictatorships, and natural disaster. A nation that was once one of the world’s premier rice exporters has been reduced to a bare subsistence level for its own people. The current incarnation of fascist rule is the State Law and Order Restoration Committee (SLORC) that was born out of the demonstrations and bloody crackdown of 1988. The SLORC is a political leper in the international community and has one of the worst records for human rights abuses in the world. Finally, despite the overwhelming repression, ethnic factions and opium lords control all parts of the country not directly beneath the feet of government soldiers.

Myanmar is a military dictatorship plain and simple. The 1974 constitution was suspended following unrest in 1988 that came from the discovery that President U Ne Win had looted the treasury of over one billion dollars. Demonstrations and rioting against the government ended when the Myanmar People’s Army (MPA) turned on the protestors, killing tens of thousands and placing hundreds of thousands under arrest in slave labor camps. The leader of the crackdown, General Khun Nyung, founded the SLORC and quickly seized control of the government. Borders were closed to foreigners, especially journalists, and a strict martial law was imposed. Curfew was set at four o’clock pm, gatherings of more than five people were banned, and all visitors were required to register with their hosts.

International pressure led to elections in 1990 for a new constitution but when the overwhelming majority rejected the SLORC it negated the elections and attacked the winning National League for Democracy (NLD). The leader of the NLD, Nobel Peace prizewinner Sulang An Kyu Sui, was placed under house arrest and other leaders were killed or imprisoned.

The SLORC’s war with the ethnic minorities, most notably the Karen, Wa, and Shan hill tribes and Khang Sar’s Muang Thai Army has simmered down to a slow boil. After several unsuccessful campaigns to retake the rebel territories, the SLORC has declared an informal truce. Government forces have even been known to aid the opium producing hill tribes by not attacking them during the harvest season and allowing the long trains of ponies carrying the raw opium paste into Thailand to pass unmolested.

Not coincidentally, Myanmar’s undeclared war with Thailand has been heating up. Burmese troops have been mauled repeatedly and are plagued by bad tactical decisions and poor logistics. Resources that would otherwise go to a starving populace are being pulled away to support the unpopular conflict. Dissatisfaction with the way the SLORC is handling the war is growing and is feeding resistance movements. Even some in the military are questioning the

### ***Myanmar (Burma) at-a-glance***

**Capital and Largest City:** Yangon (1999 est. pop. 2,670,700).

**Population (1999 est.):** 43,700,000 with 24% urban, 76% rural.

**Official Language:** Burmese

**Literacy:** 78% of adult population.

**Medical Facilities:** Average.

**Life Expectancy:** Women 55, Men 51.

**Average Annual Income (1999 est.):** \$190.

**Government:** Military rule.

**Economy:** Socialist.



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## ***Crime and Punishment***

Although there are places and times where police look the other way that does not mean that crime is not taken seriously. To the contrary, law enforcement is a very serious business indeed. The jails and prisons of Southeast Asia are full of natives and foreigners who failed to understand this fact.

Arrest in Southeast Asia is different than in Europe or America. There are no Miranda rights that must be read and police brutality is common. Lawyers and translators are generally not provided and the police have few restrictions on their interrogation methods. The criminal systems of Southeast Asia work quickly and Westerners are usually shocked to learn that the time between arrest and trial is measured in days, not weeks. Being from another country is no excuse and harsh sentences, even the death penalty, are often given. Foreign prisoners may be able to contact their embassy but they can provide little assistance other than to notify relatives of the situation.

The prison systems of the region make the worst prisons in the West look like resort communities in comparison. Food is minimal, and often putrid. Water is sometimes contaminated with disease. Discipline is brutal with guards dispensing beatings at their leisure. Fellow prisoners can represent even a greater threat. Many families have been shocked to learn that their relative died in prison after being there only a short while.

handling of the war.

Most importantly, the leader of the SLORC, General Khun, has slipped from mere megalomania to true insanity. Khun suffers from paranoid delusions and sees enemies behind every corner. He believes he is the reincarnated form of King Anawrahta, the eleventh century founder of Burma, and views himself as a kind of godlike savior of the Burmese people. He has ordered the rebuilding of the ancient ruined capital city of Bagan by slave labor in the desire to recreate "his" ancient home. Those closest to Khun have noticed a change in his behavior and an irrationality to his decisions but so far no one has spoken up. Khin's mental state will continue to deteriorate and the only question is whether Burma will survive the reign of a madman.

## ***The Myanmar People's Army (MPA)***

The Myanmar People's Army is one of the largest military forces in Southeast Asia with over 445,000 men, women, and children in uniform. The MPA is large but it is stretched thin in an effort to combat rebel states and Thai incursions along its southern border while simultaneously repressing a population of 43.7 million. What it lacks in experience and technical capability it makes up for with blunt brutality.

Service in the army is mandatory for all men over 18 and the average term lasts between two and three years, depending upon the needs of the military. In addition to the mandatory service, SLORC impressment gangs routinely grab people off the street for military service. This means that some in the army have already fulfilled their obligations to the country but are impressed for another twenty-four to thirty-six months. The impressment gangs also take people for use as porters and other slave labor. Some army units have as many slaves as soldiers and spend as much time guarding them as performing actual military service.

Economic sanctions against the SLORC has forced the government to an even closer relationship with its only friend - China. The military is trained and equipped with Chinese weapons and vehicles and Chinese officers are often observers for units in the field. Although the government denies it, one out of every three pilots in the air wing is a People's Republic of China officer.

The average soldier is given a six-week course of basic training with all specialized training occurring in assigned units. The army is based on the Chinese model with officers being selected from the recruits for their political reliability and trained separately. NCOs are also selected at the outset of training and given a three-week leadership course. Porters and other slave labor receive no training except to obey or be tortured or killed.

An MPA soldier wears a khaki and brown uniform and steel helmet, but the uniforms are not standardized and vary depending on the factory where they were manufactured. The standard issue weapon is either a locally produced copy of the HK G3A3 assault rifle or a copy of the Chinese QBZ Type 97 (designated as the K1). Officers are issued either a FN Herstal High-Power or a Sterling submachinegun. Infantry platoons are light on heavy weapons, with the Rheinmetall MG3 machine gun being the most common. The one thing that the MPA has a lot of is man-portable mortars. These small weapons can be set up in minutes to lob shells over the rugged Burmese terrain and into enemy fortifications.

Transportation is generally handled through whatever trucks the army can muster, some of which date back to WWII and the never-completed Burma Road. Even trucks are of limited use in the jungle hill country and the most common form of transportation is the porter - thus the large number of slave

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laborers. The MPA employs a variety of light armored cars, but these are restricted to urban areas as a means of repressing the population and are not sent into the jungle where they are vulnerable to missile weapons and air strikes.

The MPA does have a sizeable air wing with several squadrons of fighter jets, but aside from ten brand new MiG-29 Fulcrums, most of these are dilapidated Chinese copies of the MiG-21. PRC instructors train Burmese pilots in China and these numbers are secretly supplemented by PRC pilots. Myanmar airspace is guarded as much as possible but the air wing is no match for the Royal Thai Air Force, which has clear air superiority.

For the first time in five decades the Burmese government and the Shan, Wa, and Karen peoples are not openly at war. In 1995 the MPA successfully occupied the Karen state and destroyed Karen Resistance bases inside Thailand. Cease-fire agreements have been reached with most remaining rebel groups, most notably the Muang Thai Army, opium lord Khang Sar's personal military. This is not to say that the Army is in control. Battle lines have been frozen in place, effectively giving autonomy to the rebels. Although technically a victory for the rebels, both sides know the cease-fire will only last as long as the border conflict with Thailand does.

That conflict with Thailand is draining resources and causing record desertions. The undeclared war has not gone well for Myanmar. After initial Burmese incursions into Thailand to strike at rebel bases, the Thai military has gained control of the border and strike into Myanmar at will. Thai technical superiority and better training has overcome the MPA's numerical superiority. The border is now a meat grinder that chews up MPA units as fast as they can be sent there.

## THAILAND

Thailand is the 600-pound guerrilla of Southeast Asia. Even in the difficult economic times of 1999, Thailand dominates its neighbors in business, industry, and diplomacy. By far the most modern of the Southeast Asian nations, it also the most visited by tourists and generally the first country that foreigners think of when discussing Southeast Asia. Prathet Thai, as it is called by its citizens, means land of the free, and Thailand has the distinction of being the only Southeast Asian nation that was never a colony of the Europeans. Thailand's government is a complex balance of democracy and military rule, all overseen by a benevolent king who chooses to remain apart despite the immense respect he holds from the Thai people.

Thailand is a constitutional monarchy where King Bhumibol Adulyadej (also called Rama IX) holds primarily spiritual and social duties. Constitutionally, power lies in the prime minister, a cabinet, and the National Assembly, which is composed of an appointed Senate and an elected House of Representatives. The executive branch consisting of the Prime Minister and the elected cabinet are responsible for executing the laws created by the National Assembly and maintaining a court system based on the American model.

Politics in Thailand is incredibly complex. It is easiest to visualize it by thinking of three concentric circles of power. The first is the elected governments and the political parties. These positions run the government and create and implement their ideas about how Thailand should be run. Elections are wild and violent and resemble gang fights more than democracy. Each party maintains its own enforcers who attack rival party rallies and keep discipline within the group. Assassination is common and rallies often turn to riots. Party members are passionate in the promotion and defense of their party platforms and elections laws are routinely trampled. The last election, held in 1996, was con-

### *Thailand at-a-glance*

**Capital and Largest City:** Bangkok (1999 est. pop. 6,109,000).

**Population (1999 est.):** 59,450,000 with 18% urban, 82% rural.

**Official Language:** Thai.

**Literacy:** 88% of adult population.

**Medical Facilities:** Good.

**Life Expectancy:** Women 68, Men 62.

**Average Annual Income (1999 est.):** \$965

**Government:** Constitutional monarchy and National Assembly legislature.

**Economy:** Free market.



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sidered the dirtiest and most corrupt with over 1.2 billion dollars being spent on vote-buying and dozens of candidates murdered before election day.

The second circle of power lies in the Thai military. The military exercises its power in both subtle and overt ways. Although it is illegal to be an active member of the military and serve in the civilian government, the military sponsors several political parties, most notably the New Aspiration Party. The NAP is composed almost entirely of former and active army, navy, and air force officers, many of whom still draw active duty pay and wear their uniforms while holding office. The NAP promotes greater control of the government by the military, protecting and strengthening Thailand's dominance of Southeast Asia, and the purging of Thailand of all *farang*, non-Thai Asians. Economic difficulties and social factors have pushed the NAP to the forefront of power and it plans on being there for a long time.

While the military influences politics through its own pet parties, there have been many times when it has openly intervened - brutally seizing control of power, dissolving the government, arresting dissenters and even firing on crowds. The last time the military took over was after students demonstrated across the country in 1992. Army troops opened fire on the demonstrators with automatic weapons, grenades, and even tanks and armored personnel carriers. Thousands were killed and Thailand's international image as a democracy was badly damaged. Power returned to the civilian government but the military presence is felt throughout the country in the form of the thousands of soldiers that walk the city streets, man checkpoints, and patrol country roads performing 'internal security.'

The third circle of power that encompasses both the civilian government and the military is held by a single man - seventy-two year old jazz musician, poet, sailor, historian, and the longest reigning monarch in the world, King Bhumibol Adulyadej. During the crisis of 1992, King Bhumibol called the military and political leaders before him in a televised meeting. He chastised the military leaders for their brutality and the civilian leaders for letting the protests get out of hand. He made the leaders bow before him and promise to set things to right. They did exactly that and the crisis passed.

King Bhumibol's power lies in the immense respect and love the people of Thailand have for their monarch. His rule has been one of calm and consistency throughout the political and civil upheavals since he was crowned in 1950. He is considered nearly if not completely divine and Thais avoid defacing his image, not even licking the postage stamps that bear his portrait. Speaking ill of the King is a felony crime but those who do so will probably worry more about being killed by an angry mob than being arrested.

Despite this immense authority, King Bhumibol is reluctant to use it, preferring to allow the country to follow the constitution and be led by a civilian government. Only the most outrageous offences against the Thai people will cause him to intervene. However, when he does, Bhumibol, who's name means "Strength of the Land, Incomparable Power", always has the last word.

The current government of Thailand is a coalition government consisting of the New Aspiration Party (NAP), a pro-military party, and the Democratic Party, a pro-industrial party. However, if the coalition splits along party lines, the vote usually swings to the Chart Thai party, a small group of reform-minded politicians. The Prime Minister is retired general Chawalit Yangchaiyut (NAP) but the cabinet is held by a bare Democratic party majority. Constitutional reform is a major issue before the government but nobody is anxious to have another election anytime soon.

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### ***Thai Death Squads***

Few foreigners realize how much influence the military has in Thailand. The routine patrols and checkpoints are the most visible signs of that influence but it doesn't stop there. Covert units within the military operate as enforcers of the military's agenda and to drum up support for pro-military politicians during elections.

Actually, the death squads rarely kill - murder has been found to be counterproductive and attracts unwanted attention to their activities. Instead, the squads harass, beat, extort, and publicly humiliate those that warrant their attention. However, that doesn't mean that thousands of people haven't died in suspicious fires, accidents, of strange illnesses while in custody, or simply disappeared never to be seen again.

There are several national and international watchdog groups in Southeast Asia that report on the situation. They state that the most likely targets of the military are people with the wrong political viewpoints, but foreigners and refugees are increasingly becoming victims. The Thai government denies that the death squads exist but continue to pursue their anti-foreigner policies.

### ***National Police of Thailand***

During the civil unrest of 1992 all of Thailand's police forces were nationalized. After the return of civil government, the police forces have remained nationalized although each region and city force has considerable independence in how it is managed. The National Police maintains peace and law and order in all of Thailand's rural and urban areas and on the highways linking the massive cities. National Police are very similar to police officers throughout the western world and have a reputation for politeness and understanding when dealing with westerners. *Farang*, non-Thai Asians, on the other hand, know the National Police as an abusive agency that harasses and arrests them at every opportunity.

National Police are trained in Royal Police academies located throughout Thailand and receive instruction in weaponry, law enforcement, and crowd control. Some return to the academies to train in bomb-disposal, special weapons and tactics, and languages. Officers carry SIG/Sauer or Glock 9mm pistols and have access to HK33E assault rifles and FN P90 or HK MP5 submachineguns. In situations requiring heavy firepower, the police call upon the military for assistance.

### ***The Royal Thai Army, Air Force, and Navy***

The Thai military is by far the most well-trained, well-equipped, and professional in Southeast Asia. It has a long and relatively honorable history of protecting Thailand from enemies both internal and external. The military enjoys considerable domestic support and respect on the international scene as a tough and competent force.

The Thai military is also much more. The military has been the single greatest influence on the development of modern Thailand and can be described as a benevolent, if sometimes brutal, dictatorship. It is a major political power in its own right and organizes and supports many political parties including the coalition leader New Aspirations Party. The military has brutally intervened no less than twelve times since 1950, each time recreating the government at the cost of thousands of lives. Even during times of relative calm, there are almost as many soldiers on the streets as there are orange-robed priests.

In addition to affecting the political powers that be, the Thai military, without consent of the civil government, has secretly forged several illegal treaties with the Khmer Rouge. In exchange for allowing the military and companies close to it to extract natural resources such as wood and gems from western Cambodia, Thailand turns a blind eye to Khmer Rouge bases on the Thai side of the border. From these bases the Khmer Rouge recruit and train new soldiers as well as plan, supply, and launch their campaigns against government forces. The profits realized from the arrangement have allowed the Khmer Rouge to purchase supplies as well as several new high-tech weapons such as laser blinding devices, chemical artillery warheads, and anti-electronic weapons. This arrangement is so secret that Thai commanders shot down a military helicopter carrying American DEA agents who had overflowed the area and discovered the extensive network of roads that honeycomb the border.

On the social level, the military is promoting a fascist agenda of eliminating Asian non-Thais from Thailand. Foreign Asians, referred to as *farang*, are subject to harassment, public humiliation, and worse at the hands of soldiers, the National Police, and civil officials. The NAP has introduced several measures that revoke the citizenship of those few foreigners that have it and eliminated programs that aid or assist them. Subtle media influences have turned public



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sentiment against them and they are often made scapegoats for the end of Thailand's economic boom times of the 1980s. This program has been primarily aimed at Burmese guest workers and Cambodian refugees who have streamed into Thailand seeking a better life, but has also affected Malaysians and Vietnamese and the hill tribe peoples of the Golden Triangle. Non-Asians and Japanese and Chinese have not been targeted and are generally accepted for their economic contributions to Thailand.

The largest and most powerful branch of the Thai military is the army. The Royal Thai Army has 190,000 members compared to the Navy with 68,000 and the Air Force's 48,000. Not coincidentally, the Army has greater political influence. There is considerable friction between the branches but only at the top command levels - it doesn't affect joint operations, which are common.

Military service is once-again compulsory, although there was a brief attempt to make it an all-volunteer army. Border conflicts with Burma and increased internal security needs have required greater manpower and a twenty-four month term of service is required of all citizens. Training is extensive and taught by experienced instructors. An eight-week boot camp is followed up with specialist training and then an apprenticeship program once assigned to a unit. Advancement within the ranks is determined by time served and the soldier's service record. Non-Commissioned Officers, the backbone of any modern army, are chosen for their qualifications and are usually veterans of at least one term of service.

The Thai officer corps and command structure is based on the American model. Soldiers may become officers via an Officer Candidate School or by graduating from one of the military's academies. The minimum term of service for an officer is five years. Political reliability is less important than skills but those showing dedication to the Thai military and its unique position in Thai politics advance faster than those who do not.

The Thai soldier is equipped with a standardized olive drab uniform and steel helmet. Some specialized units have adopted body armor but these are exceptions to the rule. The HK33E and the Colt M16A2 are the most common assault rifles issued but the internal security forces in urban areas are armed with the HK MP5 submachine gun. Officers are issued either the Colt M1911A1 or Glock 17 as side arms but some go for more macho weapons like the .357 magnum. Infantry platoons are heavy on firepower with a M60 or Minimi machine gun for every six soldiers on average. Additional firepower comes from grenade launchers and LAW rockets.

Unlike the rest of Southeast Asia's militaries, most Thai infantry are motorized and are transported in trucks and armored personal carriers. The Thai army is well equipped with tanks; unfortunately not much of the country is accessible to tanks, and infantry and helicopters make a better combination. The armored units contain a mix of updated American M60A1/A3 main battle tanks and older M48A5's along with M113 armored personnel carriers.

Thailand possesses a large special opera-



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tions force with two Special Forces divisions. There are also the Royal Thai Rangers, the Tigers, a Brigade of highly trained unconventional warfare specialists. The Rangers undergo rigorous selection and training similar to that of the US Army Rangers of the United States and have an excellent reputation among the world's military elite. In addition to hounding Mynamar People's Army troops along the border, a specialized unit of the Tigers, Task Force 90, has received additional training in anti-terrorist tactics and are Thailand's premier counterterrorist unit.

The Royal Thai Air Force is small but capable with over one hundred fighter craft and nearly that many ground-attack planes. In 1993, Thailand purchased fifty American F-16s and there are another forty on order. Less attention has been paid to ground-attack aircraft where the RTAF flies aging, Vietnam War-era F5 Freedom Fighters. The RTAF also maintains a large fleet of attack and transport helicopters, mostly Bell Hueys and Cobras, with a handful of UH-60 Blackhawks.

The Royal Thai Navy has carved a niche for itself in Southeast Asia as fierce smuggler and pirate hunters. The blue-water navy patrols the Gulf of Thailand, the South China Sea, and the Andaman Sea in a variety of ships ranging from the *Chakri Nareubet* light aircraft carrier with its seven Harrier jump jets to small coastal patrol craft armed only with light machineguns. Although many have been purchased from foreign navies as they were decommissioned they have racked up an impressive number of captures and kills as well as rescues in spite of being second-hand. The most recent additions have been two Israeli-built submarines which are seeing a good deal of use inserting and extracting Thai commandos into SLORC territory. The Thai navy reserves the right to stop and board all sea borne traffic in Thai waters as well as suspected smugglers and pirates in international waters.

The navy also maintains a brown water section that patrols the country's waterways and inlets. The brown water navy is primarily geared to anti-smuggling and counter-insurgency operations. Its small boats emphasize stealth and firepower and are often used by Thai Marines for insertion and fire support along the Burmese coastline. The most common of these is the Napco Raider, a small fiberglass boat with a low profile, shallow draft, quiet engine, mounts for three machine guns and high-speed capability.

The cross-border conflict with Burma is the most active assignment for the Thai military, but not the only one. Anti-smuggling efforts are given public recognition out of context to their small size. Internal security is also taken very seriously in the face of demonstrations, rioting, and terrorism. Finally, the border with Cambodia is a hot zone of activity, mostly between the Thai military, fleeing Cambodian refugees, and the Khmer Rouge. Only those units considered politically reliable are assigned to this zone.

## **THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

Vietnam was the rising star of Southeast Asia before the worldwide depression sunk its bright vision of the future. It still has more going for it than any other country in Southeast Asia except Thailand and the recent discovery of petroleum deposits off its coast has created a flurry of activity though they have yet to pay off. Politically, Vietnam is a nation in transition. Like China, the country has adopted a "one country, two systems" approach to its economy - state industries and communism alongside privately owned businesses and open markets. The hard-line policies of the government have been softened by a new younger generation of communists who seek to bring Vietnam out of the past and into the future.

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On paper, Vietnam is a communist republic with a National Assembly representing the people. From this Assembly, the Council of State and ministers are elected to run the government. These elected people are responsible to the National Assembly, which monitors their activities.

In real life, power lies in the hands of the Vietnamese Communist Party. The party elite determines who is to be elected to the National Assembly and who is to be a minister. Usually the party elite takes the choice roles in government and fills the subordinate positions with those loyal to them. Very little debate happens in the National Assembly as all major decisions are deliberated and decided upon at party headquarters well in advance.

Vietnam is a relatively peaceful country now that all those who opposed the communists have been killed, forced into exile, or otherwise silenced. The occupation of Cambodia by Vietnamese forces has ended and the military has shrunk, allowing resources normally applied to it to go to the public. Unlike the rest of Southeast Asia, Vietnam has little ethnic violence and the greatest conflicts have been economic.

The collapse of communism in Europe and the apparent fracturing of China has left Vietnam without much in the way of allies, politically and philosophically. Efforts to boost the sagging economy in the 1980's led to profit incentives and opening the country to limited foreign investments. The success of these years as compared to the disastrous years of strict communism quickly led to further reforms. Now Vietnam has two systems, a policy officially called *doi moi* - capitalism on a small scale that has been successful and state socialism that has been a dismal failure. Agricultural production has improved since the party allowed peasants to operate private farms but several years of bad weather has prevented the country from being able to feed itself. More reforms to liberalize the economy are being currently debated by the party.

Young reformers have become a vocal minority in the communist party and have won victories that have allowed the limited capitalism to exist in Vietnam. They point to the success of profit incentive and the potential for future growth when allied with foreign investment. They see Vietnam's future in shedding the isolation of the past and joining the rest of the world. Reformers are most predominant in southern Vietnam.

Opposed to these reformers are the older hard-line communists, most of who fought in the war to unite the two Vietnams. Many are still active members of the military and despise the idea of allowing foreigners, many of whom they fought against, to buy a place in their worker's paradise. They believe the global depression is the final death throes of capitalism predicted by Marx and that the reformers are at best dangerous radicals and at worst traitors and capitalist spies. Hardliners are almost exclusively from northern Vietnam.

Between these two groups is a large group of communists who favor a middle ground. They desire the security the communist system offers to the people but enjoy their VCRs and cell phones. This group swings like a pendulum back and forth between the hardliners and the reformers.

In the background of all this debate over economics lies one fact that has been glossed over due to poor reporting methods and foreign imports - Vietnam is slowly starving to death. Bad weather and poor harvesting as a result of communist mismanagement have defeated increased rice production efforts. 1994 through 1997 were drought years and the promising harvest of 1998 was destroyed in a single day by a freak monsoon. Vietnam has been purchasing food stocks from other Asian countries and America but it is now deeply in debt. Personal levels of consumption have dropped steadily and malnutrition is becoming epidemic in the countryside. This is a quiet famine because the state takes all the food and sends it to the cities where the bulk of the population lives.

### ***Vietnam at-a-glance***

**Capital:** Hanoi (1999 est. pop. 2,623,000).

**Largest City:** Ho Chi Minh City (1999 est. pop. 4,812,800)

**Population (1999 est.):** 67,037,000 with 81% urban, 19% rural.

**Official Language:** Vietnamese.

**Literacy:** 83% of adult population.

**Medical Facilities:** Average to good.

**Life Expectancy:** Women 66, Men 62.

**Average Annual Income (1999 est.):** \$300.

**Government:** Communist one-party state.

**Economy:** Controlled free market.



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But it won't be long before starvation begins to creep into the urban areas too.

### ***Vietnamese Police***

The Vietnamese police are not a nationalized force but an observer would have a difficult time discovering that for all the uniformity the police agencies have. Officially under the Ministry of Justice, police agencies are organized into small jurisdictions that fall under the larger umbrella of the provincial government. Agencies are coordinated within provinces to work together but will always respect one another's areas of jurisdiction. Although there is a national agency to assist the provinces to work together, it has been largely ignored and cooperation between provinces is limited. Police officers are armed with Russian and Eastern European firearms but many have begun adopting American and Western European weapons for both their superior quality and status.

### ***The Army of Vietnam***

The Army of Vietnam remains the political stronghold of communist hardliners and a source of great pride for the nation. Although the military has been reduced in numbers and resources it remains a very potent and professional force.

A thirty-month service in the army is mandatory for all youths between the age of eighteen and twenty-four. Unlike other Southeast Asian nations, women are expected to perform equal service with men albeit in separate units. There are no impressment gangs but failing to join when called for is a criminal offense.

The Army of Vietnam is based on the Soviet model with the exception that all new recruits, including officer candidates, attend the same six-week boot camp. Instructors are often former Soviet officers now seeking employment in the Far East. Following the initial training comes specialty training and the officers are separated from enlisted personnel. The army is officer heavy and junior officers often fulfill jobs normally performed by enlisted soldiers in western armies. Among NCOs rank is less important than time served with soldiers having served more months outranking new ones.

The standard Vietnamese soldier is equipped with a standardized light brown uniform and pith helmet (which provides no armor for the head). The AK-74 is the most common assault rifle but reserve units may use AKMs or even American M-16s from three decades ago. Infantry platoons usually have three PK machine guns and a rocket propelled grenade launcher. Heavier weapons are relegated to specialized squads that supplement the platoons.

Transportation is almost exclusively Soviet heavy-duty 6x6 trucks and light jeeps. While Vietnam has over 2,500 tanks and armored vehicles of Soviet and Chinese manufacturer, they are increasingly unserviceable and their employment is rare.

The exception to this rule is anything to do with anti-aircraft, a subject the army has a passion for. Vietnam has one of the largest air defense forces in the world with over 12,000 self-propelled and towed anti-aircraft guns, as well as nearly seventy fixed SAM sites. Despite the numbers, these weapon systems are largely 1960's vintage and would be of limited use against a modern air force.

The Vietnamese Air Force, a branch of the army, is a strong part of the air defense system and operates nearly 200 Soviet fighters and bombers, including twelve of the advanced Su-27. As with the army, many instructors are former Soviet pilots. In addition to fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters are an important part

### ***POWs and MIAs***

In the Paris Agreements of 1973 in which the United States officially withdrew from the Vietnamese conflict, all American prisoners of war were to be released. Hundreds of POWs, mostly pilots and navigators shot down over Laos and Vietnam, were repatriated to the US and grateful families. However, there still remained over one thousand soldiers missing in action, or MIA.

Over the past two decades, there have been reports of American POWs seen in Vietnam and Laos. There have been several attempts to search for them, both by the American government and private adventurers. None returned with convincing evidence.

In fact, Vietnam did not return every POW. 125 were kept by the Vietnamese as hostages to ensure that the United States would pay reparations agreed to in the Paris Agreements. When the United States refused to pay the reparations and the American presidency unexpectedly changed hands in the wake of the Watergate scandal, the prisoners were moved permanently to Laos. After a planned American rescue attempt was made public in 1981, the prisoners were quietly shipped to the Soviet Union where they were interrogated by the KGB and then sent to prison gulags in Siberia. As of 1999, each of these men is dead from the harsh treatment of their captors. With the thaw in relations between Vietnam and the United States and the complete dissolution of the Soviet Union, this information was buried. Only a handful of powerful people in each country know the real fate of the last POWs of the Vietnam war. All of these people have a vested interest in guaranteeing that this information remains a secret.

One positive side effect of the improvement in political relations has been the creation of several teams of forensic archeologists who seek out crash sites of downed US airplanes and recover the remains. These teams are often working several sites at once in the most difficult terrain Laos and Vietnam have to offer. Despite their limitations, dozens of families across the United States have found closure to a war that officially ended twenty-six years earlier.

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of the air wing with the dangerous Mi-24 ‘Hind’ making up the backbone of the helicopter fleet.

Vietnam also maintains a small navy. Most ships are former Soviet naval or commercial vessels converted to military use. Along with the surface ships, the navy maintains two North Korean-built midget submarines. A special brown water unit of the army patrols the many rivers of Vietnam and the large Mekong Delta.

Unlike every other country in Southeast Asia, Vietnam is not engaged in conflict. This moment of peace will not last as the hard-line communist leaders have realized the extent of the progressive starvation and are determined to secure a new source of food. They plan to invade Cambodia, a nation they had previously occupied until 1988, and secure the rice harvest there. In fact, the plan was supposed to occur in 1998 but the same freak typhoon that savaged that year’s harvest also swamped roads and made travel impossible. 26,000 troops covertly inserted into southern Laos were forced to abandon their plans. Now, the soldiers have returned and are preparing for another attempt. The invasion date is scheduled for February 18. Ironically, this is Cambodia’s Vietnam Friendship Day, a holiday that commemorates the signing of a treaty between the two nations.

For the hard-line communists in the Vietnamese military to successfully invade Cambodia and avoid international wrath, they must first have a semi-legitimate reason. The carefully orchestrated plan created for the action is to insert a special operations team inside Cambodia armed with shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. The team will then shoot down a Vietnamese civilian airliner. Once the plane has been shot down and the Khmer Rouge identified as those responsible (something everyone would believe they are capable of) the Vietnamese forces massed on the border will invade in an effort to “protect the citizens of the world from Khmer Rouge terrorism.”

The fact that the plan involves the deliberate murder of over one hundred people has been debated and the hardliners have declared it both “a calculated risk” and the deaths as “regrettable but acceptable losses.”

## **FOREIGN & INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES**

The modern world is interconnected and Southeast Asia is no exception. The global drug trade, peace missions, industrial competition, and international conflicts are all reasons the world focuses its attention on the relatively small region. Most of these international players have a stake in the events that come about. Others just want to make sure they don’t get blindsided by events happening on the other side of the world.

### **The United Nations**

Despite several high-profile interventions in Southeast Asia in the early 1990’s, financial cutbacks and political failures have placed the United Nations in a difficult position. The increasing anarchy and civil disturbances of the region have required an increased military presence while the more cost effective health, agriculture, and disaster relief programs have been curtailed. Although still a powerful voice in the politics of the region, the UN is increasingly lacking in the money and muscle to back



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up its demands.

The United Nations has several non-military programs running in Southeast Asia including the World Health Organization, Agricultural Assistance Program, and the Maritime Observation Group. These groups promote general welfare by educating and assisting governments and people in preventing disease, growing more food, and regulating ocean-going trade. Because these groups work with local governments and have no authority in themselves, their effectiveness depends upon the cooperation offered. As can be expected, the level of success varies considerably.

### ***World Health Organization (WHO)***

When founded in 1948, the goal of this UN agency was to see “the attainment by all the peoples of the highest possible level of health.” Functions include teaching assistance, research, technical assistance, setting international health standards, and aiding victims of natural disaster. Safe drinking water, maternal and child welfare, and the eradication of disease have been ongoing projects.

In 1999 WHO has more than its hands full. Although the organization continues to pursue its more mundane objectives on paper, almost all of its resources have been directed to dealing with the seemingly unending number of disease outbreaks. In 1997 the Ebola virus was brought to Thailand via an African businessman from Zaire. The outbreak that struck lower Bangkok was deadly but didn’t spread thanks to the efforts of WHO agents. WHO has been less effective at dealing with cholera epidemics that have repeatedly struck Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Worst of all, the continuing AIDS plague has left hundreds of thousands dead and only recently shown signs of letting up.

By 1999, WHO is faced with an overwhelming task. It must protect the populace from becoming casualties in a micro biotic war while its own resources are being limited and help from native governments has been limited at best. Even with its best estimates, WHO in Southeast Asia will be out of money, and therefore out of business, by April. To prevent this, WHO administrators have been releasing a mountain of reports detailing the kind of catastrophe that can occur if the agency is allowed to die. Ironically, these same reports are responsible for creating the kind of apathy that haunts the world at the end of the millennium and prevents help from coming.

WHO resources in Southeast Asia include one hundred thirty full-time doctors and nurses with another seventy or so available part time. Backing up the doctors and nurses is a small army of medical technicians and trained assistants. While this force may seem formidable, most of the personnel are assigned to rural hospitals and refugee camps where the doctor to patient ratio is several thousand to one. Plus, they must work under primitive conditions, sometimes under fire, and with what medical supplies WHO can buy, beg, borrow, or steal.

The WHO Regional Headquarters are located in Bangkok, near the Swedish embassy.

The only advantage that WHO currently has is that as a UN mission, it can draw on UN material and personnel to help. Most often this comes in the form of transportation and protection of doctors and nurses as they visit rural territories. Sometimes, particularly when dealing with outbreaks of disease, WHO personnel conscript entire units for help in quarantining an area, caring for the sick, and disposing of the dead. In 1998, a Bangladeshi infantry battalion did just that when a cholera outbreak threatened a province of Cambodia.

Occasionally, WHO will contract with B/E to protect a shipment of medicines or personnel through areas experiencing unrest. With the coming money

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crunch, it is unknown if they will continue to do so.

### ***UN Military Forces***

The UN currently has sizable military forces in Cambodia and Myanmar. These are associated primarily with the Safe Zones established in those countries where refugees of the endemic fighting have been able to retreat. In addition to protecting safe zones, the UN is also continuing its early 1990s program of removal of land mines from Cambodia.

#### ***UN Safe Zone - Myanmar***

In Myanmar, where ethnic warfare has been non-stop for forty years, Canadian forces under the UN banner protect an ethnic enclave located approximately forty miles north of the Thai city of Mae Hong Song. Primarily the Shan and Wa hill tribes occupy this enclave. This enclave lies in a narrow valley surrounded by steep hills and resupply for the Canadians and the refugee camps comes via an access road from Thailand. Approximately 25,600 refugees live in the narrow valley in squalid refugee camps but are generally safe from the fighting. A mechanized infantry battalion with armor and helicopter support defends the area and rarely ventures out except to guard supply columns entering from Thailand. Because fighting has shifted to other areas of the country the safe zone has been successful. Ironically, the most provocative action came in 1998 when members of the *Nouveau Armie pour le Liberation du Quebec* terrorist group placed a bomb in a crate of relief supplies, which killed seventeen refugees.

#### ***UN Transitional Authority and Command - Cambodia***

UN operations in Cambodia are more extensive and much more dangerous. Starting in the early 1990's, the United Nations created the UN Transitional Authority and Command (UNTAC) with the two-fold objective of providing an opportunity for free elections to be held and the clearing of the millions of land mines that outnumber the people two to one.

All UN operations in Cambodia are organized and supplied from the UN headquarters located in the former Wat Phnom hotel in Phnom Penh. The Wat Phnom hotel is a beehive of activity with the parking lot filled with white UN Toyota Land Cruisers and the occasion armored personnel transport. Inside, diplomats and soldiers scurry about trying to avert the crisis of the week. Security is tight and provided by veteran Pakistani and Bangladeshi troops. A number of rocket propelled grenade and mortar attacks by the Khmer Rouge have done little actual damage but have put the troops on edge.

The UN also has its own hangers and aircraft load/unload area at Pochentong Airport, approximately four miles from Phnom Penh. This area is cordoned off from regular airport business by rows of concertina wire and sandbagged firing positions. Just as with the headquarters, attacks and threats by the Khmer Rouge have the soldiers in a 'shoot first and ask questions later' mentality.

#### ***UN Safe Zone - Battambang***

The city of Battambang lies northwest of Phnom Penh along the Sangker River and is an important railhead and market center for the rich, rice-growing lands of Western Cambodia. It has been the site of some of the fiercest fighting between Khmer Rouge, non-communist rebels, and government soldiers, and has changed hands many times. In 1997 the city was declared a UN safe zone and all combatants left - at least in theory. Now, the nearly 210,000 people live in what amounts to a medieval walled city patrolled by Pakistani, Bangladeshi,



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Argentine, and French troops under the UN banner.

In truth, the fighting has not stopped but has shifted to the areas outside of the city. The nightly handful of Khmer Rouge mortar shells thrown at the city are so poorly aimed that they are rarely lethal. All sides recognize the value of keeping the city intact. In this way, Battambang has become a prize to go to the victor in Cambodia's civil war, if there ever is one.

UN forces in and around Battambang travel in squads or platoons (never fewer than four individuals) with one heavy weapon per squad. Helicopters often accompany convoys and large patrols. Any unit in Battambang can call upon artillery support from a French battery of 105mm guns.

In addition to ground troops, UN forces in Battambang have sixteen Super Puma helicopters at the airport, with four armed as gunships. Transport aircraft constantly shuttle between Battambang and Phnom Penh to supply the UN forces.

### ***UN Safe Zone - Siem Reap***

Located just a few miles from the spectacular Angkor ruins, Siem Reap is in northwestern Cambodia, just a few miles north of Lake Tonle Sap. The city has a low population for Cambodia - only 12,000 people - but is important to the United Nations because of the Angkor complex and their effort to preserve what are some of the most incredible ruins in Asia. Forty-three researchers and historical preservationists work with hundreds of laborers to repair damage to the site from natural and unnatural sources. Most of the researchers believe that they will eventually be forced to leave the site in the near future and so they are preparing the ruins for an extended period of neglect.

A battalion of Royal Marines from Great Britain have a headquarters in Siem Reap itself as well as a presence at the town's airport. Although the UN troopers are far fewer than at Battambang, they are much more aggressive. An attack in 1998 by forty guerrillas on motorcycles armed with rocket propelled grenades left several British soldiers dead and caused the commander to change the way they protected the area. Instead of hiding in bunkers and moving in armored columns, the Marines make heavy use of local guides and conduct foot patrols through the ruins and nearby countryside. As Siem Reap province is a provincial base for the Khmer Rouge, contact with the enemy occurs often.

With so much enemy contact this battalion is one of the most combat-experienced in the British military. When Khmer Rouge activity is high, the Brits will sometimes quietly supplement the Marines with squads of SAS troopers who come more for the experience than the extra firepower. The SAS units are typically not UN sanctioned or approved by the Hun Sen regime. However, the effectiveness of these unconventional warriors has been such that no one has yet to complain.

A typical unit from Siem Reap consists of nine Royal Marines split between one squad leader and two fire teams of four. Each fire team has one man-portable heavy weapon.

### ***UN Mine Clearing Program***

Since the early 1990's the UN has fielded teams of engineers throughout Cambodia to clear the country of the millions of mines laid during the conflict. By and large, the program has been successful and vast areas once impassable are now being cultivated. However, the program won't be completed until the beginning of the next century and the UN has committed to the work, despite the current anarchy.

A typical mine clearing team consists of a half-dozen engineers, a dozen or

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so laborers, and a security team of six to ten. Because of the extent of the program and the reluctance of UN commanders to give up manpower, outside security forces are often hired. BlackEagle/BlackEagle has been a favorite source for security personnel because of its highly trained people who can often assist in the process. It was a B/E security team that protected the engineers and eventually led to their safety after the Khmer Rouge employed a laser blinding device in Kampong Cham.

The process of mine clearing is slow and dangerous. When possible, mines are detonated where they lay. If that is not possible, the engineering team will carefully remove the mine, deactivate it, and dispose of it. Because disposal is done in large groups, the deactivated mines are temporarily stored in safety pits surrounded by large mounds of dirt. These stores of deactivated mines and the valuable explosives they contain are a popular target for the Khmer Rouge and bandits. Many unfortunate B/E operatives have been forced into a firefight with their backs to thousands of pounds of high explosives.

## **Central Intelligence Agency (USA)**

The American Central Intelligence Agency has a long and colorful history in Southeast Asia as well as a reputation for Machiavellian politics. When French Indochina crumbled and Vietnam was segregated into a communist north and democratic south, the CIA had already established itself, taking over the turf of the French intelligence service. As the war heated up and more and more soldiers were imported to fight, the CIA increased its presence until the Southeast Asia branch was the largest in the organization. CIA operatives gathered electronic and photoreconnaissance, trained entire hill tribe armies, ran deep penetration missions into southern China, operated the Phoenix assassination program, and ran the largest “commercial” airline in the Pacific, Air America.

During the post-Vietnam War era, the CIA remained active in Southeast Asia, but primarily from Thailand. With the war officially over, the CIA still aided rebels in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia against the communists and gathered information, but it was just a shadow of its former self. It wasn't until the late 1980s and the economic boom in Southeast Asia that the CIA began to regroup and reform. Industrial espionage, counter espionage, and paramilitary training became organization's specialties. Anti-drug efforts by the CIA have been half hearted at best as CIA agents claim that drug eradication is really the responsibility of the DEA.

The CIA in Southeast Asia sees itself as a shadowy protector of an innocent American people and their interests in a hostile world. A philosophy of the ends justifying the means has permeated the CIA and almost any illegal or immoral action can be sanctioned so long as the final result is positive for the USA.

The CIA has a great deal of resources in Southeast Asia, including the cooperation of the Thai government. Field offices are disguised as businesses, often import/export, which allows the Agency to operate free of embassy supervision and maintain some physical assets such as vehicles and communications equipment. Field offices have been established in Bangkok, Chaing Mai, Phnom Penn, Ho Chi Mihn City, Hanoi, and most recently in Yangon (Rangoon). Thanks to good funding and some extracurricular activities the CIA is well funded and is far more liberal with its funds than other intelligence agencies.

The real reason behind the lack of enthusiasm for anti-drug efforts is because the CIA is up to its neck in the business to the tune of \$650 million dollars annually. Not a large amount compared to the rest of the industry, but still sizable, particularly for an American government agency. The CIA never com-

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pletely cut off the rebel hill tribes in Laos and Burma or dismantled Air America. Hill tribe troops were supplied through the black market in deals set up by CIA agents and paid for in money derived from opium smuggled into Thailand through CIA resources. Chief among these smuggling organizations was Air America's successor, Si-Chang Flying Service (see the *Si-Chang Flying Service*, follows).

Now the CIA is entrenched in its smuggling efforts despite the fact that most of the nations the hill tribes fight against are liberalizing their systems to become less socialist and more democratic. This institutionalized smuggling has also been lining the pockets of CIA section chiefs and others in the system and is a lucrative source of cash for the Agency.

Some agents have had second thoughts about the smuggling considering the apparent victory of the West over communism. A few have spoken out against the operation, citing drug abuse in America as a major problem and themselves as contributors. These agents are the minority and any that speak out are either transferred, blackmailed, or silenced.

### *Si-Chang Flying Service*

Getting things to the backcountry of Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia can be difficult. There are few roads and often they become brown, muddy rivers during the rainy season. Vehicles are hard to come by and not always reliable. Besides natural dangers, bandits and insurgents can threaten property and life. Even if you do manage to get something someplace, getting back can be just as much an adventure.

Enter the Si-Chang Flying Service of Chiang Mai, Thailand. This company offers delivery service to the most remote parts of Southeast Asia via its small fleet of airplanes and helicopters. Si-Chang promises the safe delivery of just about any item or person to nearly anywhere - for a price. Definitions of "safe" and "delivery" vary as the most common way of "dropping off" a package (people included) is often kicking it out the back of the airplane with a parachute attached but Si-Chang has one of the greatest success rates in the business. Famine relief goods, anthropology students, livestock, mail, and even delicate computer components have entered the jungles of Southeast Asia thanks to Si-Chang Flying Service and lived to tell about it.

Like most of the other flying services in Chaing Mai, Si-Chang is not entirely legal. The majority of its contracts come from smuggling opium into Thailand from the Golden Triangle and to destinations around the region. Smuggling flights occur on an almost daily basis and the Si-Chang hangars at Chaing Mai International Airport are beehive of activity. Customs inspectors and military personnel are always nearby but so far Si-Chang has yet to have a single one of its smuggling flights seized by authorities. Si-Chang pilots and ground crew are experienced and highly intelligent but that is not what keeps it in business. The difference between Si-Chang and the others is in its bene-



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factor - The American Central Intelligence Agency.

At the end of the American involvement in the Vietnam War the CIA suffered from major criticism of its Air America program. Air America, based out of Vientiane, Laos, was the CIA's own air delivery service for its operations in Southeast Asia and was widely used for transporting weapons and supplies to rebel hill tribes in the Golden Triangle and smuggling the hill tribe's opium out. Congressional oversight killed the program and the Air America assets were sold off at auction.

One of the major buyers of the assets was the Chinese airfreight company Si-Chang. Si-Chang, however, existed only on paper and was in fact a CIA import/export company out of Bangkok. Chiang Mai became the new home of Si-Chang and within a month the CIA paid pilots had traded their grease-stained Air America baseball caps for shiny new Si-Chang ones. It was business as usual and that business continues today.

Si-Chang Flying Service is more than just a drug smuggling operation. It does limited but brisk legitimate service - the famine relief, anthropology students, livestock, mail, and computer components mentioned above, as well as tours of the beautiful Doi Inthanon National Park adjacent to the city. It also offers a freelance insertion and retrieval service to those who wish to enter and leave the Golden Triangle discreetly. Costs are determined by range, weight, and risk with prices reaching up to the tens of thousands of dollars. A typical insertion and retrieval across the Thai border into Burma or Laos generally runs \$1000 a passenger, which is doubled if the flight crew must enter combat. All payments are due in advance.

Si-Chang has many aircraft to meet the needs of its varied customers. Most are at least one or two decades old but are kept in good condition with frequent maintenance. All are designed for unimproved airfields and short take off and landing. Since combat with ground forces is often a threat, many aircraft have mounts for weapons at their doors but none have any fixed weapons. Electronic CounterMeasure (ECM) packages and flare dispensers are installed on some of the larger aircraft but not all.

The largest and most common transport plane is the French C-160 Transall. Capable of carrying up to sixteen tons, the Transall is a double engine propeller-driven aircraft with rear loading ramp and port and starboard doors. Si-Chang also has two CV-22 Ospreys that can carry up to nine tons, has side doors and a rear ramp, and also a hoist over the forward cabin door for lifting people or objects aboard during vertical flight. The Osprey is a complex machine and requires a great deal of maintenance for every hour of flight, and prices for transport in an Osprey are doubled.

Si-Chang also flies several different types of helicopters. These are geared more towards the transport of personnel than people but some can carry heavy loads. One of the heavy haulers is the CH47 Chinook. This twin-rotor helicopter is capable of lifting up to 7 tons and has a rear cargo ramp in addition to doors on either side. The UH-1 Iroquois, commonly called Hueys, can carry 1000kg or six passengers. Many of the Hueys in the Si-Chang inventory are military surplus from the American phase of the Vietnam war and are experienced warhorses. Rounding out Si-Chang's helicopter inventory is the Hughes Model 500, also called the Little Bird. This bubble nosed helicopter can carry 1000kg or four passengers and is very swift and agile. Its open cockpit and many windows make it excellent for sight seeing or observation.

Obtaining the services of Si-Chang isn't very difficult. For legitimate transport, a phone call and credit card will do fine. For less legitimate missions, Si-Chang will refer people to planning specialists and pilots who will negotiate the price. Because of its unusual connection, anything that Si-Chang knows, the

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CIA also knows. If a contract goes against CIA operations, for example, the aircraft may experience engine trouble or the B/E operatives could find themselves deposited in the middle of some very unfriendly natives.

## **Drug Enforcement Administration (USA)**

The United States represents the single largest consumer of illicit narcotics in the world. Thousands of tons of drugs and billions of dollars move through what is the nation's largest underground industry, an economic force equaled by only the largest legitimate industries. As such, the US government takes a keen interest in illegal and legal narcotic production around the world. At the forefront of this effort is the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

The Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States plays an active role in monitoring drug manufacturing, distribution, and consumption around the world in both the legal and illegal varieties. Although a national agency with powers technically limited to within the US, the DEA has made special arrangements with various governments allowing DEA agents onto foreign soil with law enforcement powers. DEA agents typically come as a kind of package deal along with anti-drug money. The agents supposedly just monitor the use of those funds by the host countries, but in reality act as assistants, trainer and even leaders in anti-drug efforts in countries where the local authorities are too ill-equipped, ill-trained, inept, or corrupt to do it themselves. Of the roughly 7,000 DEA agents, 5,500 are Special Agents with law-enforcement powers and approximately 130 of these agents are assigned to the Far Eastern Branch with its headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand.

Unlike DEA operations in Colombia and other nations, the DEA presence in Southeast Asia is not just a paramilitary force, although it has that capability. The DEA in Southeast Asia conducts investigations, performs lab analysis, coordinates intelligence gathering on drug manufacturing, and actually arrests drug smugglers and dealers. Needless to say, in a region that thrives on the opium trade, the DEA makes few friends.

### ***Bangkok Field Office***

The DEA has a special cooperation agreement with the Thai government that extends back to the 1980s, far longer than any other foreign operation in the DEA's history. All of the DEA's operation in Thailand and the rest of Southeast Asia are planned and conducted from the office and its adjacent compound. Although most of the DEA's activity is within Thailand, operations often take agents over the border and into hostile territory.

DEA activity in Southeast Asia is hampered by a combination of corruption and incompetence, at the heart of which lies the drug syndicates that they have been tasked with destroying. From the very beginning of DEA activity in cooperation with Thai officials, the agency has been forced to deal with the fact that the majority of those they must entrust information, evidence, and their very lives with are not playing on the same team. Thai police salaries have always been low and corruption is not viewed with the same distaste as in the West. In fact, up until recently, Thai police were expected to make up the difference between their official incomes and their living expenses with the bribes they received from the criminals they were supposed to arrest. With campaigning by the American government and honest Thai officials at home, this is changing, but not very quickly. There are some Thais that have earned the trust and even admiration of the DEA and these are used extensively - but they are few and far between.

### ***Corruption***

Unlike in the West, civil servants in Southeast Asia who are not on the take are the exception to the rule. In fact, many jobs in government offer low salaries with the expectation that the person make up the difference in bribes. Although some countries do take corruption charges seriously, only rarely is it investigated by itself. Corruption charges that do come about usually do so in conjunction with some other charge such as failure to perform their duty and obstruction of justice.

Bribery is by far the most common form of corruption. Minor incidents can be smoothed over with a carton of cigarettes or bottle of liquor. More sophisticated acts may require cash, American, if you please. While this may prove an inconvenience or a boon to operatives, it is simply a part of life in Southeast Asia.

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Consequently, the DEA factors this into their plans and Thai officials are only given the barest of information and opportunities to send the information back to the drug lords. Often, the DEA will run parallel operations - the first as a dummy investigation to provide cover for the real action in the second. Agents call these dummy investigations "hush-puppies".

The DEA compound in Bangkok, of which the field office is only one of several buildings, contains the agency's inventory of vehicles and weapons, communications cluster, headquarters, as well as living space. It is the largest foreign office in the DEA and the second largest overall, with the office in Miami having only slightly more personnel.

The walled compound resembles an American suburb with tract housing, a school, and a convenience store. Most of the houses are now decrepit and few of the lawns maintained. Much of the government housing is empty or has been converted into office space. The school and convenience store are vacant, symbols of a time when the administration allowed agents to bring their families to Thailand. In 1987, after the murder of several agents, the administration declared the Bangkok office as too dangerous for dependants and the families were moved out.

Security is provided by the US Marine Corps, a platoon of which live in the compound along with the agents. The Marines occupy the entrance/exit checkpoints as well as maintain roving patrols along the walls and empty streets. A typical patrol consists of two HMMWVs with a mounted heavy weapon (the M240G or SAW machine guns being most common) and six soldiers. In an emergency, the full platoon of fifty soldiers can be mustered and ready for action within five minutes.

### *Operations*

With the Presidential mandate to attack drug manufacturing wherever it may be - not just where DEA agents have law enforcement powers - the nature and scope of the DEA has changed drastically. In addition to deep cover operations where DEA agents take weeks and even months preparing for a bust and the arrest of smugglers and manufacturers, agents are now jumping aboard helicopters for quick search and destroy operations, oftentimes on the wrong side of the Thai border. Agents must be prepared to switch from police force to soldier without warning.

In general, the cross border raids come with the blessing of the Thai military. Because of border conflicts between Myanmar and Thailand, the Thai military is only too happy to assist in what amounts to commando raids in the name of drug interdiction. The cooperation between the Burmese drug syndicates and the Myanmar government virtually guarantees that striking one will have a negative affect on the other.

On Thailand's eastern border with Cambodia, however, things are different. DEA investigations in this area have come close to revealing the Thai military's covert trading with the Khmer Rouge and active participation in the rape of Cambodia's natural resources. Although not in the DEA's area of interest, if this relationship were to be revealed to the public, the negative exposure would be tremendous. Thai military officials have been uncooperative with the DEA in its investigation of any possible Cambodian drug manufacturing and in many instances have been openly hostile. In October of 1998, an air-to-ground missile shot down a helicopter carrying DEA agents investigating satellite images of maintained roads in the border region. The Thai military blamed the Khmer Rouge but the DEA has its doubts. The fact that the DEA has its hands full in the Golden Triangle and that drug production in Cambodia is currently low

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keeps the full attention of the agency away from this area, much to the relief of the Thai military.

The militarization of the DEA in Southeast Asia has not meant that they have become sloppy investigators. There are a dozen investigations of smuggling and opium production occurring at any one time. Undercover agents have infiltrated the opium empires and provide information otherwise unavailable. DEA Special Agent-in-Charge Charlie Novak determines if the war on drugs would be best served by an arrest or a surgical strike. Unfortunately, he has been forced to choose the latter more often as the opium syndicates become better armed.

### ***Resources***

The DEA relies upon US military and intelligence satellites for imagery and intelligence but the majority of information comes from its human assets. Agents have multiple cells of informants within the criminal underworld and the extent and detail of the information gained is remarkable. It is rare for any criminal enterprise to pass unnoticed, even if the DEA is unable to do much about it.

Due to a peculiarity in the agreement between the US and Thailand concerning the DEA, the agents must rely on the Thai military for its air support. For operations on the Thai/Burma border this rarely poses a problem. Thai helicopter pilots have a reputation as “great stick and rudder” pilots who will face withering ground fire to retrieve personnel and provide fire support. More than one pilot has received a case of champagne from a grateful team that otherwise wouldn’t have made it home.

Operations on the Thai/Cambodia border have received far less cooperation and are often canceled at the last minute due to “mechanical failure.”

Agents have found ways to circumvent the agreement. Agents have cultivated relationships with some small charter flight companies who have a willingness to do more than the usual sightseeing tours. Some of these outfits are actually captured smugglers who were offered a deal in exchange for the occasional favor. So far, these unorthodox methods haven’t done more than raise politician’s eyebrows but it wouldn’t take much to create a diplomatic incident.

On the ground, the DEA is much more intimidating. In addition to its undercover agents, the DEA maintains seven special operations teams for tactical operations. These teams are mostly filled out with former military personnel and occasionally some that are ‘borrowed’ from active military units. Navy SEALs and Army Green Berets have been known to cycle through as trainers, although it is debatable who really gets the training. The teams are most active in the Thai/Burma border region where they conduct search and destroy operations against drug syndicates and the Muang Tai Army. Operations within urban areas as backup for police raids are also not uncommon.

### **Direction Generale de la Securite Exteriure (France)**

Like most of the first world powers, France has an active interest in Southeast Asia and has both diplomatic and intelligence resources in the area. As French industries gained closer ties with Southeast Asia, so too did the French government. Where goes French interests, so goes the French intelligence service, the DGSE (Direction Generale de la Securite Exteriure). The success of the French people, whether in business, diplomacy, or militarily is its goal.

Political infighting, poorly managed operations, and general bad luck plagued the institution until the late 1980s but a series of internal overhauls rebuilt the



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DGSE into a highly professional, apolitical organization. France's support of Chad in its war with Libya has given the DGSE many agents with combat experience as well as a cadre of battle-hardened commandos. French operatives have performed tactical raids, hostage rescue, reconnaissance, and occasionally, assassination. The DGSE prefers to keep its operations in-house but has been known to hire mercenaries for special assignments that require anonymity.

Like the KGB, the DGSE prefers to establish its field offices in embassies where the agents may enjoy diplomatic immunity as bodyguards, cultural attaches, and other low-level posts. The current theater field office is in the French embassy in Ho Chi Minh City. Each field office has from five to twelve full-time agents, each of whom specialize in a particular facet of espionage. Each field agent generally manages two or more active sources of information while simultaneously recruiting more. Compared to other intelligence agencies, the DGSE is cash poor and recruiting methods rely less on monetary gains and more on blackmail, seduction, and information and resource exchange. Despite this financial handicap, the DGSE has managed some remarkable success including the turning of a high-level Thai diplomat. A DGSE operation also discovered that Resources Unlimited had found petroleum reserves off the Vietnamese coast, allowing a French oil company to successfully bid for the right to drill before the Vietnamese knew what a bonanza they had.

The DGSE is on friendly terms with the British MI-6 and also the American CIA, albeit less enthusiastically. There is an unstated opinion among DGSE agents that Southeast Asia is "their" territory by virtue of France's colonial past. The Southeast Asian theater has suffered from lack of attention compared to the shooting war in Chad but as the government swings to the right and nostalgia for "the good old days" of colonialism rises, the SEA branch is sure to see its star rise.







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# CHAPTER FOUR

# BUSINESS IN

# SOUTHEAST

# ASIA ▼▼

## *Doing Business In Southeast Asia*

Much of Southeast Asia's deal making occurs not in the corporate boardroom, but in bars and restaurants. Business relationships are taken personally in Asia and chief executives of corporations are expected to be friends as well as partners. A night on the town complete with food, drink, and entertainment is as much a part of business as contracts and lawyers. Who picks up the tab for this business expense depends on who needs the deal the most.

Southeast Asia is one of the world's busiest financial and industrial centers. Thailand and Vietnam are known as new economic dragons whose annual growth, prior to the worldwide depression, were in the double digits. It was said that anyone could make money in Southeast Asia and many people did. Since the depression, however, factories have become silent and unemployment hovers near the fifty-percent level. Uncompleted skyscrapers fill the skies of Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City like decaying skeletons and give these cities the appearance of having been bombed. Those businesses that remain have found that survival requires the ability to move quickly and efficiently and to keep an eye on the law - usually from the other side. Ethics and morals have become two more casualties of downsizing.

Asian manufacturers have always been good at industrial espionage and stealing products from western companies, and the competition between them is no less fierce. Sabotage, computer theft, and attacks on employees are not uncommon. Corporate security often has more clout and firepower than local police and generally prefers to solve problems themselves rather than go to the authorities. The authorities are often more than happy to allow the corporations to do as they will, so long as they receive a substantial cut.

Even in the hard times at the turn of the century, Southeast Asia still has the ingredients for a strong economy - cheap labor, natural resources, low government oversight, and a huge pool of potential customers. The world still wants cheap electronics, food, and other products that the region manufactures and those companies that have taken the risks have been richly rewarded.

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## UNITED WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

As the industrial world continues to grow, industrial waste becomes a larger problem. Environmentally safe methods of disposing of the chemical, biological, and nuclear materials left behind by a modern society are becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to come by. No one wants the material in his or her backyard and it is no longer feasible to store the material on-site. United World Environmental Services (UWES) offers an alternative to disposal in the expensive and heavily regulated industrial nations. UWES personnel are skilled environmental engineers and waste management specialists. The company's fleet of specially designed cargo ships and transport vehicles remove the offending waste and dispose of it in the less restricted and therefore less costly third world.

UWES founder Peter Corvell, a former waste management expert for the United States' Environmental Protection Agency, opened negotiations with several Southeast Asian governments to allow the disposal of foreign waste on their soil. He promised that UWES would meet the same standards as those imposed by the EPA, and that the facility would pay handsomely in taxes. These assurances, as well as large bribes, soothed the concerns of the government ministers. The first UWES facility opened on the remote northeast tip of Indonesia in 1992 and was soon operating at maximum capacity. The next facility opened a year later in Thailand and new storage and disposal sites are built throughout Southeast Asia at a rate of one per year. UWES facilities are operating in Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and recently, the Philippines.

Corvell was killed in a plane crash in 1997 and the company is currently engaged in a proxy war between two of the original investors - Anita Corvell, widow of Peter Corvell and a consortium of European investors known as the Luxemburg Group.

### *Market*

Industrial corporations are the primary source of UWES business but many nations employ UWES to clean up messes left behind by government services, particularly militaries. UWES has three branches in addition to its corporate bureaucracy. The first deals with on-site cleanup of hazardous materials by UWES personnel and equipment and is the most expensive. The second branch handles the transportation requirements by UWES personnel to remove the materials to a secure storage or disposal site. The third deals with the actual storage and disposal of the wastes, and although it is more demanding of personnel and equipment the reduced costs of the Third World allow it to be the least expensive.

UWES rates fluctuate depending on the what the waste is, its expended lifespan, and the amount of personnel and equipment required to handle it safely. Because biological and most chemical waste can be incinerated or otherwise made inert, they are relatively less expensive to handle. Nuclear waste cannot be destroyed and must be stored in such a way that no leakage occurs during the material's half-life, often tens of thousands of years. Nuclear waste storage is by far the most expensive and sought after service offered by UWES.

### *Company Resources*

The ability to deal with hazardous materials anywhere in the world quickly, quietly, and inexpensively is United World Environmental Services' primary appeal. UWES maintains a fleet of six specially designed cargo ships



### **UWES**

#### **United World Environmental Services Inc.**

*Giving Back to Nature*

**Corporate Headquarters:** 19 Siphaya Road, Bangkok, Thailand  
Due to the dispersed nature its

business, UWES has teams active around the world. The Transportation HQ is located in Sattahip, Thailand. UWES also maintains a fast reaction team and air transport at Don Muang Airport, Bangkok, Thailand.

**President:** Anita Corvell

#### **Senior Executives:**

VP-Accounts:

Robert Hartway

VP-Field Operations:

Christopher Perry

VP-Security: Rotjana Sisarn

VP-Transportation:

Emile Parriaux

VP-Site Operations:

Brent Jones

#### **Gross Revenue (FY 1998):**

\$522,481,000

#### **Outstanding Stock:**

not publicly traded

#### **Controlling Interest:**

The Luxemburg Group

#### **Top Shareholder:** unknown

#### **Subsidiaries:**

PrimaChem Corp., Vietnam

#### **Employees:**

Total: 24,550

Bangkok Area: 7,612

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(unimaginatively named *UWES One* through *Six*) that can transport both equipment and waste. Each ship can carry an entire waste removal unit, its vehicles, and detoxification equipment as well as thousands of tons of toxic waste. Each vessel is triple-hulled and has extensive fire fighting and spill management systems installed. In addition to the UWES ships, the company also keeps a pair of C-130 transport aircraft at a leased hanger at Bangkok's Don Muang Airport. Although these have been reserved for emergencies only, they were put to use eight times in 1998.

The central headquarters of the transportation branch and homeport of the UWES cargo ships is the city of Sattahip, approximately forty miles southeast of Bangkok. An entire dock and its adjoining warehouses are leased by UWES and security is tightly maintained. Only UWES personnel and Thai customs and environmental officials are allowed inside. Occasional protests by environmental groups occur outside the facility gates and are usually broken up by Thai police after a few hours.

UWES does not maintain corporate offices outside of its Thailand headquarters and counts on the cooperation of local authorities to assist them in their jobs. As UWES always reserves the right to back out of a contract if cooperation is not given and as UWES is often the only option available to its clients, they rarely have a problem.

Cleaning up waste requires a large number of specialized chemicals. UWES has established PrimaChem, a small processing facility that is exclusively contracted to UWES. Located outside Ho Chi Minh City, PrimaChem is ironically, a major polluter and has been cited by Vietnamese officials many times for sloppy procedure and damage to the water supply.

### ***The Real Scoop***

Corvell's goal behind UWES was to provide proper waste disposal services more inexpensively than illegal dumping or other ecologically unsound methods. During his time as President and CEO, UWES generally followed guidelines similar to those established by environmental protection agencies in the United States and Europe. However, as the day-to-day operations of the incinerator plants and storage sites became too much for one person to monitor, Corvell placed his trust in people whose motives were less noble than his own. His biggest mistake was placing his wife in charge of the new location in Vietnam. Anita Corvell quickly realized that although UWES was financially successful, it could be much more so if some of the more expensive regulations were followed less stringently.

With the aid of Corvell's business partners, a consortium of European investors called the Luxemburg Group, UWES began to relax its safety procedures and cut back on staff. Waste improperly stored in temporary facilities was left unsupervised. Nuclear waste was mislabeled, smuggled into the country and buried in large pits deep in the jungle. The few government monitors were bribed or threatened into silence.

In August of 1997, Peter Corvell made several surprise inspections and realized the depth of the conspiracy. He confronted his wife and she admitted it all to him hoping that by implicating him he would back down. Instead, he threatened to go to the press. He was on his way back to Bangkok with incriminating evidence in his possession when the bomb planted on his wife's authority exploded in the cargo compartment of his private jet.

UWES has twelve field teams, each comprising between fifty and several hundred waste management experts, technicians, engineers, drivers, and necessary hangers-on. Although some contracts require secrecy, toxic waste re-

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moval is not easily hidden. Instead of stealth, UWES employs guile. Vehicles are repainted, jackets with false logos issued, all personnel are given bonuses for silence, and security teams haunt work sites and follow employees. This method has been successfully employed many times in the past.

As can be expected, environmentalists and groups opposed to the exploitation of the Third World detest United World Environmental Services. Protests at waste sites and at storage and disposal facilities have increased. UWES' headquarters in Bangkok is under constant police guard to keep an eye on protesters whose numbers vary from a handful to several thousands. ETG and Gaia's Fist have both lodged threats against UWES and security against terrorist attacks has been tightened.

Not only has site security been expanded, but also UWES, under Anita Corvell's leadership, has taken a much more pro-active stance on those who oppose the corporation. After one of UWES' illegal dumping operation was uncovered in Australia's outback by BlackEagle operatives under contract with the Environmental Protection League, Corvell placed a spy within the environmental group. In November, the spy informed Corvell that the EPL had contracted with the BlackEagle cell to inspect the Osprey Nuclear Power plant, she hired mercenaries to attack at the same time, framing the cell (see *The Osprey Incident* sidebar in Chapter Two).

Other actions have been less public. In July of 1998, a team of Gaia's Fist terrorists attempted to infiltrate an incinerator facility in Malaysia and were captured. UWES guards, under orders from Corvell, executed the three terrorists, and disguised their deaths as a jeep accident.

## **THEAP FISHING**

The world is hungry and growing more so everyday. The demand for food drives a powerful market that is every bit as cutthroat and competitive as those of the microchip and genetics. No longer just a collection of local fishermen, the fishing industry features fleets of huge factory trawlers towing driftnets miles long, scouring the seas for anything edible. In the eighties, the Japanese and Polish fleets dominated the industry but at the end of the millennium, the Theap Fishing fleet of Vietnam has taken a step towards the forefront.

When the Vietnamese government relaxed its communist system to allow for small-scale capitalist ventures, Theap was born. Two brothers, Min and Van Theap convinced their fellow fishermen in their village collective to pool their resources and invest in modern sonar equipment, upgraded engines, and other material. A fortunate first year saw their investment returned many times and the original company has since grown into the third largest fishing fleet in the world.

Min Theap is now the sole owner of the enterprise after pirates killed his brother in late 1992. As a consequence of that murder, Min Theap places a high value on the security of the boats, the catch, and his employees.

### **Market**

Theap sells its catch worldwide but caters to the Southeast Asian market, with most of its catch coming from the Pacific and Indian oceans. Japan and China's Kwangsi Chuang, Kuangtung, and Hong Kong provinces are also major buyers but will defer to nationalist fishing enterprises if at all possible. In addition to fresh fish, Theap owns a modern processing facility at its port headquarters in Cam Ranh Bay where millions of tons of fish are dried, canned, frozen, pureed, etc. The distinctive Theap label, two fish locked in a Yin and Yang symbol, is

# THEAP



## FINE FISH

### **Theap Fishing Corporation**

*Fine Fish For You*

**Corporate HQ:** Theap Fishing Building, Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam  
Theap Fishing has both its

headquarters and manufacturing facilities at the former Soviet Naval base in Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam.

**President & CEO:** Min Theap

**Senior Executives:**

VP Fleet Operations:  
Cho Viet Oanh

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VP Manufacturing: Thao An Quy  
**Gross Revenue (FY 1998):**  
\$188,679,900

**Outstanding Stock:**  
not publicly traded

**Controlling Interest:** Min Theap

**Top Shareholder:** Min Theap

**Subsidiaries:** (incomplete)

Qay Food Products Ltd.  
Theap Canned Goods Inc.  
Yin Yang Products Co.  
Fish-In-A-Cup Ltd.  
Oriental Frozen Foods Co.

**Employees:**

Total: 15,060

Cam Rahn Bay: 14,601

### *Empty Nets*

Overfishing in the waters of the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea has created an impending environmental disaster. Catches are down between fifty and seventy percent throughout the region. Since more than two-thirds of the protein in the Southeast Asian diet comes from fish, it's hard to understate the problem.

For the commercial fishing fleets of Thailand, Vietnam, and other countries, this means that the competition is fierce and becoming more so. Unfortunately, some are also reverting to illegal drift nets to increase their catches, much to the alarm of Greenpeace and other ecological organizations.

While the problem is bad for commercial fishermen, it is catastrophic for the millions of small-time fishermen who count on the catch to feed their families. Some villages are facing starvation. Pot-bellied children up and down the coastlines go hungry at night while their fathers return with empty nets. In some areas, mostly southern Vietnam and western Thailand, villages have been all-but abandoned as the families leave to search for non-existent work in the cities.

(con't. next page)

found on shelves and in markets just about everywhere in Southeast Asia and in specialty stores around the world.

### *Company Resources*

The Theap fleet is organized like a military fleet, with a central command and control and smaller, picket vessels ringed around it. The average ship is a small ocean going fishing ship with five to ten crewmen. The flagship of the fleet is the *Ca Na*, named after the town the two brothers came from. This immense factory ship receives the catch from the smaller ships as well as that from its own driftnets that extend for miles. The *Ca Na* and its sister ship, the *Van Theap*, trade places approximately every other month while one is in port for offloading, maintenance and repairs.

The company headquarters is located in the former Soviet naval base at Cam Ranh Bay. Unlike when the Americans left the Philippines, the Russians left the base relatively intact and Theap Fishing quickly occupied it. The port facilities have been specialized for fish processing and the surrounding area is dotted with factories churning out the processed meat and also the accompanying cans, cartons, and other goods. These secondary products are manufactured by subsidiaries of Theap Fishing, increasing its profit margin considerably. The once sleepy town of Cam Rahn is once again a bustling center of activity. Unfortunately, the crystal blue waters that made the bay famous are turning a silty gray from industrial effluent.

The greatest investment the company has made is in a program of near constant modernization and upgrading of the fleet. As a result, the company is relatively cash poor but has faster ships, better communications, and a higher catch-to-ship-tonnage ratio than any similar company. Also, Theap has developed a close relationship with Resources Unlimited and receives hourly updates on fish migrations and potential hot spots based on satellite photo analysis and other sources from the Miami corporation. Despite the current government ban against Resources Unlimited in Vietnam, Theap Fishing has received a special dispensation allowing the relationship to continue.

### *The Real Scoop*

A newcomer to the commercial fishing industry, and still considered an upstart by its Japanese and Polish competitors, Theap Fishing has been quick to adopt methods that are considered unethical at best. One of the primary reasons behind its initial success was the purchase of radio equipment that allowed the company to eavesdrop on other commercial fishermen, learning the locations of catches and tracking future movements. Also, Theap made extensive use of spies on the docks around the region as well as a few well-paid moles. More recently, these moles and spies have been used to sabotage competitors by damaging ships, cutting nets, and erasing computer files.

In addition to industrial espionage and sabotage, the early days of Theap Fishing were marked by episodes of piracy. If employees came across an isolated boat and fisherman and the opportunity allowed, they were encouraged to pirate his catch and sink the boat. It was on one such raid that Van Theap was killed.

Theap Fishing isn't the only company to resort to such measures. Almost every commercial fishing company has similar operations and competition is fierce to the point of open warfare on the sea. Ships have been known to ram each other and gunfire is sometimes exchanged.

With these conditions, it comes as no surprise that security is becoming an

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increasingly large concern. At the beginning of 1998 Theap Fishing began to carry security personnel armed with automatic weapons and trained in marine combat. Although the primary reason is as a deterrent to piracy, many Polish and Japanese boats that have come too close have fled with their superstructures riddled with bullet holes.

## **SARABURI MANUFACTURING INC.**

The international weapons black-market has been flooded with a deluge of high-tech weapons and military systems. This quiet revolution occurred thanks to several Japanese industrialists who sold advanced technology secrets to several Pacific Rim and Southeast Asian manufacturing companies. Saraburi Manufacturing Inc., previously a maker of cheap electronics for clock radios, is a leader in the sales of several new systems that threaten to change the world.

### ***Market***

Saraburi Manufacturing specializes in the creation and sales of weapons systems that many have yet to realize even exist. They make no distinction between legitimate governments, insurrection groups, and even terrorists. Saraburi is more concerned with a customer's bank balance rather than their ideological stripe. The only exception being any who would use the weapons to threaten Thailand.

Foremost among their inventory is a vehicle-mounted HERF (High Energy Radio Frequency) gun (see *Appendix One*). This system looks like a radar antenna mounted on the back of a heavy duty truck but its energy beam can disrupt and burn out electronics miles away. It can be tightly focused for a specific target, such as an airplane, or set for a wide pattern that can disrupt a small city (though less effectively).

Another popular Saraburi product are military-grade lasers (see *Appendix One*). Banned by international treaties, these laser weapons don't disintegrate tanks and buildings like in science fiction but have a more sinister purpose - they blind people. Most eye protection is useless and the wide-beam laser causes permanent injury, leaving an enemy maimed and helpless. The lasers can be broken down and carried by a squad of soldiers or mounted on a vehicle.

A recent entry to the inventory is Saraburi's new line of drones. These systems are similar to miniature helicopters and are intended for use in surveillance and reconnaissance but can be outfitted with explosives and light fire-arms. A single person can operate them and require almost no take off and landing space. Saraburi Manufacturing predicts that they will be hot items in 1999.

The company also makes many items that are less exotic, but previously only available to first-world militaries. These include inexpensive AWACS systems and integrated AA systems, laser designators and guidance packages for missiles and bombs, sophisticated battlefield ammunition, and military-grade radios and satellite phones. Sales of their products has been brisk and they have already turned the tide of several conflicts.

### ***Company Resources***

The primary manufacturing center is in Saraburi, Thailand, near Bangkok. This center is a mix of ultra-tech clean rooms and robotic production where the delicate electronics are created, and the traditional sweatshop where the systems are assembled. Corporate offices are in Bangkok where clients may be

### ***Empty Nets (con't.)***

One positive result of the problem is that some villages have adopted aquiculture techniques that allow them to maximize their catches while not harming the fish population. These programs are sponsored by universities or government programs and have met with mixed success due to internal quarrels, poaching, and lack of cooperation. However, those villages that have been successful have seen their catches increase while others around them are starving.

## **SARABURI**

### **Saraburi Manufacturing Inc.**

*Tomorrow's Strength Today*

**Corporate Headquarters:** 291  
Silom Road, Bangkok, Thailand

A successful high-tech weapons  
venture, Saraburi Manufacturing  
Inc. has agents around the  
globe. Manufacturing center is  
located in Saraburi, Thailand.

**President:** Nikorn Phasuk

#### **Senior Executives:**

VP Accounts:

Pongsak Ponsena

VP R&D:

Dr. Pira Sudham

**Gross Revenue:** \$782,573,000

#### **Outstanding Stock:**

not publicly traded

#### **Controlling Interest:**

Phomvasong Investment Group

#### **Top Shareholder:**

Nikorn Phasuk

#### **Subsidiaries:** none

#### **Employees:**

Total: 1152

Saraburi Area: 932

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entertained more easily. Research and Development is conducted at a secret location in western Thailand under the watchful eye of the military. Many projects are developed in cooperation with the Thai military, which provides combat testing.

### *The Real Scoop*

Saraburi Manufacturing is generally up-front about its products and market—after all, there is no law in Thailand against their manufacture and they have the blessing of the military. Saraburi advertises heavily in defense magazines and aggressively attends weapons shows. Special delivery and payment programs are available to those who have unique needs. Demonstrations are arranged through the Thai military, often in combat along the Thailand/Myanmar border, so prospective buyers can get a feel for how the products handle under real conditions.

The Thai military has a greater hand in Saraburi Manufacturing than anyone except the corporate heads realize. As much as half of all research is subsidized by the Thai government through grants and low interest loans. Through these, the government, primarily the military, control the company and influence decisions. There has been talk in some government circles about nationalizing the company but the current consensus is to allow the company to exist as a private entity, so long as it serves the needs of the state.

Despite its climbing revenues Saraburi Manufacturing has a problem. The plans for its new line of drones were purchased from an industrial spy who stole them from Israel Military Industries Ltd. The Israeli intelligence agency Mossad has traced the stolen plans to Saraburi only to realize they are too late to stop production of their top-secret drone. Not willing to forgive the trespass, Mossad agents have already begun plans to sabotage the company.

## *Quinn & Potok* Archeological Merchants

### **Quinn & Potok**

*Bringing The Past To Life*

**Phnom Penn Office:** 478

Samdech Preah Sihanouk,  
Phnom Penn

**Presidents:** Carlisle Quinn and  
Chandy Potok

#### **Senior Executives:**

Managing Director:  
Colette Dumas

**Gross Revenue (FY 1998):**

\$29,072,000

**Outstanding Stock:**

not publicly traded

**Controlling Interest:**

Carlisle Quinn and  
Chandy Potok

**Subsidiaries:** None.

**Employees:** 146

## **QUINN & POTOK, ARCHEOLOGICAL MERCHANTS**

People have been living in Southeast Asia for millennia and many empires have been born, thrived for a time, and then perished. The jungle reclaimed the majestic cities and temples and they were lost until rediscovered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Now, the remains of those empires are prized around the world and Quinn & Potok have risen to meet the demand for high-quality archeological specimens.

Two university professors interested in the preservation of the ruins of Southeast Asia founded Quinn & Potok. Carlisle Quinn and Chandy Potok of Oxford University and the University of Phnom Pen respectively were involved in several restoration and preservation projects in Cambodia and Thailand during the 1980s. During this time they saw the pillaging of the Khmer ruins for their valuable artifacts. Initially, they intended to preserve some artifacts by removing them from locations where they were likely to be stolen. In an effort to raise cash for their project, it was determined that some items of lesser archeological value could be sold. Now, almost half of the specimens recovered from the Cambodian jungle are slated for sale on the open market.

### *Market*

The primary market for archeological specimens comes from interior decorators that want to provide an atmosphere of realism to their Asian design. Corporate offices and large resort complexes around the world have Quinn & Potok statuary and base reliefs adorning their walls and hallways. Some even go so far as to recreate the original setting for their purchases.



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Another buyer of Quinn & Potok's products are wealthy private collectors and galleries. These customers are less interested in the aesthetics of the individual pieces and more in their documentation. They want to know where an item came from, who made it, and when.

Quinn & Potok have been blacklisted from selling their products to museums and universities for turning to "Indiana Jones archeology" and the commercialization of their profession. Even their alma mata, Oxford University, refuses to accept their offers to donate specimens.

### ***Company Resources***

Quinn & Potok have expanded since their original partnership and now have four teams of archeologists scouring the green Southeast Asian jungle for undiscovered or poorly guarded sites. Each team consists of five to seven archeologists, twenty porters and diggers, and a handful of mercenaries for security. Locals are hired as guides and diggers. Teams have access to Land Rovers, satellite data, and digging supplies.

The corporate headquarters is located in turbulent Phnom Penh near the Wat Phnom Hotel, home of the UN. Quinn & Potok occupy an entire warehouse filled with vehicles, equipment, and specimens. The offices are primitive but linked to the outside world through satellite and radio equipment. Six employees have been trained to restore the specimens and are constantly at work on new acquisitions.

### ***The Real Scoop***

Quinn & Potok are constantly straddling the line between thievery and archeology. Unlike their university sponsored colleagues, Quinn & Potok archeologists look upon a new site more as a mining venture. Sites are surveyed, inventoried, cataloged, and finally excavated. Unique statues and artwork are recorded on video and sent to prospective clients and the company often has a buyer before work is begun.

The original founders have hired a business manager, Colette Dumas, to perform the day-to-day running of the operation while they specialize in acquiring and restoring new items. Both Quinn and Potok have become wealthy from their venture but they still crave the professional acceptance they have lost. Both have written articles under pseudonyms that have been published in professional journals.

Since buying and selling historical treasures is a capital offense in Cambodia, the company has had to make some very large payments to many members of the Hun Sen regime. In addition, their work often takes them across the border into Thailand, an area infested with Khmer Rouge soldiers. Equally large payments to the Khmer Rouge has allowed the company to operate in these areas without too much difficulty. However, the Khmer Rouge have demanded more money and Dumas is attempting to negotiate a settlement with them. The negotiations are long and difficult as each site has a different Khmer Rouge leader who must be placated.

The greatest find for the company has come late in 1998. A team was exploring the upper reaches of the Tonle Sap river in Cambodia when they uncovered a Buddhist temple that had been submerged by a change in the river course nearly a thousand years before. The heavy silt of the Tonle Sap had covered the temple before too much damage occurred and a quick diving expedition recovered two jade statues of Buddha worth millions of dollars. The site has been marked but the negotiations with the Khmer Rouge have forced the company to delay further excavation.



**Bin Hoa Microsystems Ltd.**

*We Make It Happen*

**Corporate HQ:** 616 North  
Nguyen Trai, Ho Chi Minh City,  
Vietnam

**Ho Chi Minh City Manufacturing  
Center:** Chuong Duong Road

**Hanoi Manufacturing Center  
(incomplete):** 80 Cao Van Street

**Da Nang Manufacturing Center  
(incomplete):** 107 Dong Khoi  
Road

**President & CEO:** Kenji Ryuno

**Senior Executives:**

Finance: Yoko Tomita

Manufacturing: Tola Vong

Research & Development:

Kenji Ryuno

**Gross Revenue (FY 1998):**  
unknown

**Outstanding Stock:**

not publicly traded

**Controlling Interest:**

Natsumi International Ltd.

**Top Shareholder:** Izo Miyagawa

**Subsidiaries:**

Loi Information Systems Co.

Bo Son Communications Inc.

**Employees:**

Ho Chi Minh City: 9,009

Total: 9,831

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## **BIN HOA MICROSYSTEMS LTD.**

Cost effective electronics make new technology affordable for the average person and allow the world to increase the speed at which it communicates and operates. At the forefront of this revolution is Bin Hoa Microsystems.

Kenji Ryuno, a researcher for Phoenix Instruments, one of the world's largest electronics manufacturers, discovered a new method for imprinting circuit boards for microchips that made them smaller and more efficient. He was shocked when Phoenix Instruments rejected his discovery and refused to allow him to publish his research. The computer industry was in a slump and Phoenix Instruments had just completed a very costly upgrade to its systems using the old technology and was not about to invest more. Ryuno threatened to leave the company and take his expertise elsewhere. Shortly after his threat, while on vacation with his family, their car was attacked and riddled with bullets. Ryuno survived but his wife and child did not.

Ryuno left Japan as soon as he could walk and fled to friends in Vietnam. There, he presented his research to a group of investors who agreed to finance the building of a state-of-the art manufacturing center. Using Ryuno's research, Bin Hoa Microsystems now manufactures the least expensive, fastest, and smallest computer processors in the world.

### ***Market***

Bin Hoa produces chips for a variety of customers, mostly for home appliances, automobiles, and, of course, computer makers. The architecture of the Bin Ho chip allows for many operations previously done by several different resistors, capacitors, and transistors to be done by a single chip. This appeals to industries that require small and lightweight products. Bin Hoa chips are found in everything from toaster ovens to cruise missiles.

### ***Company Resources***

Sales of Bin Hoa's new chip has generated large amounts of cash in a very short period of time. However, much of this has gone to repaying the original investors, research and development, and expanding the company's manufacturing capability. Besides chips, Bin Hoa now manufactures all kinds of electronic components using the new technology.

The original manufacturing center in Ho Chi Minh City has been added to several times and new centers are being opened in Da Nang and Hanoi. Bin Hoa has also created a large distribution center near the airport. The company continues to expand and employ more and more people, and has become a kind of a celebrity within the Vietnamese government.

Kenji Ryuno continues to manage operations and still do a great deal of research and development. His new passion comes not from electronics but biotics - so called wetware that merges the biological and electronic worlds to create new kinds of technology. He has successfully implanted microchips into insects and can influence their behavior.

### ***The Real Scoop***

Bin Hoa Microsystems currently has the lead in technological advances but is well aware that its lead could evaporate in a nanosecond. Industrial sabotage and espionage are a problem and there have been several assaults on the Bin Hoa computer systems by hackers. Each passing day sees the company becoming increasingly paranoid. The security section has already tripled in size

and further expansions are planned.

The research that Ryuno has done into biotics has taken an unexpected turn. The wetware interface, the part that actually connects with the nervous system of the insect, has stimulated regrowth in damaged areas. Ryuno has observed this only recently but has already deduced that the technology could possibly heal victims of paralyzing wounds and diseases. He has quietly arranged for his wetware to be tested on human subjects in Ho Chi Minh City's Saigon Hospital.

Ryuno has done a competent job of leading Bin Hoa but he has divided his time equally between research and management. As a result, he has failed to fully devote himself to either and there are many in the company hierarchy who complain that their CEO spends too much time in the lab. Efforts to replace him as CEO are underway by the original investors. Unbeknownst to Ryuno, the original investors are tied to the Japanese mafia, the Yakuza. The Yakuza are very pleased with their return on the investment but would like to own the company completely. They plan to leave Ryuno as head of research and development, a position he is really happiest at, but if he balks they will resort to eliminating him.

## **PACRIM COURIER SERVICE**

With the billions of bits of data being sent around the world via GenNet and satellite communications every day, it's difficult to believe that there are still some things that must be delivered in person. Most of these must be handled in a particular manner, such as legal documents and contracts, but often there are security considerations that require constant monitoring and protection. PacRim Courier Service guarantees delivery of any package lighter than 10 kilograms to any destination within the Pacific Rim and Southeast Asia within 24 hours. Unlike other couriers, PacRim couriers are armed and expected to protect themselves, and more importantly, their package.

PacRim Courier Service was founded in August of 1986 as a traditional courier service and it balanced on the line between profit and bankruptcy for several years. However, in March of 1992, hijackers attacked one of its couriers, Carlton Daley, while he rode on Australia's lonely Eyre Highway. Daley successfully fought off the attackers thanks to a handgun he carried, despite company policy against it. Daley recognized the need for an armed courier service in a rapidly deteriorating world and hit up his friends and family for investments to buy his company. Since Daley purchased PacRim Courier Service in early 1993, the company has hired on over one hundred new employees, many former military or police officers, and seen the company come out of the red and leap headlong into profitability.

### ***Market***

PacRim Courier Service contracts with multinational corporations throughout the Pacific for its expensive but valuable service. Australia is still the primary source of contracts, but companies in Southeast Asia, Japan and the Philippines are being signed up every day. For a typical courier run, costs begin at \$5000 and rapidly escalate depending upon the package, the security risk, and the destination. The guarantee for delivery is without exception, regardless of difficult conditions, attacks on personnel, and even the weather. Thanks to PacRim's talented couriers and intelligent planning, PacRim has only had to make good on its promise six times since 1993.

A new client that was personally sought out is the International Organ Transplant Foundation. This non-profit group matches donated organs in programs in



### **PacRim Courier Service**

*When It Absolutely Has to Get There*

**Corporate HQ:** Floor 26, Sydney Tower, Sydney, Australia

**Sydney Operations:** Kingsford Smith Airport

A small company specializing in protective courier services within the Pacific Rim and Southeast Asia.

#### **President and CEO:**

Carlton Daley

#### **Senior Executives:**

Operations Manager:

Alice Daley

Personnel: Brent Stockdale

Security: Arthur Crawford

Diplomatic Oversight:

Tamera Daley

#### **Gross Revenue (FY 1998):**

\$41,338,700

#### **Outstanding Stock:**

not publicly traded

#### **Controlling Interest:**

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Carlton Daley  
**Subsidiaries:** none  
**Employees:**  
Total: 171  
Sydney Area: 81

countries around the world and to possible recipients based on need. Daley benefited from this program in 1997 when he underwent a heart transplant after a massive coronary and was so grateful that he contracted with foundation to deliver the organs at reduced prices. Now, couriers are as likely to be transporting a cooler with a chilled kidney as they are sensitive documents.

PacRim has developed a tough reputation for protecting its packages and its couriers. Its record for delivery is the best in the business. Several couriers have died in the process but in each case, the package never fell into the wrong hands.

### *Company Resources*

PacRim's greatest resource is its pool of couriers. Daley has personally selected all and PacRim's chief of security, Eli Openshaw for their skills, creativeness, and above all, a drive to accomplish their objective. As stated, many are former police or military and several are former BlackEagle operatives. Couriers are highly trained, highly motivated, and well paid.

In an effort to limit costs, and also for security, most packages are carried by a pair of couriers on regular public transportation. PacRim employs travel and diplomatic specialists who make arrangements with airlines, trains, and private drivers as well as all customs notifications necessary. The service also employs a customs officer from each country on a full-time basis to inspect all outgoing packages. Keeping the customs officers on the payroll for what usually amounts to only a few hours work per week is expensive but it ensures speedy travel.

PacRim training focuses on escape and evasion techniques rather than confrontational approaches as their couriers are usually outgunned. Packages are handcuffed to one of the couriers at all times and carried in a bulletproof case. Couriers are expected to check in at specified times and to be within reach at all times. The cases are equipped with transmitters and anti-tampering devices that will destroy the contents before they can be retrieved.

### *The Real Scoop*

PacRim Courier Services is organized much like a BlackEagle office, with Carlton Daley as the chief executive and his daughter Alice as operations manager. All deliveries and contracts are coordinated at the Sydney office, which occupies the entire twenty-sixth floor of the Sydney Tower. Daley's second daughter, Tamera, who is also pursuing a graduate degree in international relations at Sydney University, handles diplomatic liaisons. All customs inspections and packaging of the protective cases takes place at airports around the Pacific rim in rented sites near the country's primary airport.

Only one third of PacRim's couriers live in the Sydney area. The rest are scattered around the Pacific. Couriers receive notification by pager or GenNet and pick up the material to be delivered, take it to the airport and have it inspected and repackaged in the protective case, and then travel via commercial airline to the airport closest to their destination. From there, couriers will either rent a vehicle or be picked up by a prearranged driver to finish the final and most dangerous leg of the journey.

PacRim Courier Services has the best reputation for delivering secure packages in the business. This is in part because of good security and intelligent couriers but also because of ruthlessness and connections to organized crime.

Of the six instances where the package was not delivered in 24 hours, four were due to attacks on the couriers and the theft of the package. After each

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attack, Wilton, a former soldier in the British SAS, and a handpicked team of couriers went after those responsible. Anyone who took part in the attack was hunted down and murdered. Although they didn't advertise who had exacted revenge, it wasn't long before the criminal underworld recognized the value of leaving PacRim couriers alone.

PacRim has also made contacts with various organized criminal groups such as Triads in Bangkok, Russian mafiya in Sydney, and Yakuza syndicates in Kobe and Tokyo. In exchange for leaving the couriers alone, PacRim agrees to provide small-scale smuggling services to these groups. Some of the protective cases are built with secret compartments and the customs officials hired by the service are given bonuses for not looking too closely at the packages. After the initial legal delivery the couriers make covert deliveries, exchanges, and pick-ups. Most of this smuggling involves many of the same type of documents as done by PacRim's legitimate customers, but can also include firearms, explosives, and drugs.

## **MEDIA**

The media in Southeast Asia is as alive and vibrant as any in the world but suffers from a lack of credibility. Unlike in the United States and Europe where the media is relatively independent of government and political parties, media in Southeast Asia is almost always identified with a particular group and all information coming from that viewpoint. As a result, people have become experts at reading between the lines and are distrustful of the media.

Another problem the media faces in Southeast Asia is the lack of guarantees to freedom of speech. All governments censor copy before it goes to the public and can legally shut down newspapers, radio, and television stations for disseminating information the government would rather not make public. In extreme cases, offices have been trashed and burned and reporters and editors imprisoned and even executed.

Despite these problems, the media of Southeast Asia trudges on. Most good newspapers are published in a native and foreign language edition, usually English, and also publish an on-line edition. Radio and television stations are almost exclusively in the native language but will have times when news and entertainment is broadcast in English or French.

Some of the better media sources are listed below.

### ***The Guardian (Myanmar)***

The Guardian is Yangon's only newspaper not directly tied to the SLORC regime and suffers from heavy censorship. However, it is cleverly written to avoid as much censorship as possible and savvy readers can infer a great deal of information by reading between the lines. Although the Guardian bills itself as a daily newspaper, shortages and government shutdowns make it more of a weekly.

### ***The Nation (Thailand)***

This daily newspaper specializes in local stories in and around Bangkok. This newspaper has strong investigative reporting and has uncovered many incidents of corruption within the Thai government. The Nation was temporarily shut down in 1997 by the new coalition government after a scathing review of election fraud.

### ***The Sex Industry of Thailand***

Thailand is known the world over for its legal prostitution and sex industry. Hundreds of thousands of girls and boys are employed in the sex trade in the brothels of Bangkok and Pattaya. Most of them are from small villages in the provinces or from Burma and Cambodia, and send money back home to their families. Some are less fortunate and have been sold to gangs by their families in exchange for badly needed cash.

The life of a prostitute in Thailand is short and harsh. They are subject to beatings, rape and murder at the hands of their pimps and most are addicted to heroin or other drugs. HIV infection is so common (seventy percent in some areas) that many prostitutes simply consider death within a decade as part of the job. Other sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhea and herpes are even more common.

Although not wanting to intrude on operative's personal lives, BlackEagle strongly suggests that operatives in Thailand refrain from engaging in sexual relations with anyone.

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### ***The Bangkok Post (Thailand)***

The Post is the other major newspaper of Bangkok and it has more extensive coverage of international events and the world stock market. Famous for its quirky style (reporters and editors insert their opinions in parentheses), the Post has been around since 1946.

### ***Channel 4 (Thailand)***

This is a military-owned television station that broadcasts Thai and Chinese movies, documentaries, and stock market reports. What makes this station interesting is not the military news, which is boring and not very informative, but the program schedule itself. When the military wishes to influence a particular subject, many of the movies and programs will have that subject as a central theme. For example, when the new coalition government was first established the military wanted to encourage cooperation between the parties. For the next week Channel 4 broadcast patriotic movies and programs, most of which dealt with the forging of a modern Thailand from many diverse elements.

### ***Saigon Word (Vietnam)***

The Word is bi-weekly news magazine that has only recently been established. The editor's goal is to make the Word as different as possible from the communist party newspaper and as a result the it tends to look more like a supermarket tabloid than a reliable paper. Don't be fooled by the cover photos of women in skimpy bathing suits. Word reporters have several highly placed sources within the communist party the Ho Chi Mihn City People's Committee and the newspaper is often used as a tool by the reformers to embarrass hard-line communists. Not surprisingly, Saigon Word has been closed many times by the government and even when it is open, it suffers from shortages of state controlled supplies.

### ***On-Line Publications***

On-line publications and magazines are gaining popularity as computer literacy grows. The Burmese National League for Democracy took advantage of this cheap method of reaching millions of people early in the 1990's and sponsors several GenNet sites where information, on-line communication, and video recorded events can be found.





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# CHAPTER FIVE SYNDICATES & INSURGENCIES



This chapter focuses on those organizations that are counter to the established governments of Southeast Asia. Some are small bands of loosely structured thugs similar to those found in gangs around the world and others are larger, more elaborate groups with complex connections and hidden agendas. All walk on the wrong side of the law and must contend with government agencies, even entire armies, bent on their destruction.

The groups listed here are representative of organizations that are either unique to the region or have a particular twist that separates them from criminals and insurgents the world over. As with every organization, they have traits that reflect the personalities of their members. Ethnic issues, ideological clashes, and viciousness vary from group to group, depending upon the parts that make the whole.

## **LITTLE FISH - BANDITS & PIRATES**

### *Bandits*

A combination of economic troubles, lack of law enforcement, and the abundance of trained soldiers in Southeast Asia has led to the infestation of the countryside with small groups of bandits. The bandits roam the countryside in groups of five to fifty and attack anything vulnerable. Villages are attacked for food and women, corporations are blackmailed, and trucks and trains are ambushed for their cargos. In central Cambodia and western Thailand, the problem has gotten so bad that even military units have been attacked and there are large areas left unplanted because the peasants have fled.

These bandit groups are usually centered around charismatic or successful leaders in gang organizations. Membership is very fluid with new members being allowed to join and old members being killed or leaving. Bandits generally come with their own equipment and have some military training. Handguns and



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rifles are the most common weapons but some larger groups have civilian and military explosives.

Bandits are predators, but attack only the weakest of targets and then from ambush. Even minor resistance is enough to discourage most and virtually none will stick around for a real firefight. Bandits are useful for information and can be hired as mercenaries if the pay is good.

### *Pirates*

What bandits are to the open countryside, pirates are on the shipping lanes and open seas. Incidents of piracy have increased a hundred fold since 1990. The global depression and failing fishing grounds make crime an attractive alternative to many who earn their living from the sea. Everything from overcrowded refugee boats to monstrous oil tankers have been attacked and the loss of ships and lives mounts daily.

Most pirates act in small groups, sometimes as few as three or four members with a single boat. Larger groups have greater numbers of pirates and boats but come together only for large targets. Organized crime syndicates will often direct pirates to targets and handle the sales of stolen goods and vessels. Modern pirate ships are nothing like the sailing ships from years past. They are usually smaller vessels disguised as fishing boats or small trading ships. They emphasize speed and disguise over firepower, cargo capacity, and even safety. Although high-powered speedboats are sometimes used, these tend to draw attention and are more often used by smugglers.

The weapons of the pirate are not much different from gangs on the street: handguns, small arms, automatic weapons, and grenades. Some have access to heavy weapons such as machine guns and rocket propelled grenades, but these are the exception to the rule.

Pirates search shipyards and docks for potential targets. A syndicate may point them to a particular ship and cargo. If the ship is to be stolen, the pirates will acquire the vessel's registry information and create a forgery for it. During the actual attack the pirates attempt to sneak aboard by stealthily pulling alongside, or use their weapons to force the ship to stop. The crew will be locked into a cabin, tied up, or simply killed.

Small-time bands usually go for the contents of the captain's safe instead of more profitable but bulky cargo. Larger groups go after the cargo and possibly the ship itself. Favored targets are electronics, cars, expensive foodstuffs, and fuel.

A new problem is state-sponsored piracy. Anti-smuggling patrols often receive a bounty on the cargos they capture and some naval captains refuse to wait for smugglers. The Chinese navy has a reputation for boarding ships well into international waters and forcing them to the nearest Chinese port. There the cargos are confiscated and the crews held in prison for smuggling.

The worst areas for piracy have been the Gulf of Tonkin (the Chinese are especially active there), the Gulf of Thailand, the Straits of



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Malacca, and the western coast of the Murgui Peninsula. The Thai and Vietnamese navies have been engaged in an anti-piracy campaign but limited resources prevent them from clearing the sea-lanes. The most active international anti-pirate organization is the International Maritime Board which tracks pirate activity and provides warnings and information.

Merchant vessels have found that an armed response to pirates is the best way to deal with them. Pirates prefer defenseless targets and generally steer clear of anything that looks like it might put up a fight. Captains have begun to arm their sailors and sometimes hire additional security.

## **BIG FISH - ORGANIZED CRIME & INSURGENTS**

### *Triads*

Triads, also called Tongs outside of Asia, are Chinese crime syndicates organized from ancient secret societies that have spread throughout the world. They control the Chinese underworld and have considerable power and influence in Southeast Asia. They favor sales and distribution of narcotics as well as more mundane crimes like gambling, loan sharking, protection rackets, and prostitution. In addition to crime, Triads have extensive corporate ties and their activities are so blended together it is difficult to tell where one stops the other starts. The Triad power base is the deep loyalty of its members, which can number as high as 10% of the Chinese population in some areas.

There are hundreds of different societies with each maintaining its secret rites and initiations. Triads often have contact with other societies but there is no single overarching leader or group. The Triads prefer cooperation to conflict and when two societies do have difficulties they will usually attempt to find a peaceful and profitable resolution rather than let it go to violence.

This is not always the case and there are bitter historical rivalries. Triads have access to practically any equipment, weaponry, and training and are dangerous foes. Some societies specialize - the White Crane Society of Hong Kong is famous for its members using hatchets to chop their victims to pieces.

Triad organization is based on a fraternal organization. The head of the society oversees many "vice presidents," each with an area of specialty (smuggling, prostitution, etc.). Beneath each VP is a bureaucratic layer involving Accounting, Enforcement, and Collections. The lowest level is the gang member who is answerable to all of the above. In addition, the head can create a "crisis manager" for special actions who holds the equivalency of a VP.

In the past, all Triad headquarters were located in Hong Kong, regardless of where the gang had its territory. With the transition of Hong Kong to communist Chinese rule, some fled to locations within the former British Commonwealth such as Vancouver, Sydney and even as far away as London. Others moved their headquarters to their resident territories.

Law enforcement officials have a difficult time infiltrating and arresting Triad members for their crimes because of a lack of Chinese officers and the strict code of silence that all members swear to when they are initiated. Triads accept only ethnic Chinese and these must be sponsored by blood relative or close friend. On initiation, the new members make an oath of silence regarding the activities of the society and they and their families are punished, usually murdered, if that oath is ever broken.

### *Opium Syndicates*

Unlike the racially homogenous Triads, most criminal organizations are less con-

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cerned with heritage and more concerned with the acquisition of money. Modern opium syndicates have been in existence for only a few decades but have roots in the opium trade that has centuries of tradition behind it. Some, like the huge Khang Sar Syndicate, have adopted a military hierarchy as well as a political cause, but are really still criminal enterprises at heart.

As is obvious, opium syndicates are characterized by their focus on the growth, manufacture, and sales of opium and opium-based products. Rarely do these organizations branch out into prostitution, gambling, or other staples of organized crime. Most don't even have a street-level distribution system, preferring to sell their products in bulk to the Triads and other organized crime groups who have their own distribution networks.

That is not to say that the opium syndicates are not wealthy or powerful. In fact, opium lords have more control in Southeast Asia than any other single force. No government agency, no military, no group at all does anything if the opium syndicates object. Fortunately, the single-minded pursuit of the drug trade has maintained the status quo.

Opium syndicates are usually organized around a single individual, a leader who is both warlord and mafia Don. Beneath the leader are vassals organized in either a gang or military hierarchy. When the syndicate leader is removed, either assassinated or arrested, the syndicate falls apart. Only when a new leader steps forward who has made agreements with allies and crushed his opponents is the syndicate reformed.

### ***Small Fish In A Big Pond***

Not all criminal organizations fall neatly under the categories of Triad or Opium Syndicates. Many specialize in a particular type of crime and hire out their services to other groups. Smugglers, auto thieves, and hundreds more perform what would be called contract service in legitimate industry. While they may be allied to a powerful umbrella organization, these groups are independently operated and may have many clients.

### ***Rebels and Insurgents***

The difference between a criminal and an insurgent is often a matter of opinion. Groups that seek to overthrow established governments are usually called criminals by the government but in the eyes of many they are freedom fighters and patriots. Some may even resort to criminal activity such as robbery, kidnapping, and murder to further their cause but it can be argued that these actions are simply striking back at the systems they are at war with. For the purpose of this book, insurgent groups are defined as those organizations that pursue a particular political goal as their primary motivation rather than the acquisition of wealth.

Southeast Asia has a long and bloody history of insurgencies in almost every nation. Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia are all governments that were at one time rebels fighting against the established rulers. As they have become the legitimate leader, they now deal with insurgents of their own.

Civil unrest is usually marked by particular cruelty and violence and the conflicts of Southeast Asia have been bloodier than most. Civilians have been massacred, prisoners tortured and executed, and so on. Many, like the Khmer Rouge of Cambodia, desire an ethnic cleansing of their country and target minorities and foreigners.

Even after an insurgent group has toppled the government and taken power, the attacks on their enemies continue. As in Vietnam in the late 1970s, former

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enemy soldiers and leaders are often tried as criminals and sentenced to concentration camps euphemistically called re-education centers. Ironically, these harsh reprisals are often the cause of continued civil unrest and the root of future insurgencies.

## **THE FRINGE - MERCENARIES & SAINTS**

Not everyone fits neatly under the category of criminal or rebel. Mercenaries, often called mercs, work for whomever doing whatever as long as the price is right. Some have an alternative agenda they are following and do mercenary work on the side while others are dedicated professionals who pursue a paycheck with no questions asked. Political Activist Groups are the most unusual type in this chapter. Many seek to right wrongs and see that justice and human rights prevail. Many are more legitimate than the regimes that have branded them criminals.

### *Mercenaries*

Southeast Asia has a wealth of natural resources, not the least of which is political conflict. Not everyone has the time or the resources to create an army from the ground up and many find it easier to hire one. It comes as no surprise that there is a large pool of able personnel who have military training, or at least a weapon and the will to use it. Most are just freelance thugs-for-hire with minimum experience and are little better than street gangsters.

With the collapse of the former Soviet Union and communism in Eastern Europe a number of highly trained and experienced soldiers have entered the mercenary marketplace. Many are technicians and trainers who have found a new home in Southeast Asia repairing and training people to use Russian weapons and communications systems. A handful are special-ops types who command high fees for their services.

### *Political Activist Groups*

Although violence is becoming the method of choice for many political organizations, there are still groups who want to bring about change through peaceful means. Instead of seeking to overthrow established governments, activist groups use protests, strikes, boycotts, and international attention to affect policy. Just because they are non-violent does not mean that they lack courage. To the contrary, many activists must run the risk of arrest, torture, imprisonment, and even execution and yet they still persist in doing what they believe in.

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## Dim Mak Pirates

The Dim Mak pirates are typical of a small pirate organization. There are no restrictions on race or gender but each member must be able to pull their own weight. The group is based out of the Mekong Delta fishing village of Vihn Loi and preys on small ships and boats around the southern tip of Vietnam.

### *The Real Scoop*

Together the Dim Mak number twenty-three pirates with four boats between them. They usually operate independently of one another but gather for an especially lucrative target. Although there are captains of the individual boats and an overall leader who directs the group, Somaly Sok (Van Phor was killed in a bar fight months ago), receives information and direction from a mysterious “businessman”. This person provides them with ship’s registers, travel routes, and locations where the stolen goods can be sold. Only Sok knows the identity of their benefactor.

In fact, the “businessman” is Duang Hoa, an administrator of the Vietnamese Maritime Department. His access to shipping schedules and manifests leaves him in an excellent position to pick and choose from targets. He has hidden the money he has earned from the pirates and plans to immigrate to the United States in a few years. There he will live out his life in wealth and luxury.

While hardly the scourge of the ocean lanes, the Dim Mak are ruthless. They have attacked over forty ships and have been responsible for thirty-seven deaths, including the *Shau Lu* massacre. Their annual income is in the millions of dollars but much of this goes to their “businessman” advisor and maintenance of their converted fishing boats.

Not mentioned in the database is the fact that several of the Dim Mak have taken to raiding targets on land as well. Five pirates acting independently from the group attacked the village of Do Qua, Vietnam. Had Sok known of their plans, she would certainly have forbidden the attack as too risky and likely to bring more attention to their activities than they can handle. Sok is still unaware of this independent action and if she were to find out she will be furious.

A typical Dim Mak group consists of four to ten pirates in one or two boats. Each boat is equipped with a heavy weapon. Use the *Pirate NPC Stereotype* (see *Appendix Two* p. 130) for standard pirates and the *High-End Grunts Stereotype* (*Millennium’s End v2.0* p. 156) for Lieutenants or Captains.



**Dim Mak Pirates**

#CR0001794

**Source:** Interpol, International Maritime Board (IMB)

**Type:** Piratical criminal organization

**Scope:**

Frequent acts of piracy, robbery and murder on international and territorial waters. Limited to the Gulf of Thailand, South China Sea, and Mekong Delta [IMB].

**Affiliations:**

None

**Personnel:** 20-30

**Operating Since:**

1992

**Structure:**

Criminal hierarchy with a primary leader and each boat captain as a lieutenant.

**Leaders:**

Van Phor [#LL8818957]

**Legitimate Connections:**

None

**Resources:**

Small arms, explosives, some light military weapons and three converted fishing boats (15m to 20m). Believed to have a source of information inside the shipping industry.

**Suspected Criminal Activity:**

Sporadic attacks on fishing and small merchant vessels. Blamed for the disappearance of the tramp steamer *Shau Lu* and its fourteen crew. Suspected in attack on the fishing village of Do Qua, Vietnam.

**Additional Commentary:**

Vessels that have fought back against the Dim Mak have been successful in driving them off. Coordination between boats is poor and few of the pirates appear to have had military training. In one instance, the pirates left a wounded comrade to be eaten by sharks rather than risk a second confrontation with an armed boat.

Last Update: November 18, 1998

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## The Red Sash Society

The Red Sash Society has existed for over one hundred years and is the most powerful Triad in Thailand and possibly Southeast Asia. Its control of the Bangkok harbor and the drug distribution in the hotels and bars of Thailand give it a solid income, which it has intermingled with legitimate businesses. Using a combination of political manipulation and violence, the Society protects its interests and expands the scope of its operations.

### *The Real Scoop*

The power of the Red Sash Society is difficult to gauge, even for its leadership. While they occupy a niche in the top of the criminal underworld in Thailand, they also have managing interests in several of the world's top one hundred corporations. In addition, the Society favors politicians and public servants with extravagant bribes and campaign donations, gaining access to the highest levels of power. Whether on the street, in the boardroom, or in the National Assembly, one doesn't have to look far to find someone or something touched by the Society.

The criminal enterprises operated by the Society are flanked by legitimate businesses that aid them and vice versa. All elements of the society work together to maximize profits and minimize costs and exposure. For example, the prostitution section handles the *sois* and brothels in Bangkok and Pattaya as well as high-priced escorts and prostitutes in Thailand's resorts, many of which are owned by the Society. However, the acquisitions of new prostitutes from neighboring countries, the sales of heroin and other drugs, and any muscle for protection come from smuggling, distribution, and enforcement, respectively. All money raised is then sent to an accounting department, which launders the cash and prepares it for use as the organization dictates. This may seem like a chaotic manner in which to run a business but it has the advantages of compartmentalization and has been the way of the Society for over a century.

The Society is organized like most Triads. The current head, Shan Wa Lin, is a Bangkok businessman who specialized in international trade and banking until he officially retired 1995. Lin, an elderly gentleman approaching his eighty-fifth birthday, uses the two-dozen vice presidents as a board of directors for the society and relies upon them for advice as well as reporting information. Among the vice presidents, the VP in charge of smuggling, David Han, emerged as Lin's favorite after he orchestrated the relationship between the Red Sash Society and Khun Sa's opium empire. This relationship has endured for nearly two decades and has earned the society millions of dollars in profit.

On a day-to-day basis, the Society prefers to keep things quiet, peaceful, and organized. Opposition is rarely openly attacked. Instead, the Society will tap its immense cash flow and undersell a competitor. At the same time, other resources that hinder the competitor such as delays in shipping, computer sabotage, and police scrutiny will be brought to bear.

In the rare cases where violence is called for, it is quick, harsh, and public. The Red Sash Society favors drive-by shootings but has also been responsible for numerous bombings, kidnappings, and poisonings. Mao Lo Fat, an upstart heroin dealer in Bangkok, was killed by Society enforcers who trapped his car in heavy traffic on the Taskin Bridge in Bangkok. This killing was also a warning to others.

Competition isn't the only time the Red Sash Society resorts to violence. The secrecy of the Society is all-important and when an investigative reporter for the English language newspaper *Bangkok Post* discovered a link between

BlackEagle/BlackEagle Logistics & Procurement Branch, Data Support Section  
Results of Criminal Organizations Database Search: Red Sash Society  
(also Hung Mun, Heaven and Earth League of Bangkok)  
End Search

**Triads**

#CR0000221

**Source:** Interpol, CIA, MI-6, DEA

**Type:** Narcotics smuggling and distribution, racketeering, gambling, extortion, prostitution, weapons smuggling and distribution

**Scope:**

Regional operations in Thailand. Particularly strong in Bangkok and Pattaya. Headquarters located in Hong Kong.

**Affiliations:**

Linked to Red Fist and Shining Swords societies. Has "diplomatic" ties to Khun Sa and Cheo Lin organizations.

**Personnel:** Estimated 15,000 member with 300+ active.

**Operating Since:**

Approximately 1885

**Structure:**

A loose bureaucratic model based on an a fraternal organization.

**Leaders:**

Shan Wa Lin [#LL8416072], David Han [#LL7086313]

**Legitimate Connections:**

The Red Sash Society has been linked to several Bangkok hotels, restaurants, and courier services. Saraburi Electronics and the Phran Investment Group have also been linked to the Society. David Han has been seen at many political fund-raising activities for Bangkok city officials and is close friends with Mon Phousovong, president of the Bangkok dockworkers union.

**Resources:**

In addition to the resources of their legitimate connections, the Red Sash Society has high-speed motorcycles, armored limousines, high explosives, automatic weapons, grenades, and ready cash exceeding \$5,400,000 [Interpol].

**Suspected Criminal Activities:**

Prostitution, extortion, murder for hire. The Red Sash Society is a major player in the smuggling and distribution of illicit narcotics in Bangkok. DEA and Thai customs officials have captured society members in numerous raids. Red Sash gang members are also suspected in the machine-gunning of Mao Lo Fat and three of his bodyguards and have also been implicated in the suicide of Timothy Hatch, managing editor of the English language Bangkok Post [1997].

**Additional Commentary:**

The Red Sash Society is primarily interested in heroin smuggling through Bangkok harbor, where they have considerable influence. The Society also distributes heroin in southeastern Bangkok and the resort town of Pattaya via a chain of hotels and restaurants owned by the Phran Investment Group, which is owned by Hong Kong businessman Shan Wa Lin.

Members of the Society receive a tattoo of a red banner upon initiation and often wear a red strip of cloth. Society enforcers favor western clothing, leather jackets, high-speed 'bullet' motorcycles, and submachine guns. A favorite murder tactic is to wait until the victim is trapped in one of Bangkok's traffic snarls, swarm in between traffic lanes on motorcycles, riddle the victim's car with bullets, and then scatter before the police can respond.

Last Update: December 28, 1997



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the Society and Bangkok city officials, the editor was tossed from the roof of the Post's eighth floor office. The reporter failed to finish the article and has since disappeared.

Despite this immense power and the flashy lifestyles of lower level members, the leaders of the Society prefer to live comparatively austere lifestyles. Lin sets an example by shunning the public's eye and living in modest apartments, albeit under heavy guard, in Hong Kong and Bangkok. Leaders with vices are admonished to keep them under control and those that fail to do so are removed from their positions.

For game purposes, use the *Cheap Thug NPC Stereotype (Millennium's End v2.0 p. 156)* or the *Gangster NPC Stereotype (GM's Companion p.117)* for minor Triad members. Use the *High-End Grunt NPC Stereotype (Millennium's End v2.0 p. 157)* or the *Mob Enforcer NPC Stereotype (GM's Companion p. 119)* for mid- and high-level Triad soldiers.

## **Khang Sar and the Muang Tai Army**

The single most powerful organization in the production and smuggling of opium is the Khang Sar syndicate and the Muang Tai Army. Centered on the charismatic Khang Sar, the syndicate earns hundreds of millions of dollars a year and has virtually carved a new nation out of the Burmese hillside.

### ***The Real Scoop***

Khang Sar, an ethnic Shan from Myanmar, rose to power during the late 1970s and early 1980s by joining several different organizations together under his leadership. In 1985, Khang Sar offered to help finance the Muang Tai Army in exchange for its assistance in his opium production and transportation. As the one holding the purse strings he quickly gained control and now the Khang Sar syndicate and the Muang Tai Army is so integrated there is no real difference between the two.

The Khang Sar syndicate is organized on a loose military model with members receiving rank or its equivalent in the Muang Tai Army (MTA). The procurement branch makes deals with the hill tribes of the Golden Triangle for the purchase of their raw opium. A transportation branch receives the raw product and transports it in heavily armed columns to central processing sites where it is converted to heroin or condensed into a consumable form of opium. From these sites the product is moved across the border into Thailand via Chiang Mai and smuggled to Bangkok. Once at Bangkok, the narcotics are distributed around the world.

Select members of the Muang Tai Army handle all protection. The quality of the MTA troops varies but is far above the average punk on the street and only the most fearless or foolhardy attempt to disrupt the organization. The MTA also acts as a supply of ready-trained terrorists and assassins who are fanatical to Khang Sar. They share Khang Sar's hatred of the DEA, a group they believe they are as much at war with as the SLORC. It was an MTA soldier who drove the truck bomb that exploded outside DEA headquarters in 1996. Other assassinations have led to the deaths of over twenty DEA agents.

Khang Sar has not been seen since the Fall of 1998. This is not because he is dead but because he has been personally overseeing the construction of one of his grandest dreams - a state of the art communication center complete with its own geostationary satellite. This center, a large camouflaged complex of buildings, bunkers, and dishes, will allow him to run his syndicate free of elec-

### ***Drugs Imported into Southeast Asia?***

In a region saturated with the drug trade, it is difficult to believe that some people are smuggling drugs into Southeast Asia. However, sales of cocaine from South American drug cartels has increased exponentially since the mid 1990s. Solid numbers are not available, but anti-narcotic officials in Thailand and Vietnam are concerned and plan to take action against the cartels in 1999.

Ironically, the greatest obstacle to the cartels may be the opium lords who intensely dislike the idea of competition in their own backyard. Attempts at forming alliances have failed due to mutual animosity; the Asians consider the South Americans to be brash and foolhardy while the South Americans believe the Asians to be arrogant and deceptive. The Asian syndicates and South American cartels have yet to have a major clash but if the trend continues there is little doubt that they will.

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tronic surveillance and disruption. More importantly, the center will give him the tools to intercept DEA and anti-narcotic communications. It is costing hundreds of millions of dollars to construct the center and purchase the satellite. Its heavily guarded location on the peak of Loi Lan mountain in the Shan State is a secret to all but the highest members of the syndicate and the MTA.

Although the primary interest of the Khang Sar syndicate is the production of opium, Khang Sar has made good on his promises to support a free and independent Shan state. In 1997 Sar arranged for the first cease-fire between SLORC troops and the Muang Tai Army in forty-eight years. Now, the Shan state of Myanmar is a separate country in all but name. Tension between SLORC troops and Muang Tai troops has slackened. The SLORC (State Law and Order Committee) of Myanmar, starved for cash, has put forward offers of cooperation to Khang Sar but so far the two have yet to make any formal agreements.

In addition to the large-scale operations in the Shan state and Myanmar, Khang Sar has invested heavily in co-opting the Thai civil government and military forces. The corruption and bribes exist in every level of government; from the lowest police recruit in the academy to members of the National Assembly and generals of the army. To say that the syndicate's efforts have been successful is an understatement. Khang Sar is the defacto ruler of the Golden Triangle.

For game purposes, use the *Guerilla* NPC Stereotype (*Terror/Counterterror* p. 126) or a mix of *Cheap Thug* and *High-End Grunts* NPC Stereotypes (*Millennium's End v2.0* pgs. 156, 157) for Muang Tai Army soldiers. For members of Khang Sar's syndicate use the *Mob Enforcer* NPC Stereotype (*GM's Companion* p. 119) or the *High-End Grunt* NPC Stereotype.

## The Circle Trade

Of those businesses that fall on the shadier side of the law, none is more repugnant than the slave trade. The Circle Trade, an international consortium of slavers and smugglers, does brisk business in Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand.

Slaves are usually acquired in China, Burma, and northern Thailand. Some pay several thousand dollars to the Circle Trade to smuggle them into the United States and other Western nations but are then forced into labor in brothels and sweatshops when they arrive. Many of the young boys and girls in Thailand's sex industry were sold by their impoverished families to representatives of the Circle Trade who promise good wages and treatment in exchange for services rendered. Neither is true and the slaves soon find themselves in a personal hell of rape, forced drug addiction, physical punishment, and murder.

Once a slave has been acquired, they are transported to warehouses located in and around Bangkok and Hong Kong. There, the slaves are secretly examined for health problems, skills and talents, and potential troublemakers are singled out. Each person is assigned a number and a sometimes a microchip containing their information is implanted beneath the skin. This information is placed on the international black market and given to select customers and purchases are arranged. Most slaves who leave Southeast Asia go to the United States and Europe but Japan and the Middle east are also large markets. Prices vary from a few hundred to several thousand dollars for slaves of exceptional skill or beauty.

While warehoused, the slaves are starved and tortured in an effort to break their spirit. Injections of heroin and morphine are given to make the slave an

**Khang Sar Syndicate**

#CR0001192

(See also Muang Tai Army)

**Source:** Interpol, CIA, DEA

**Type:** Narcoterrorist syndicate

**Scope:**

Narcotics production and distribution organization operating primarily in Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, and Laos.

**Affiliations:**

The Khang Sar syndicate and the Muang Tai Army are so closely linked that it is impossible to separate the two. Smuggling ties with the Red Sash Society triad. Suspected ties with Thai military and anti-narcotics units [DEA].

**Personnel:**

Criminal syndicate members at 420 [DEA, Interpol] and Muang Tai Army at 10,000+ soldiers [CIA].

**Operating Since:**

Early 1980s

**Structure:**

Military hierarchy.

**Leaders:**

Khang Sar, Major General of the Muang Tai Army.

**Legitimate Connections:**

As leader of the rebellious Shan tribe of Burma and its Muang Tai Army, Khang Sar represents the embodiment of the tribe's desire for autonomy. Other rebel organization in Burma are in cooperation but not directly associated with the Khang Sar syndicate. The syndicate has purchased hundreds, possibly thousands, of legitimate businesses, primarily in Thailand where the advanced banking connections and loose laws allow for easier laundering of money.

**Resources:**

Small arms, primarily modern military weapons. Grenades, mortars, explosives, advanced communications suites and suspected anti-aircraft capability. Strong connections in the black market, excellent local intelligence assets, extensive training from mercenaries [CIA]. Excellent funding with the annual opium harvest grossing between \$700 and \$900 million [DEA, Interpol] and as much as 7% set aside for military investment. Ready cash exceeding \$50 million.

**Suspected Criminal Activities:**

Illegal narcotics production, smuggling, and distribution. Hundreds of bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, and murders of police and military personnel and criminal competitors. Khang Sar has placed a \$50,000 bounty for each DEA agent in Thailand killed. In 1996, Khang Sar agents bombed DEA headquarters in Thailand, killing twelve agents and two civilians. Believed to have bribed and corrupted hundreds of Thai officials.

**Additional Commentary:**

The Khang Sar syndicate is not the only drug empire in the Golden Triangle, but it is the largest, wealthiest, and most powerful in both military might and political influence. The Khang Sar syndicate controls 60% of the opium trade in the Golden Triangle and the Muang Tai Army fighting for Shan independence from Myanmar. Only Cho Wei Lun, an ethnic Wa opium warlord, comes close to rivaling this power. A "mutual cooperation" agreement in 1994 between Cho Wei Lun and Khang Sar has limited conflict between the opium superpowers and both have reaped record harvests.

The syndicate's headquarters is now at an unknown location deep in the Shan State of Myanmar. The original headquarters was only two miles north of Mei Sai on the Thai border. A cross-border raid in 1995 by Thai officials and DEA agents forced the warlord to move his base despite the fact that the operation failed to actually reach the estate.

Little is known about Khang Sar personally. He has not been seen in public since November 1998, leading some to speculate about his death [Interpol]. No direct evidence supports this theory.

Last Update: December 15, 1998

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### ***The Flesh Trade of Thailand***

Thailand is known the world over for its prostitution industry. Hundreds of thousand of girls and boys are employed in the sex trade in the brothels of Bangkok and Pattaya. Most of them are from small villages in the provinces or from Myanmar and Cambodia, and send the money they make back home to their families. Some are less fortunate and have been sold to gangs by their families in exchange for badly needed cash (see *The Circle Trade*).

The life of a prostitute in Thailand is short and harsh. They are subject to beatings, rape and murder at the hands of their pimps and most are addicted to heroin or other drugs. HIV infection is so common (seventy percent in some areas) that many prostitutes simply consider death within a decade as part of the job. Other sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhea and herpes are even more common.

Although not wanting to intrude on operative's personal lives, B/E strongly suggests that operatives in Thailand refrain from engaging in sexual relations with anyone at any time.

addict and add another form of control. The slavers are so practiced at destroying people's will that only exceptional individuals survive with their minds intact. Those who refuse to break are usually murdered as an example to the others. As many as one in three die from the harsh treatment or who will not succumb to their torturers, a number factored into the Circle Trade's profit margin.

Those slaves purchased in Southeast Asia are smuggled to their buyers in specially constructed semi-trucks and vans with cages and restraints. Slaves purchased on the international market are often transported in large numbers, chained together and crammed into the stinking cargo hold of a tramp steamer, such as the one that ran aground off the coast of North Carolina in 1993. Many are so docile from the experience that they can be transported in regular vehicles and will not attempt to escape even if given the opportunity.

A new and even darker side of the slave trade has come into being only recently. As the number of people requiring organ transplants increases around the world, the legitimate supply of donated organs has not kept pace. Those who have money and connections can turn to a thriving black market in organs. Recognizing the value of this market, the Circle Trade has adopted a program of murdering slaves and harvesting their organs.

During the inspections of the slaves, blood samples and organ matches are made and likely candidates selected. These slaves are then given special, less harsh treatment and better food. Vivisection takes place once a buyer has been found or sometimes, if the slave has a peculiar blood type that is always in demand, immediately and the organs stored for future sale. The doctors who perform the vivisections are unscrupulous and will often let the slave die on the operating table.

Circle Trade members are sadistic bullies. Use the *Gangster NPC Stereotype* (*GM's Companion* p. 117) or the *Cheap Thug NPC Stereotype* (*Millennium's End v2.0* p. 156) for its members.

### **The Khmer Rouge**

Few groups in history have been the cause of so much suffering, cruelty, and needless death. The Khmer Rouge are despised the world over as violent madmen responsible for the genocide of nearly one seventh of their own people. Despite universal condemnation the Khmer Rouge have survived and once again are a major force in Southeast Asian politics.

#### ***The Real Scoop***

The Khmer Rouge are poised to bring their nightmare utopia back into existence. A new campaign launched in December of 1998 against the Cambodian People's Armed Forces (CPAF) and the Hun Sen regime has been successful in driving government forces from northern Cambodia and into the larger cities of southern Cambodia. Khmer Rouge forces have freedom of movement in the countryside and are in complete control of at least 30% of the country. Large areas have become zones of anarchy with neither side in control and the population living in fear.

Despite being rabid communists the Khmer Rouge have recognized the value of trading with the Thai military. Secret treaties between the Thai military and the Khmer Rouge have given Thai companies free access to timber, gems, and mineral resources, often extracted with Cambodian slave labor. This relationship also benefits the Thai military as it allows the Khmer Rouge to patrol the border and keep refugees from fleeing to Thailand where they are not wanted. The money generated from these sales has allowed the Khmer Rouge to supple-

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ment the supplies it receives from China.

The Khmer Rouge army is divided into three groups: Army Group West, located in Pailin and under the command of General Moen Phat, Army Group Center currently located just north of Lake Tonle Sap under the command of General Sovan Santapeap, and Army Group East stretched between Siem Reap and the northeastern city of Preah Vihear. Each Army group is further divided into divisions, battalions, and companies. Army group center is the largest and is also responsible for maintaining camps on the Thai/Cambodia border where conscripted slaves grow food and manufacture simple essentials.

The Khmer Rouge also have hundreds of guerilla and urban terrorist cells spread through the country, backed by a network of supporters. Each cell varies in size and activity but most are very active. Phnom Penh has been especially hard hit by terrorist's bombs and shootings and it is a rare day when no Khmer Rouge activity is reported.

The Khmer Rouge are plagued by the fact that they have failed to make the transition from insurgent group to effective military presence. Although they have the soldiers and the firepower, the leadership is still in the insurgent mindset. This is demonstrated in the fact that once an area has been occupied and taken by the Khmer Rouge, the occupying force is very reluctant to leave to pursue the battle elsewhere. They prefer to stay where they are, taking command of the area like conquering feudal lords. It is also demonstrated in the fact that cooperation between units, despite improvement in communications, is minimal. Each company sees only the battle directly in front of it and focuses on that alone. Those soldiers trained in the camps on the border are better at avoiding these pitfalls but their commanders have yet to adapt to the situation. Despite this, Khmer Rouge firepower and blunt force have allowed the insurgents to make dramatic headway.

Several decisive victories for the Khmer Rouge have come thanks to the acquisition of new high-tech weapons. The laser-blinding device encountered by the B/E cell providing security for a UN mine clearing team has been used against CPAF troops to great effect. The Khmer Rouge have also purchased advanced shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, and laser guided artillery rounds. The offensive underway as of January 1, 1999 is the largest ever and stands a good chance of further damaging the Hun Sen regime, if not toppling it.

However, the Khmer Rouge are no longer unified. General Moen Phat, whose forces occupy the province of Pailin, has refused to join other Khmer Rouge forces in the new offensive. Phat has failed to join the Khmer Rouge high command for important meetings and has begun to forge his own agreements with the Thai military for access to the timber and gems in Pailin province. General Sovan Santapeap and other Khmer Rouge commanders have accused Phat of breaking from the Khmer Rouge and attempting to forge his own miniature empire. Confrontation between Phat's troops and the rest of the Khmer Rouge have yet to happen but tensions are high.

Unknown to Santapeap and the Khmer Rouge hierarchy, Phat has also sent quiet messages to the Hun Sen regime regarding his switching sides in the conflict. Phat wants to keep the wealthy Pailin area to himself and will gladly defect to the government side if given assurances of autonomy. To provide proof of his good intentions, Phat has revealed to the Hun Sen regime that kidnapped Union Carbide VP Jefferson Brown is still alive and being held in a Khmer Rouge camp on the Thai border. Phat has also ordered the release of two Australian Jesuit priests captured by Pat's Khmer Rouge soldiers on Christmas day, 1998.

For game purposes, use the *Guerilla* NPC Stereotype (*Terror/Counterterror* p. 126) or a mix of *Cheap Thug* and *High-End Grunts* NPC Stereotypes

### ***The Death of Pol Pot***

The death of Pol Pot has not been verified by any international agency and those few people who claim to have seen the aging leader's body suggest that it was not him. The body was cremated in a makeshift funeral pyre consisting of old tires, books and magazines, and the old man's mattress. There was no autopsy and his remains have supposedly been scattered in Lake Tonle Sap.

Many have suggested that Pol Pot is not dead and is still leading the Khmer Rouge from Pyongyang, North Korea, where he was last given medical assistance. Others suggest that Pol Pot is dead but was murdered by other Khmer Rouge, citing reports that the United States and Thailand were interested in capturing Pot and putting him on trial for the atrocities he perpetrated. If such a trial had come about, the other Khmer Rouge would no doubt have been indicted.

**Khmer Rouge**

(Also Khmer People's Congress, Democratic Kampuchea, Communist Party of Kampuchea)

**Source:** CIA, MI6, DGSE

**Type:** Terrorist/insurgent organization

**Scope:**

Terrorist/insurgent organization operating primarily in Cambodia and the Thai/Cambodia border.

**Affiliations:**

Diplomatic and military ties to the People's Republic of China (PRC).

**Personnel:** 73,000 (believed) [DGSE]

**Operating Since:**

1948

**Structure:**

Military hierarchy.

**Leaders:**

Pol Pot [#LL0453410], Sovan Santapeap [#LL6582766], Ieng Sary [#LL7918874]

**Legitimate Connections:**

Receives funding, supplies, and training through PRC sources [CIA].

**Resources:**

Access to modern military weapons and training. Excellent intelligence. Good funding from sales of natural resources on Thai/Cambodian border [CIA]. Within the regions controlled by the Khmer Rouge the group acts as an infantry force with limited combined arms capability. Known to have many man-portable weapons systems, including heavy mortars and light artillery. The Khmer Rouge have yet to show possession of equipment requiring a large support staff such as aircraft and armor but are known to have sophisticated anti-personnel weapons, possibly a laser blinding device. The Khmer Rouge have seized approximately 40,000 peasants for use as slave labor growing food and making basic military supplies but these are non-combatants.

**Suspected Criminal Activities:**

The systematic starvation, torture, and murder of over 1,000,000 Cambodians from 1975 to 1978. The 1976 kidnapping, torture, and murder of four American sailors. The 1978 attack on the American cargo vessel *Orlando* and the kidnapping of its crew. Hundreds of assassinations, kidnappings, tortures, rapes, and murders as well as firebomb and machine-gun attacks on industrial plants, railway lines, communications facilities, voting centers, and public works, 1979-1999. 1982 bombing of Cambodian National Assembly, killing six civil servants. 1984 hijacking of Thai Airlines flight and subsequent extortion of \$10 million. 1985 torture-murder of reporter Jules Lou bet. Protracted guerilla and military actions against the CPAF, 1986-1999. 1988 kidnapping and murder of 6 American tourists in Pailin province. Multiple attacks on UNTAC mine clearing teams, 1991-1999. 1991 assassination of Ohm Nigh (Cambodian District Judge) and mutilation of her children. 1992-1999, rocket attacks on UNTAC headquarters in Phnom Penh. 1993 attacks on voting centers, resulting in 283 deaths. 1993 kidnapping and murder of three foreign tourists and thirty ethnic Vietnamese. 1995 rocket attack on Lake Tonle Sap ferry, sixty-eight killed. 1995 massacre of ethnic Vietnamese in Kong Kohl, seventy-one men, women, and children killed. 1996 attack on UNTAC relief trucks, resulting in twelve relief workers killed. 1997 kidnapping of WHO doctor. 1997 crucifixion and murder of Peru Sammy (Kampong Champ Chief of Police). 1997 torture deaths of twelve UN soldiers in Kampong Sam. 1998 attack on Pochentong train resulting in 148 deaths. 1998 missile attack on Thai military helicopter carrying four DEA agents. 1998 kidnapping of Union Carbide VP, Jefferson Brown.

**Additional Commentary:**

The Khmer Rouge, literally translated as “red Cambodians” referencing their communist ideology, came to power in 1975 after a long struggle with the Western backed Cambodian government. The Khmer Rouge, led by Maoist Pol Pot, attempted to build an agrarian utopia by exterminating opposition and forcing the Cambodian people into huge communes in the countryside where they performed slave labor in the name of “Anka,” the state. Cities were destroyed, modern facilities sabotaged, and currency outlawed in what became known as Year Zero. The educated were killed and millions suffered from institutionalized torture, slave labor, and famine. Conservative estimates of the number of deaths start at 1.4 million and some claim as many as 3 million [CIA]. At least 2 million people braved minefields and execution to flee to Thailand.

In 1978 the Vietnamese invaded Cambodia and overran the country in just two weeks. The Khmer Rouge were forced into refugee camps on the border and have remained there ever since. From these bases the Khmer Rouge reformed their slave labor communes, created a new army, and launched several campaigns to retake Cambodia.

Although the Thai government technically has no ties to the Khmer Rouge it is widely believed that the Thai military tolerates their presence in exchange for access to northwestern Cambodia’s natural resources.

A typical Khmer Rouge soldier is a fanatic to the cause of “Anka”, the Khmer Rouge term for the communist hierarchy. Khmer Rouge soldiers are given brutal training during which as many as one in five die. Those that survive are athletic warriors indoctrinated in the ways of Maoist communism. Khmer Rouge typically wear black “pajama” style clothes and carry Chinese AK-74’s, PK machine guns, and rocket propelled grenade launchers. The Khmer Rouge prefer to move in large numbers and patrols are usually conducted by company-sized units rather than platoon sized units.

At present the Khmer Rouge are engaged with the Cambodian People’s Armed Forces (CPAF) of the Hun Sen regime based out of Phnom Penn. The Khmer Rouge possess the countryside and can move at will during the day or night. The UN safe zones of Battambang and Siem Reap are under siege and the Khmer Rouge occupied the city of Pailin in 1996. The latest offensive was launched in December of 1998 and has been very successful, forcing CPAF soldiers to retreat to the south end of Lake Tonle Sap. The capital of Phnom Penn is currently government controlled but under almost daily terrorist attack (last update December 10, 1999).

Leadership of the Khmer Rouge has been split between Sovan Santapeap and Ieng Sary, two commanding generals in the Khmer Rouge Army. Each controls a major force of Khmer Rouge soldiers in the Siem Reap and Pailin areas respectively.

A bizarre attempt at public relations occurred in 1997 when the Khmer Rouge put Pol Pot on trial for the atrocities committed during the reign of terror between 1975 and 1978. The seventy-two year old Pot was convicted and sentenced to house arrest for the rest of his natural life. Pot died in December of 1997, supposedly from complications related to his chronic malaria [DGSE].

The Khmer Rouge have always been rabidly engaged in ethnic cleansing of all non-Khmers from Cambodia. Entire villages of ethnic Cham, Vietnamese, and Chinese have been massacred. Europeans and Americans are almost always executed if captured.

During the UNTAC operation to rebuild Cambodia in the early 1990’s the Khmer Rouge dis-

rupted elections and continued its terrorist attacks. UN sponsored mine clearing teams have been attacked by the Khmer Rouge many times. A BlackEagle/BlackEagle security team foiled a Khmer Rouge attack in 1998 in the Kampong Cham area during which the Khmer Rouge used an unknown blinding device, presumably a laser. BlackEagle/BlackEagle operatives should be advised that the Khmer Rouge has issued a warning that all operatives captured in Cambodia will be executed as "foreign mercenaries and enemies of the people of Cambodia." Operatives engaged in Cambodia for any reason should be compensated accordingly.

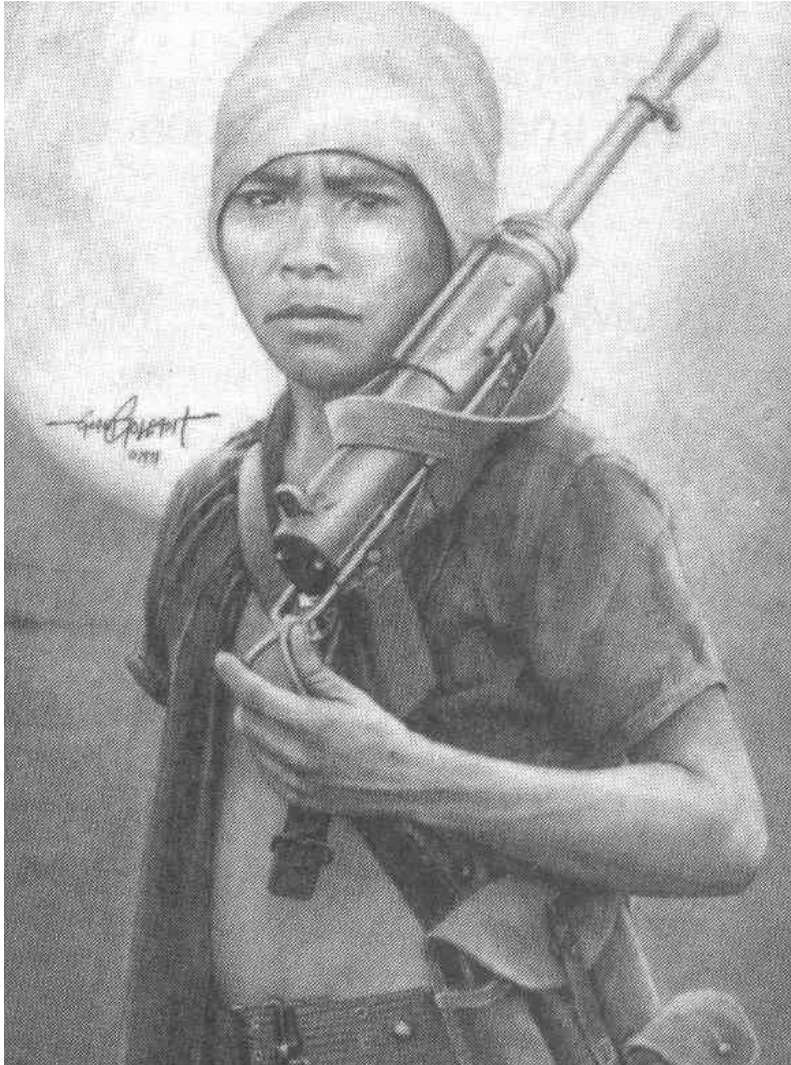
Last Update: December 18, 1998

(*Millennium's End* v2.0 pgs. 156, 157) for Khmer Rouge soldiers. For those in terrorist cells use the *Urban Revolutionaries* NPC Stereotype (*Terror/Counterterror* p. 127) or the *High-End Grunt* NPC Stereotype.

## Hmong Mercenaries

The Hmong people have existed in the Golden Triangle for millennia and are one of the few truly indigenous peoples of Southeast Asia. They are fiercely independent and have been oppressed by one rising empire after another. But

throughout history the Hmong have survived when all around them have faded away. Now, they are in control of a large portion of the Golden Triangle's opium crop and they fight for whomever has the money.



### *The Real Scoop*

The Hmong people have been caught in the jaws of almost every conflict in Southeast Asia since the 1700's. Attacked by the Thais, Burmese, Vietnamese, and Laotians in turn, the Hmong have developed an independent culture with a strong fighting tradition. That tradition combined with their rich opium fields has made them a valuable commodity.

During the American phase of the Vietnam War, the Hmong acted as valuable allies to the Americans. In exchange for money, supplies, and weapons the Hmong attacked communist forces in Laos and Vietnam. Although outwardly the battles were one of ideology, the Hmong and the Laotians have always had ethnic conflicts and the Hmong were only too happy to be paid to do what they probably would have done anyway. The CIA-owned-and-operated Air America supplied them with daily airdrops and moved the Hmong opium to buyers in Thailand and Myanmar.

After the American pullout of the Vietnam War, the CIA continued to supply the Hmong armies they had trained, but at a much reduced level. In 1975 the Laotian government fell to the Prathet Lao, Laotian commu-



**Hmong Mercenaries**

**Source:** Interpol, CIA, DGSE

**Type:** Mercenary group with ties to narcotics production and smuggling.

**Scope:**

Northern Thailand, central and southern Laos

**Affiliations:**

Linked to Khang Sar and other opium syndicates [Interpol].

**Personnel:** 12,000 (estimated) [DGSE]

**Operating Since:**

Unknown.

**Structure:**

Military hierarchy parallel to Hmong tribal chieftains.

**Leaders:**

None (leadership is limited to village level).

**Legitimate Connections:**

The expatriate relief organizations of Laotians for a Free Laos and the Hmong Relief Fund [DGSE].

**Resources:**

The Hmong possess some of the most fertile opium fields in the Golden Triangle and sell the annual crop to various criminal syndicates [Interpol]. Hmong mercenaries vary from village to village but generally have access to military arms, explosives, and heavy weapons [CIA].

**Suspected Criminal Activities:**

Narcotics production, smuggling, extortion, murder, attacking the Laotian People's Revolutionary Army.

**Additional Commentary:**

The Hmong are not organized into a single unit but are a collection of villages, each with its own chief and military unit often no larger than twenty soldiers [CIA]. Each village is autonomous of the others and only charismatic leaders can convince the Hmong to join together for any kind of activity. Agreements with one village have no weight in another and villages are often in conflict with each other.

The Hmong have been fighting against the Laotian communists since the 1960s and were closely allied to the United States during its part of the Vietnam War. The Hmong are not recognized as citizens in their own country and have suffered a great deal for their rebellion against the Vientiane regime. Allegations of chemical warfare against the Hmong have never been proven but there is considerable circumstantial evidence to support them [CIA]. The conflict between the Hmong and the Laotian government has reached a stalemate with neither side able to secure a victory. At present most villages have cease-fire agreements with the government along with assurances of autonomy [DGSE].

The Hmong possess some of the best opium growing fields in the Golden Triangle. In the beginning of the growing season the villages hold bidding competitions between opium syndicates for the year's crop. Competition is fierce and sometimes violent. In addition to the opium, the buyer gets the use of the Hmong soldiers for the duration of the season. This opium trade allows the Hmong to continue their struggle against the Laotian government and support their population in their harsh mountain environment.

Last Update: December 19, 1998

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nists, and the oppression of the Hmong took on genocidal overtones. Thousands of Hmong escaped into Thailand and thousands more perished in Laotian bombings and massacres. The communist regime even allowed the testing of chemical weapons on Hmong villages by the Soviets, creating the legend of the deadly Yellow Rain. Entire villages were wiped out in the single pass of a helicopter and remain barren dead zones populated only by aging skeletons.

In the 1990s the Hmong have emerged from the conflict with the Lao People's Democratic Republic as resistant survivors who have worn down the government's desire to control them. Treaties between Hmong villages and the government leave the Hmong in peace for the first time in generations. Some units of the Laotian People's Revolutionary Army even aid the Hmong in the production and transportation of the opium. The CIA is still heavily involved with the Hmong opium trade with as much as a third of the opium being smuggled by the CIA run Si-Chang Flying Service. Weapons and supplies purchased by the Hmong are also delivered by the same CIA air service.

Since each village organizes its own force of mercenaries, larger villages field larger forces and wealthier villages provide better weapons and equipment. Some villages specialize in a particular aspect of combat such as sniping or light artillery. Hmong are disciplined and talented soldiers and have a detailed knowledge of terrain and jungle warfare.

The average soldier equips himself with a submachine gun or assault rifle - the M16 and AK-47 being the most popular - and grenades. Hmong are known for close-in fighting and are vicious with a knife or machete. Leadership parallels the village hierarchy with the village chief or his appointee leading the group. Hmong mercenaries don't coordinate well with groups outside their own village and so any Hmong army is actually a collection of loosely organized platoon sized-units. Enemies of the Hmong have used this fact to their advantage many times.

Hmong mercs are able and willing soldiers for almost any cause backed by the right cash. Use the *Guerilla* NPC Stereotype (*Terror/Counterterror* p. 126) or a mix of *Cheap Thug* and *High-End Grunts* NPC Stereotypes (*Millennium's End* v2.0 pgs. 156, 157).

## The Zhukov Brigade

Although several thousand troops short of the an actual brigade, the Zhukov Brigade has carved a name for itself in the volatile world of international mercenaries. This small squad of highly trained individuals, all from countries in the Soviet bloc, sells its services from Ho Chi Minh City to customers around the Pacific Rim. In keeping with their leader's *spetznaz* training, the Zhukov Brigade specializes in demolition, search-and-destroy missions, and assassination.

Captain Pavel Antonivich formed the Zhukov Brigade in 1994 when he suddenly found himself without a job, thanks to the downsizing of the Russian military and the shifting of the political winds. Rather than face the bleak prospect of finding another career so close to his fiftieth birthday, Antonivich and a handful of trusted associates used their clandestine skills to leave Russia and travel to Vietnam. There, Vladovich used his contacts within the Vietnamese military to establish themselves as a free-lance Special-Ops group.

Business has been good for the Russians. Their first job was the assassination of a political opposition leader in Thailand, which they performed by injecting the victim with a deadly poison. This job was quickly followed by others. Now, the Zhukov Brigade have the luxury of selecting their work. Reflecting its Soviet background, the Brigade prefers to work for socialist governments and

organizations that it considers to be friendly to the socialist cause. However, the offer of large sums of cash is enough to make even the most capitalist client palatable. The Zhukov Brigade commands an average fee of \$100,000 per contract, with more being required for long-term or particularly dangerous activities.

Player characters won't find themselves working alongside the Zhukov Brigade as they prefer to work alone. More likely, they will be in direct competition if not conflict.

***Captain Pavel 'Akula' Antonivich (ret.)***

Captain Pavel 'Akula' Antonivich is both the founder and leader of the Zhukov Brigade. Antonivich, whose nickname means 'shark', is a spetznaz veteran of over twenty-five years. He served the Soviet Union in such far-away lands as Vietnam, Afghanistan, and in covert KGB operations in Western Europe and the USA. His final action in a Russian uniform came during the uprising in Chechnya, where Anonivich coordinated spetznaz operations against separatist rebels. True to his Cossack heritage, Antonivich stands at just less than two meters tall with narrow shoulders set on a wiry frame.

49 year-old Caucasian man, 196cm, 108kg, Black hair, brown eyes, tan skin.

<b>Int</b> 58	<b>Sen</b> 66	Aim	42
<b>Agl</b> 34	<b>Cor</b> 48	Autofire	62
<b>Con</b> 42	<b>Str</b> 47	Smallarm	58
<b>Per</b> 67	<b>App</b> 44	Drive	37
<b>Bra</b> 49	<b>Wil</b> 71	Auto	52
		Hiding	45
Perception	61	Conceal	62
Base Speed	12	Creep	65
Damage Rating	5	Medicine	25
Mass Factor	0.7	Emer. Med.	32
		Military Science	40
		Hardware	50
		Tactics	59
		Unarmed H-to-H	39
		Punch	58

**Equipment Carried:** Tactical vest, one frag grenade, one smoke grenade, AK-74 (30 rnds ball/tracer) and two extra magazines ball/tracer and one AP, Desert Eagle .50in (8 rnds glaser) and an extra mag, 10km mil-spec transceiver, night-vision goggles, basic first aid kit.

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD	dam. type
Punch	13	58	1.0	Impact
AK-74	4	86	19	Hyd. Shock
Desert Eagle .50in	11	77	26	Hyd. Shock

## *Maksim Sergeikov*

Like Antonivich, former sergeant Maksim Sergeikov is former spetznaz and a specialist in demolitions, assassination, and counter-insurgency. His particular specialty is hand-to-hand combat. Sergeikov is Antonivich's second in command and most trusted associate and the pair have been friends since serving together in the bitter fighting in Afghanistan's Peshawar Valley. Sergeikov is tall, the top of his bald head reaching 206cm, and broad-shouldered. His goatee is blonde to contrast his brown eyes. A tattoo of the Soviet flag graces his right upper arm. He speaks little and has a slight stutter when he does. Sergeikov is a sadistic thug, albeit a smart thug. He prefers silenced weapons and carries at least one knife at all times.

37 year-old Caucasian man, 206cm, 119kg, Bald, brown eyes, tan skin.

<b>Int</b>	42	<b>Sen</b>	53	Aim	49
<b>Agl</b>	56	<b>Cor</b>	51	Autofire	69
<b>Con</b>	53	<b>Str</b>	71	Smallarm	68
<b>Per</b>	38	<b>App</b>	42	Armed H-to-H	43
<b>Bra</b>	55	<b>Wil</b>	61	Swing	64
Perception			49	Thrust	64
Base Speed			15	Hiding	65
Damage Rating			6	Concealment	77
Mass Factor			0.6	Creeping	72
				Military Science	35
				Tactics	49
				Unarmed H-to-H	48
				Dodge	68
				Punch	72
				Kick	70
				Grapple	62

**Equipment Carried:** Tactical vest, two frag grenades, HK MP5SD6 (30 rnds glaser) and two extra magazines glaser and one mag AP, Makarov P6 (8 rnds hollowpoint) and an extra magazine, large knife, 10km mil-spec transceiver, night-vision goggles, basic first aid kit.

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD	dam. type
Punch	15	72	1.0	Impact
Large Knife (swing)	13	72	2.4	Cut
(thrust)	11	72	3.0	Puncture
HK MP5SD6	6	92	21	Hyd. Shock
Makarov P6	14	82	18	Hyd. Shock



***Daniel Offenbach***

Daniel Offenbach, the Zhukov Brigade’s explosive and demolitions expert, is a recent addition to the Brigade after one of the founding members was killed in action. Offenbach has no military training and his actual field-craft skills are weak. However, he makes up for this shortcoming with his talent for explosives and improvised munitions. Offenbach is currently wanted by the FBI for a bombing he conducted on behalf of the Earth Liberation Front that killed two researchers in Boston. He is currently laying low with the Zhukov Brigade and welcomes the opportunity to use his skills, especially against capitalist targets and perceived enemies of the environment. He has long blonde hair pulled into a ponytail and wears wire-rimmed glasses most of the time. Although he has received some training by Sergeikov, he has yet to become very stealthy. Consequently, another team member accompanies Offenbach whenever possible.

31 year-old Caucasian man, 176cm, 60kg, Blonde hair, blue eyes, tan skin.

<b>Int</b> 61	<b>Sen</b> 39	Aim	26
<b>Agil</b> 46	<b>Cor</b> 42	Autofire	36
<b>Con</b> 44	<b>Str</b> 40	Electrics	45
<b>Per</b> 53	<b>App</b> 69	Electronics	67
<b>Bra</b> 66	<b>Wil</b> 51	Engineering	54
Perception	38	Chemical	80
Base Speed	14	Civil	72
Damage Rating	4	Hiding	24
Mass Factor	1.1	Creeping	30
		Military Science	15
		Tactics	22
		Unarmed H-to-H	39
		Punch	54

**Equipment Carried:** Tactical vest, one frag grenade, one CS gas grenade, booby trap kit, breaching charge, two 1kg C4 charges, radio detonator, M4 Spectre (50 rnds glaser) and an extra magazine, 10km mil-spec transceiver, night-vision goggles, basic first aid kit.

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD	dam. type
Punch	13	54	1.0	Impact
SITES M4 Spectre	7	57	21	Hyd. Shock

## My Te Loc

My Te Loc was trained by the Vietnamese intelligence service to be a “honey trap”- an agent who compromised her target through seduction, sex, and blackmail. However, she has found herself moving towards another specialty - assassination. In the new world order, Loc discovered herself an agent without an agency and joined the Zhukov Brigade for the money it offered. Her natural hair color is black but has been dyed many different shades and is often covered beneath a wig. Her training has made her jaded towards love and although she has an intimate relationship with Antonivich, in her mind it is just another aspect of the business.

29 year-old Asian woman, 176cm, 60kg, Black hair, dark eyes, tan skin.

<b>Int</b> 50	<b>Sen</b> 67	Acting	33
<b>Agl</b> 65	<b>Cor</b> 39	Con	49
<b>Con</b> 55	<b>Str</b> 51	Aim	51
<b>Per</b> 69	<b>App</b> 71	Longarm	76
<b>Bra</b> 44	<b>Wil</b> 53	Smallarm	66
Perception	59	Armed H-to-H	38
Base Speed	16	Swing	48
Damage Rating	5	Thrust	50
Mass Factor	1.1	Make-Up	25
		Disguise	37
		Hiding	48
		Concealment	72
		Creeping	63
		Military Science	22
		Tactics	33
		Unarmed H-to-H	28
		Punch	42
		Kick	40

**Equipment Carried:** Tactical vest, SVD Dragunov (10 rnds AP) and an extra magazine AP and one mag of ball/tracer, P5 Compact (8 rnds glaser) and an extra magazine, 10km mil-spec transceiver, night-vision goggles, basic first aid kit.

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD	dam. type
Punch	16	42	1.0	Impact
Walther P5 Compact	16	79	22	Hyd. Shock
SVD Dragunov	6	108	19	Hyd. Shock

## The National League for Democracy

One person’s reformer is another person’s criminal. The National League for Democracy is the most powerful reform movement in Burma (Myanmar) and one of the most well-known and respected democracy movements in the world. Its message of non-violence and pacifist resistance to the brutal SLORC regime is aimed at the hearts and minds of the Burmese people. The NLD is confident that eventually their message of peace will conquer SLORC violence.

The National League for Democracy rose from the bloody streets of Yangon after government troops massacred thousands of protesters during the 1988 political chaos. Survivors of the massacre realized that for Myanmar to become a peaceful democracy they must put aside their political and ethnic differences and act as a single unit. Sulang An Kyu Sui (pronounced *Su-lang An*

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*Kyoo Soo*), the daughter of a murdered national hero, was elected to lead the new group along with her close friend Dr. Sein Win. Under Kyu Sui's guidance the NLD organized its first round of international condemnation of the SLORC and forced the regime to hold new elections.

The elections of 1990 were a tremendous success for the NLD and it won eighty-two percent of the votes. The SLORC, however, nullified the election, arrested Kyu Sui and Dr. Win and hundreds of others, and ostracized itself from the rest of the world. Kyu Sui won the Nobel Peace Prize and has lived under house arrest since 1990. Dr. Win has been in and out of prison, refusing to stop working for democracy.

Outlawed in its own country, the NLD moved its headquarters into Karen tribal resistance camps on the Thai border. It was moved again in 1995 when SLORC troops overran the Karen headquarters and has since settled in Chiang Mai, Thailand. A small staff organize protests in foreign nations, funnel relief funds to NLD activities and disseminate information about the SLORC's human rights abuses. The NLD is one of the most respected pro-democracy groups in the world and enjoys celebrity support and an annual "Free Burma" televised fund-raising concert.

The NLD is a pacifist organization and all its protests are non-violent. Even in Myanmar, where protesters are beaten, shot, and mauled by dogs, the NLD refuses to take up arms. Instead, its primary weapon is information. NLD activists photograph and videotape SLORC violence and human rights abuses and smuggle the film and tapes into Thailand where they are distributed around the world. The GenNet has been a major tool for the NLD and digital cameras have allowed the world to watch events in Burma on their computer screens. Another valuable tool, Radio Free Burma, has been secretly financed by the United States through the CIA. Radio Free Burma broadcasts music and anti-SLORC programs and music into Burma twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. It must be successful as the SLORC constantly tries to scramble the signal and several bomb threats have been sent. A real bomb exploded in the station in 1997, killing four but failing to disrupt the broadcast.

Although the SLORC has yet to yield to international pressure, the NLD has been very successful in isolating it from the rest of the world. This success has come at a great price - thousands imprisoned, tortured, and murdered by the SLORC. Yet, for every activist who disappears or falls to a bullet, more take their place.

The NLD leadership in Thailand has become increasingly worried about the safety of Kyu Sui and Dr. Win. Dr. Win has not been seen or heard from since he was arrested again in October of 1998. Kyu Sio remains under house arrest but sources within the SLORC have reported that the government is planning to poison her. The NLD leadership would very much like to gain freedom for both of them but has so far failed to act.

Stats for NLD members are a little unusual due to their pacific nature. Use the *Cyberterrorist* NPC Stereotype or *Urban Revolutionary* NPC Stereotype (*Terror/Counterterror* pgs. 126, 127) or a mix of *Cheap Thug* and *High-End Grunts* NPC Stereotypes (*Millennium's End v2.0* pgs. 156, 157). Ignore all combat related skills.

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# APPENDIX ONE

# PIECES OF THE

# PICTURE ▼▼

Like any game of *Millennium's End*, a role-playing session in Southeast Asia requires a lot of work to make the location and the action realistic and believable. This appendix contains resources important for use when planning an extensive campaign or a quick-and-dirty play session. The following sections contain details that will provide the GM with a colorful setting in which characters can do their thing. Although some parts are specific, GMs are encouraged to be creative and tailor the information to the game and the players.

## FOOD

Much of the thrill of going someplace new comes from sampling the local foods. Southeast Asia has a huge variety of foods and styles to choose from. The few staples that everyone includes are steamed rice, sometimes prepared as a sweet sticky rice, and noodles. The Chinese influence on Southeast Asian cooking cannot be understated and most native dishes are variations on Chinese themes.

Most Thai and Lao recipes are a blend of Chinese and Indian and start with “take a handful of chilies.” Most dishes are spicy by comparison to western foods, some to the point of being a health hazard. Chilies are also used as seasoning or garnish, as is curry and ginger. Peanut sauce, stinky fish paste (the literal translation), and ginger sauce are common accompaniments. Fruits such as lychee, jackfruit, and longans often come with meals, particularly for westerners, who can use the sweet to sooth the fires below.

Burmese food has more of an Indian influence than Chinese and curry is part of nearly every dish. Soups and stews are common and usually feature seafood such as fish, squid, octopus, and mussels. Burmese food is less fiery than Thai food but the uninitiated should still beware; Cholera is rampant in Myanmar and those who eat contaminated food are at severe risk.

Vietnamese recipes feature fish sauce, mint, and rice as their main ingredients. Vegetables, eggs, chilies, and seafood are also used. Vietnamese will eat



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dog meat, unlike the rest of Southeast Asia, where the practice is considered barbaric and very insulting.

There is a reason that there are no world famous Southeast Asian beers or liqueurs. For those who insist on trying local products, Ba Moi Ba and Singha Beer are brewed in Vietnam and Thailand, respectively. Drinkers should be warned that the alcohol content is raised with the addition of formaldehyde, the same substance used to embalm bodies.

## **FORESTS AND JUNGLES**

Despite the best efforts of lumber companies and slash-and-burn farmers, about forty percent of Southeast Asia is still heavily forested. The Golden Triangle and Cambodia are the most heavily covered while southern Thailand has exploited its forests and Vietnam still suffers the effects of the American 'Agent Orange' defoliation program from decades past.

There are really two types of jungle. Primary jungle, untouched by human hands, is what most people think of when they envision a jungle. Massive mahogany, teak, and ebony trees reaching a hundred feet in the air with leaves spread out in a dense, multi-layered, canopy. On the ground below, ferns and palms grow in the dim sunlight that filters through from above. Birds, monkeys, deer, wild pigs, tigers, and others all live in this ecosystem as well as dozens of poisonous snakes and millions of species of insects. Movement is relatively easy but the incredible humidity and heat trapped beneath the canopy makes it very uncomfortable for humans. Only about twenty percent of the rain forests of Southeast Asia are primary jungle.

Secondary jungle, places that have been cleared and then abandoned, covers the rest of the equatorial rain forests. Secondary jungle has no towering trees but is thick with fast-growing bamboo, small trees, dense shrubbery, and nasty needle-covered vines. Secondary jungle is nearly impenetrable and visibility can be limited to a handful of meters. Only smaller creatures live in these jungles, but there are still plenty of poisonous snakes and insects to be found.

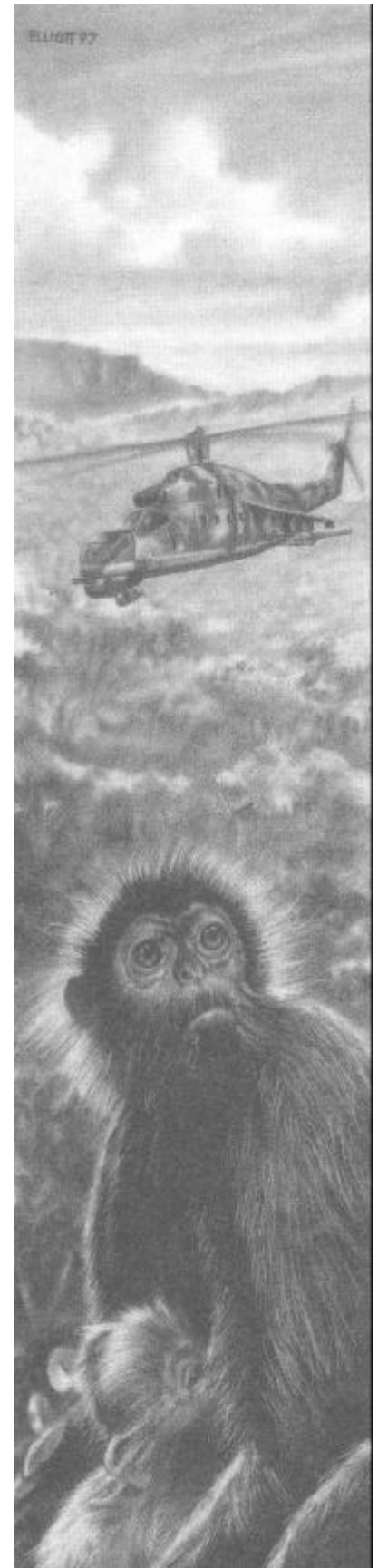
For game purposes, a good rule of thumb is to call for a Survival/Equatorial roll for every four hours of normal movement through a jungle.

### ***Tiger***

The tiger, the largest of the cat family, was once found throughout Southeast Asia but hunting and deforestation have restricted their numbers and range. The Burmese tiger, Southeast Asia's sub-species, was near extinction but wildlife groups secured protection for the big cats and has actually pulled them back from the brink and though their numbers are small, they are holding steady. They now range throughout the Golden Triangle.

Adult male tigers may stand one meter tall at the shoulder and weigh between 180kg and 270kg. Adult females are generally smaller and may have two or three cubs in tow. Tigers typically hunt at night but have been known to prowl their territory during daylight hours as well. They are solitary hunters, among the best in the world, and will stalk both large and small prey, including humans. Like most cats, the tiger will stalk its prey, getting close enough to bring it down with a brief rush. The sharp claws tear and pin the prey while the powerful jaws crush bones and suffocate (Damage Rating equals weight divided by ten, Armed H-to-H/Swing equals weight divided by three).

Although humans are not the tigers preferred meal, about a dozen people a year are killed by tigers in Southeast Asia. Even well-armed soldiers have been taken and eaten. Although the Thai government refuses to comment, there is a



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man-eater, a tiger that prefers humans, in the Doi Inthanon forest east of Chaing Mai. This cat, known only by its peculiar paw print (missing two toes on one paw), killed five people in 1998.

While the tiger is dangerous to people, it has much more to fear from them. As the world economy sours, poaching is more prevalent than ever. There is a great demand fueled by collectors and those seeking the organs for Chinese medicines and aphrodisiacs. Poaching is a capital offense in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam and wildlife officials will often shoot first and ask questions later.

### *Asian Elephant*

The Asian elephant, sometimes called the Indian elephant, was once common in Southeast Asia and were a symbol of royalty. In modern times, however, the elephant is being replaced by heavy machinery and wild elephants are nearly extinct.

The Asian elephant is slightly smaller than its African cousin (which is the largest land animal in the world), but still stands 2.5 meters at the shoulder and weighs in at 4750kg. Asian elephants have smaller ears and tusks and only males have tusks. The elephant has been domesticated in Asia for a very long time and it was used for heavy labor in mountain plantations and even the cities. Its strength is awesome and many consider it a sacred animal. The royal family of Thailand still keeps a small herd of white elephants on a plantation in northern Thailand.

Sadly, the days of the elephant are numbered. Heavy machinery has replaced the elephant in all but a few tasks and many have been turned to the tourist trade. As of 1996, there were no wild elephants remaining in Thailand but there have been reports of a few herds in Myanmar and Laos.

Riding an elephant isn't difficult, if you can climb aboard. Domesticated elephants respond to verbal commands or prods from their riders. Attempting to ride a wild elephant is not recommended.

Although the Asian elephant has no fighting skills and are not as easily angered as the African elephant, if an elephant feels threatened it will charge, crushing all in its path.

### *Cobra*

The poisonous cobra snake is a native of Southeast Asia and causes nearly 750 casualties a year throughout the region. Unlike other animals, the cobra adapts easily to the fields and villages of modern man and has little fear of human beings. Although not the most common of snakes, or the most poisonous, they are nowhere near the endangered species list and pose a genuine hazard to off road movement.

The cobra is a large snake, usually longer than one meter in length and can be up to five meters. They vary in color from brown to emerald green and often have a diamond pattern within their scales. The cobra spreads its ribs near its head to create its familiar hood when threatened, often the last thing a person sees before being bitten. Although the cobra strike is relatively slow, few people can react in time to avoid it. Cobra fangs are short and some species in Southeast Asia actually spray the venom in a blinding stream out to two meters. The venom works by breaking down a victim's blood cells and an average adult human takes several hours before the toxin reaches full effect. Cobra bites are only fatal 10% of the time and anti-venom is available in well-stocked hospitals and clinics but the snakes are so prevalent that they still cause hundreds of deaths a year.

Cobras have nests or burrows and prefer a variety of climates. Some take to fields and pastures while others live in the humid jungles. Some even climb trees and drop onto victims from above.

Cooked cobra is a popular dish in Myanmar and Thailand. Venom from a freshly killed cobra is mixed with liquor in some seedy Bangkok bars and is rite of passage for many visiting soldiers and sailors. Taken in this form the venom has no toxic effect beyond indigestion.

## LANGUAGES

Language divides and unites the people of Southeast Asia. Every country has an official language that is taught in the schools and spoken by most citizens, but there are still dozens of languages spoken only by isolated hill tribes and ethnic minorities. However, there are four main languages spoken in Southeast Asia and they are grouped as follows. Note that there is no Read/Write Vietnamese skill as Vietnamese uses the Romanic alphabet.

Language Table (Southeast Asia)			
Language Groups and Languages			
Burmese Language Group	Burmese Read/Write Burmese	Mon-Khmer	Khmer (Cambodian) Read/Write Khmer
Siamese Language Group	Thai Read/Write Thai Lao Read/Write Lao	Vietnamese	Vietnamese

## NAMES

As in every *Millennium's End* campaign, adventures in Southeast Asia requires dozens of NPCs and bit parts to played by the GM. Most players will be unfamiliar with the area and have to rely on hints and helps in the form of NPCs. Guides, police, corporate executives, beggars, and clients can be used to provide information to assist the players or simply prod them along. Coming up with names for everyone, especially the Asian names, can be hard for those unfamiliar with the territory. Here are a few helps regarding identification and naming in Southeast Asia.

In Southeast Asia, surnames come first. For example, Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi has the given name Suu Kyi and her father's name was Aung San. The generational names are usually dropped by the grandchildren but sometimes they are kept, creating huge names that as much a genealogy as identifier. This can get complicated, particularly if player characters are researching the history of an area or a family.

In countries like Thailand or Vietnam that have been heavily influenced by western culture, people will sometimes adopt western nicknames. It wouldn't be unusual at all to find an NPC named Bobby Coy or Suzy Tian.

In general conversation Asians prefer to address each other by their first names. Westerners, who tend to be more formal, may find this practice a little disconcerting.

Provided below is a quick listing of common names arranged by ethnic type and nationality. Each list is divided into first, second, and surname columns with a letter in parenthesis following to indicate if the name is masculine or feminine. A pronunciation guide follows. Note that the Thai and Lao names have been consolidated into a single list due to the similarities between the two.

### Thai and Lao Names

First Names	Middle Names	Surnames
Arsa (M) (ars-ha)	Ko (ko)	Kamsai (kam-si)
Boryrath (F) (bo-ry-rat)	Lo (lo)	Kavitanon (kav-it-tanon)
Bunrouen (F) (bun-ru-ahn)	Na (na)	Pairuah (pi-ru-a)
Chakrapand (M) (chak-ra-pond)	Pa (pa)	Patalung (pat-a-long)
Jong (M) (jong)	Pe (pay)	Phasuk (pa-suk)
Keng (F) (kang)		Phirote (pi-rot)
Mechai (M) (me-chi)		Phraesrithang (pras-rit-tang)
Nikorn (M) (ni-korn)		Ponsena (pon-sen-na)
Noi (F) (noy)		Sarasin (sa-ra-sin)
Pira (F) (pee-ra)		Sivaraksa (siva-rak-sa)
Pisat (M) (pee-sat)		Sudham (sud-am)
Pongsak (M) (pong-sat)		Ungsongthan (ung-song-tan)
Prateap (F) (pra-te-ap)		Viravaidya (vira-vayd-ya)
Rotjana (F) (rot-jan-na)		Winarnpreecha (win-arn-pree-cha)
Samajarn (M) (sam-ma-jarn)		Wongburanavant (wong-bur-ran-avant)
Sathorn (F) (sat-torn)		
Sirikit (F) (sir-ee-kit)		
Staporn (M) (sta-porn)		
Sulak (M) (su-lak)		
Yuey (F) (yoo-ee)		

### Chinese Names

First Names	Surname
Chang (M) (chang)	Chun (chun)
Chu-Hua (F) (choo-hwah)	Da (da)
Deng (M) (deng)	Di (di)
Hui-Fang (F) (hweh-fahng)	Fei (fway)
Huang (M) (hwang)	Guang (gwang)
Li (M/F) (lee)	Hui (hway)
Lian (F) (lee-ahn)	Kee (kee)
Ming (F) (ming)	Kuan (kwan)
Niu (F) (nee-oo)	Sha (sha)
Ping (F) (ping)	Shen (shen)
Qi (F) (kee)	Tian (tee-ahn)
Qing-Nian (M) (ching-nee-en)	To (too)
Quon (M) (kwan)	Yueng (ywang)
Sheng (M) (shung)	Xiaoping (zhoo-ping)
Yuan (M) (ywahn)	Zhong (zhong)
Yi (F) (yee)	
Zhuang (M) (zhoo-ang)	

### Khmer (Cambodian) Names

First Name	Last Name
Boupha (F) (bo-fa)	Cham (chom)
Chandra (M) (chan-dra)	Coy (co-ee)
Chomron (M) (chom-ron)	Eam (ee-ahm)
Durong (M) (du-rong)	Khan (kahn)
Elay (F) (ee-ly)	Kheng (kang)
Nihm (M) (nim)	Khin (kihn)
Om (F) (oom)	Nuon (noo-ahn)
Phon (M)(pon)	Noy (no-ee)
Pollee (M) (pol-lee)	Roth (rot)
Sarit (M) (sah-rit)	Sok (sok)
Sokanny (F) (so-kah-nee)	Soth (sot)
Sopheha (F) (so-fe-ah)	Theng (tang)
Sophen (F) (so-fen)	Vath (vat)
Somaly (F) (so-mah-lee)	Vorn (vorn)
Soren (M) (so-ren)	
Sovan (M) (so-ven)	
Teve (F) (teh-vee)	
Vanna (F) (vah-nah)	

### Vietnamese Names (use all three names)

First Name	Middle Name	Last Names
Cam (F) (kam)	An (M/F) (ahn)	Diem (dee-em)
Can (M) (gun)	Bua (F) (boo-ah)	Giau (gee-ow)
Chau (M) (chah-oo)	Din (M) (din)	Hoa (hwa)
Dat (M) (dat)	Chau (F) (chow)	Le (lee)
Dieu-Kiem (F) (yoo-kee-em)	Chau (M) (chah-oo)	Loan (loo-ahn)
Kim (F) (keem)	Huynh (F) (hwehn)	Loc (lok)
Kim (M) (kim)	Man (M) (mun)	Oanh (oo-ahn)
My (F) (mee)	Pin (M) (peen)	Quang (kee-ang)
Ngoc (F) (n-gowk)	Tao (F) (tow)	Quy (kee)
Nguyen (M) (n-go-yen)	The (F) (tee)	Tau (tow)
Tam (M) (tahm)	Viet (M) (vee-et)	Thu (tu)
Vinh (F) (vun)	Xuan (F) (zhwung)	Vu (vu)

### Burmese Names

First Name	Last Name
Dagon (M) (da-gun)	Aung (M) (ang)
Khun (M) (kun)	Gyi (F) (g-yee)
Mu (M/F) (moo)	Kyi (F) (k-yee)
Muang (F) (mwang)	Nyunt (M) (n-yoont)
San (F) (san)	Oo (M/F) (oo)
Se (F) (see)	Sa (M/F) (sah)
Suu (M) (soo)	Shwe (F) (shwee)
Thein (M/F) (tee-yin)	Taya (M) (tay-ya)
Wai (F) (wah-ee)	

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## NEW KATA SUBSKILLS

**Kenpo** - This aggressive, attack oriented form of Karate teaches students to disable their opponents with a combination of holds, punches, and kicks. This is a modern martial art with its roots in America but is also widely taught in Australia. This is the martial art taught by Stubby, Senior Cell Leader of the Sydney B/E office. Martial artists in this school may use the following techniques: combination maneuver, pain hold, negate defense, and increase damage. Kata rolls may be made with the following types of actions: Unarmed Hand-to-Hand/Block, Grapple, Kick, and Punch

**Muay Thai** - The traditional sport Thailand, Muay Thai is commonly called Thai kickboxing and uses every blow imaginable with the exception of the head butt. Those who learn Muay Thai also learn the ritual dance that occurs before boxing matches. This martial art is very aggressive and offensive in nature. Muay Thai practitioners may use the following techniques: combination maneuver, negate defense, increase damage, and attack to stun. Kata rolls may be applied to the following actions: Unarmed Hand-to-Hand/Block, Kick, Punch, and a new Unarmed Hand-to-Hand subskill Elbow Strike. This subskill requires the characters engaged in combat to be in close contact to each other and may be used when the attacking character is unable to punch.

### *Skill Packages*

#### **MARTIAL ART--KENPO**

These are the minimum skill level requirements for a black belt in Kenpo.

**Total Cost:** 200 skill points.

**Package Deal:** 175 skill points.

Kata	40
Kenpo	20
Unarmed Hand-to-Hand	40
Block	20
Grapple	10
Kick	20
Punch	20

#### **MARTIAL ART--MUAY THAI**

These are the minimum skill level requirement for entry to an advanced level Thai boxing competition.

**Total Cost:** 200 skill points.

**Package Deal:** 175 skill points.

Kata	40
Muay Thai	20
Unarmed Hand-to-Hand	40
Block	10
Elbow Strike	20
Kick	20
Punch	20

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## MINES AND UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

Southeast Asia is literally covered with things designed to blow you up. Just about everywhere in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos has been bombed or mined at one time or another and chances are, there are still a few around.

Mines are the most popular anti-personnel weapon in Southeast Asia. Most are small, buried devices about the size of a can of tuna and explode upwards when triggered by someone stepping on them. These mines are designed to maim rather than kill on the premise that a wounded person requires more care from fellow soldiers than a dead one. Vehicles that strike a mine such as this will probably not be seriously damaged but will most likely lose a tire and possibly require some repairs.

Other, more lethal explosives exist as well. The American military dropped millions of tons of bombs and artillery shells during their time in Southeast Asia, and not all of these exploded as planned. Everything from small, anti-personnel bomblets to large, two-thousand pound bombs lie rusting under the Asian sun. Unlike mines, which go off only when provoked, many of these are very unstable and will explode for seemingly no reason at all.

On roads and well-used trails and paths the danger is virtually zero. In worked fields and pastures the danger is greater but not extreme. Unused fields and any place not occupied by people are much more risky. Former battlefields or areas that received heavy bombing are very dangerous and should only be crossed with caution. Areas currently under threat and being actively mined should be avoided at all costs.

When player characters cross an area with mines or unexploded ordinance, the GM should determine the level of the threat, the concealment of the mines, and the wariness of the characters. GM's should make a roll for each character within the danger zone based on their Perception with a successful roll indicating the character noticed the danger and avoided it while failure indicates that the character did not avoid the danger and suffers the effects of it.

Use the same stats for unexploded ordinance as in *Millennium's End v2.0*. Use the following stats for anti-personnel mines:

Explosive type	concussion
Attack Number	1
Damage Factor	16 to 22
Range (m)	8 to 11 with all ranges being halved
Damage type	concussive

Disarming a mine requires a successful roll of the Miniature Mechanics skill.

**Saraburi Manufacturing  
H-220 HERF Weapon**

Cost: \$1,250,000

*focused fire*

IA: 20 (laser sight+computer control)

Fire Rate: Once per twenty minutes

Eff Range: 7,500m

Ammo: special battery

Damage: special

*wide broadcast*

IA: 0

Fire Rate: Once per twenty minutes

Eff Range: 1,200m

Ammo: special battery

Damage: special

*HEMTT transport (ten tons)*

Acceleration: 4 / 5

Braking: 11 / 8

Cornering: 1 / 2

Top Speed: 125kph

Range: 360

## **HERF (HIGH ENERGY RADIO FREQUENCY) WEAPONS**

HERF weapons work by broadcasting a powerful pulse of energy that disrupts and/or burns out sensitive electronic parts such as transistors and computer CPUs as well as disrupting radio transmissions. The beam can be tightly focused to strike a single area or it can be widely broadcast in all directions, disrupting everything around it. The pulse does not directly affect people or animals around it, but it does render all electronic equipment useless. Because modern life is so dependant upon electronic technology (not to mention BlackEagle operatives in the field) this can prove to be a major, and possibly fatal, inconvenience.

Saraburi Manufacturing sells only one model of HERF weapon, the H-220, but it has proven to be a popular item with Third-World militaries and insurgent groups as a cheap way to eliminate a technologically superior opponent's edge. Because of the massive power requirements needed for the weapon to work over long distances part of the HERF system is a powerful generator and battery system which hold the charge until its release. All this is mounted on a large HEMTT ten-ton truck. The parabolic dish that broadcasts the beam is located on a computed-controlled crane arm that has 360-degree rotation. For wide broadcasts, the dish is simply aimed at the sky.

An unavoidable quirk of the system is that every time the weapon is fired, there system itself is affected. Although the electronics are shielded as effectively as possible, the pulse still has an effect at 'ground zero'. To counteract this, the computer system is designed to shut down milliseconds before the pulse is broadcast. In addition, large fuses are mounted throughout the system. These fuses, each one a meter long and weighing 10 kilos, burn out spectacularly during each pulse and must be replaced before the system can be fired again.

A crew of five is required to effectively run the HERF weapon, although two if necessary can do it and time is not an issue. Saraburi Manufacturing provides on-site training to clients who purchase the weapon.

### ***Effects***

The HERF system is designed to disrupt or destroy electronic equipment and disrupt radio broadcasts. The HERF pulse is invisible and noiseless, although the weapon itself has a distinct whine to its generators and the burning fuses emit showers of sparks. The amount of disruption and damage is determined by the intensity of the pulse and the distance from the target.

A focused beam fired from the HERF system will burn out all electronics, unshielded or shielded, at a range of 1,750m. The same beam will burn out unshielded electronics out to 3,500m. All unshielded electronics will be temporarily disrupted out to a range of 7,500m.

A wide broadcast is directed in a 360 degree arc from the parabolic dish. The pulse will burn out all electronics at a range of 225m and all unshielded electronics out to 500m. All unshielded electronics and radio signals within 1,200m will be temporarily disrupted. Note that this pulse is broadcast in all directions, including up, and the dome of disruption affects aircraft and radio signals that pass through it.





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## LASER WEAPONS

Laser weapons are actually banned by international agreement and so Saraburi Manufacturing sells them as laser designators. These weapons were originally intended to be used against weapons systems that used optical imaging or range finding but were found to be effective against human targets as well. The blinding effect of these weapons caused an international outrage and all production was stopped, except by China, the United States, and Saraburi Manufacturing.

The most popular model is the LD-11k, a man-portable unit that breaks down into two parts, a tripod and battery and the laser unit itself, and fits into a pair of standard backpacks. It requires two people to operate, a firer and a spotter, although one person can operate the weapon but the fire rate is doubled. The LD-11k has a 5x targeting scope and a long-range IR laser sight.

Once in place, the LD-11k projects a powerful green laser beam up to five kilometers. Targets must be in a direct line-of-sight to be affected and smoke, fog, rain, and other hazards to visibility drastically diminish the weapons effectiveness. Of course, the target must be facing the laser's general direction but closing his or her eyes does NOT stop the blinding effect.

### *Effects*

A direct hit will result in permanent blindness to the target and is also capable of burning out night vision devices, range finders, and other light-sensitive devices. Individuals struck by the beam can be treated at hospitals for flash burns to the retina, but the treatment is long, costly, and not always successful.

A near-hit, within a meter of the target, will result in temporary visual impairment and partial blindness for twenty to forty minutes. For game purposes, every individual struck with a near-hit suffers a -40 impairment to all sight-related rolls for the duration of the blindness. Repeated hits cause an additional -20 impairment. When an individual has reached -100 impairment, they have become completely, and permanently, blinded.

### *Saraburi Manufacturing LD-11k Laser Designator*

*Cost:* \$57,500.00

*Speed:* 12

*IA:* 30 (+20 for the laser sight)

*Fire Rate:* 1 every 3 turns

*Hands Req'd:* 2

*Eff Range:* 1500m

*Action:* semi

*Magazine:* 100 one-second  
bursts/battery

*DF/DD:* special



# APPENDIX TWO

## NAMES & FACES

The following section covers two NPC Stereotypes and seven non-player character that are tied to Southeast Asia and its complex situation. Some have been mentioned in brief in other parts of this book and are associated with the institutions and peoples of the region. Others are completely independent and may

appear in an adventure under a variety of circumstances.

The NPC Stereotypes are intended to cover a broad range of people who fall under that category. Five NPC stats are provided as well as the weapons of choice of the stereotype and other pertinent information. These are just skeletons and can be used as throwaway opponents or, with a little effort, make into complete NPCs.

The seven NPC Stereotypes cover a broad range of people in Southeast Asia, with several different nationalities and personalities to pick and choose from. Of course, nationalities are easy to change as are personalities and GMs are under no obligation to play them in any particular way. Entirely new NPCs who fall under similar categories could be generated from the stats provided.

### *Pirates*

The scourge of the sea-lanes no longer cruise the open ocean in sailing vessels but they are just as effective and vicious as their ancestors. Pirates must also have a basic understanding of the environment of the sea and ship handling skills to sur-

### NPC Stereotype: Pirates

Gender	male	male	female	male	female		
Height	165cm	172cm	179cm	188cm	183cm		
Weight	51kg	60kg	79kg	68kg	77kg		
<b>Int</b>	38	82	40	57	68		
<b>Sen</b>	60	39	68	50	62		
<b>AgI</b>	67	43	55	66	40		
<b>Cor</b>	54	52	34	58	48		
<b>Con</b>	56	42	65	40	47		
<b>Str</b>	48	56	58	36	54		
<b>Per</b>	38	58	54	44	36		
<b>App</b>	40	50	38	46	58		
<b>Bra</b>	55	73	44	49	58		
<b>Wil</b>	46	28	68	54	56		
Perception	44	32	50	38	47		
Base Speed	17	13	15	14	16		
Dam Rating	5	6	6	4	5		
Mass Factor	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9		
Skill Rolls:							
Aim	42	37	49	24	32		
Smallarm	67	44	63	31	42		
Longarm	55	49	69	35	44		
Autofire	61	54	72	30	43		
Armed H-to-H	26	22	25	18	32		
Swing	38	33	35	27	45		
Thrust	41	30	36	27	47		
Climb	28	44	45	35	31		
Drive	24	36	21	27	19		
Powerboat	36	52	31	39	24		
Military Sci.	15	43	18	10	21		
Tactics	21	65	25	15	30		
Navigation	37	26	21	29	33		
Water	54	39	28	43	48		
Swim	27	34	32	38	24		
Unarmed H-to-H	33	29	34	25	39		
Punch	44	40	48	36	51		
<b>Weapons:</b>							
weapon	spd/roll	spd/roll	spd/roll	spd/roll	spd/roll	DF/DD	Dam. Type
Punch	17/44	13/40	15/48	14/36	16/51	1.0	Impact
20cm Knife (swing)	16/43	12/38	14/40	13/32	15/50	2.0	Cut
(thrust)	14/46	10/35	12/41	11/32	13/52	2.6	Puncture
Makarov PM	17/81	13/58	15/77	14/45	16/56	16	Hyd. Shock
AKSU-74	10/82	6/75	8/93	7/51	9/64	19	Hyd. Shock
CIS SR 88	7/87	1/80	5/99	4/56	6/69	19	Hyd. Shock
Win. 1300	7/71	1/69	5/89	4/55	6/64	18	Hyd. Shock

## Guide/Translator

Global Positioning Systems, cellular phones, satellite photos, and geographic maps make it seem as if anybody can go anywhere at any time and not run into trouble. That assumption is not only wrong, but dangerously so. Maps can be incorrect, GPS tells you where you are, not how to get where you want to go, and satellite photos don't penetrate jungle canopy or roofs. If you want to get someplace you've never been before and you want to be able to communicate with somebody when you get there, you need a guide who speaks your language and theirs.

The guide stereotype represents everyone from experienced hunting guides to illiterate tribes people who live little different than their ancestors did. Their key attribute is that they know the land and the languages and can read tracks in the jungle as easily as the words on this page. Few have any formal military training and won't enjoy getting into a firefight, but if it's their skin, they'll do what they have to survive.

NPC Stereotype: Guides/Translators							
Gender	male	female	male	female	male		
Height	168cm	172cm	184cm	179cm	189cm		
Weight	52kg	61kg	77kg	72kg	86kg		
<b>Int</b>	40	62	42	52	54		
<b>Sen</b>	44	44	66	72	26		
<b>AgI</b>	41	32	51	57	39		
<b>Cor</b>	42	34	36	23	34		
<b>Con</b>	48	45	50	58	36		
<b>Str</b>	34	51	52	50	62		
<b>Per</b>	60	76	44	56	36		
<b>App</b>	62	44	30	36	44		
<b>Bra</b>	70	84	29	44	41		
<b>Wil</b>	35	46	28	58	74		
Perception	35	35	50	53	26		
Base Speed	14	12	15	15	13		
Dam Rating	4	5	5	5	6		
Mass Factor	1.3	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8		
Skill Rolls:							
Aim	<b>30</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>40</b>		
Longarm	<b>45</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>58</b>		
Armed H-to-H	<b>36</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>29</b>		
Swing	<b>46</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>39</b>		
Foraging	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>38</b>		
Geography	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>43</b>		
Specific Reg.	<b>56</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>43</b>		
Hiding	<b>41</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>37</b>		
Anglo Lang. Group	<b>32</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>		
English	<b>48</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>60</b>		
Other Lang. Group	<b>24</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>29</b>		
Language	<b>36</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>42</b>		
Other Lang. Group	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>		
Language	<b>27</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>		
Navigation	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>39</b>		
Survival	<b>51</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>44</b>		
Tracking	<b>49</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>38</b>		
Unarmed H-to-H	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>36</b>		
Punch	<b>46</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>52</b>		
<b>Weapons:</b>							
weapon	spd/roll	spd/roll	spd/roll	spd/roll	spd/roll	DF/DD	Dam. Type
Punch	14/ <b>46</b>	12/ <b>41</b>	15/ <b>55</b>	15/ <b>68</b>	13/ <b>51</b>	1.0	Impact
Machete	12/ <b>54</b>	10/ <b>42</b>	13/ <b>71</b>	13/ <b>71</b>	11/ <b>48</b>	2.8	Cut
SIG/Sauer P220	14/ <b>45</b>	12/ <b>56</b>	15/ <b>52</b>	15/ <b>60</b>	13/ <b>55</b>	17	Hyd. Shock
Rem. Model 700	4/ <b>74</b>	2/ <b>80</b>	5/ <b>83</b>	5/ <b>96</b>	3/ <b>87</b>	22	Hyd. Shock



## **Hnut Won Gya** *Burmese Political Activist*

When the SLORC regime opened fire on its own people in 1988, it intended to crush opposition to its rule once and for all. Instead, the slaughter resulted in drawing more people than ever against the Myanmar government, and made heroes of the most unlikely of people. Hnut Won Gya (pronounced nut won gee-yaa) was undergoing a belated term of service as a novice monk in Yangon's huge Shwedagon Pagoda in 1988 and was the source of much discussion among the monks. A heroin addict and an alcoholic, Gya was ten years older than the next initiate and was less than thrilled with the monastic lifestyle. He refused to follow the most basic rules of the temple and was constantly in trouble. Some of the senior monks even considered evicting Gya.

It rained on the night of September 18, but the streets outside the temple were filled with political protestors. Army troops that had been quietly brought into the city deployed against the protestors and opened fire, killing hundreds. The streets flowed with blood and were choked with bodies. Gya, who had escaped from his room to watch the protest from the temple walls, watched in horror. For possibly the first time in his life, he performed an unselfish act and opened a side-door to the fleeing crowd, allowing dozens to flee the carnage. Gya shielded many from the withering gunfire with his body but was miraculously unhurt. He emerged from the crisis a hero of the people, a criminal in the eyes of the government, and a man with his soul reborn.

Gya abandoned his previous bad habits and became a model monk. He took to the role of political agitator with gusto and organized several National League for Democracy protests. After several episodes of imprisonment and beatings for his activities, Gya was forced to flee Myanmar in 1993. He was in the NLD camp on the Thai border when it was raided and saw many of his close friends killed in that action but again, he emerged unscathed. Gya now lives in Chaing Mai and works with the NLD office distributing information, raising funds, and working for the release of political prisoners in SLORC prisons. Gya has become an international celebrity, his story being made into a book and even a Hollywood movie. Although he is uncomfortable with fame Gya doesn't shy away from using it to illuminate the plight of his people and to raise funds.

The NLD has many operations within Myanmar and Gya is involved with most of them. Gya uses a network of monks throughout the nation to gather information about the Thai/Myanmar conflict and civil rights abuses. He has smuggled himself in and out of Myanmar several times and has even made disguised visits to the infamous Prison No. 57 to encourage imprisoned activists. The NLD hired mercenaries and BlackEagle/BlackEagle operatives to get the monk in and out in one piece. Although a dedicated pacifist, Gya understands that for his country to be free, he must rely on people who have a less idealistic approach to their fellow human beings.

Gya is physically unremarkable, made even more so by the uniformity of his simple saffron robes and shaved head. A white scar from a policeman's baton runs from his right ear to the back of his head. Gya wears glasses, but only when reading. His most remarkable characteristic is his winning smile, which reaches from corner to corner of his round face.

Gya speaks Burmese and Thai fluently but his English is halting and he prefers to have a translator whenever possible.

### **Hnut Won Gya**

35 year-old Burmese male  
153cm, 49kg  
bald, dark brown eyes

<b>Int</b>	62	<b>Sen</b>	58
<b>AgI</b>	43	<b>Cor</b>	38
<b>Con</b>	55	<b>Str</b>	36
<b>Per</b>	73	<b>App</b>	35
<b>Bra</b>	49	<b>Wil</b>	69

Perception	44
Base Speed	14
Dam. Rating	4
Mass Factor	1.4

Computer Op	34	<b>41</b>
Civil Systems	14	<b>55</b>
Diplomacy	51	<b>57</b>
Coercion	18	<b>75</b>
Prying	24	<b>81</b>
Journalism	38	<b>45</b>
Research	17	<b>62</b>
Law	25	<b>32</b>
International	12	<b>44</b>
Philosophy	53	<b>60</b>
Eastern	21	<b>81</b>
Psychology	42	<b>49</b>

## JAMES BONNETTI *Corrupt CIA Case Officer*

For the CIA drug smuggling operations to remain a secret, an experienced professionals such as James Bonnetti must handle it. An case officer only a handful of years away from retirement, Bonnetti has spent almost half of his adult life in Southeast Asia in the service of his country. The Italian-American entered the region just after the dissolution of Air America and at the beginning of a new phase in CIA involvement with the opium trade. A quarter century later, Bonnetti manages it all, from bartering with Hmong hill tribe chieftains to making sure that Si Chang Flying Service security is as good as it can be.

The son of a cop, Bonnetti had no intention of joining the drug trade when he entered CIA service in 1975. As an idealistic young case officer fresh from Boston College, Bonnetti came to Southeast Asia at the lowest period of American influence in the region. From these desperate times came desperate measures and Bonnetti developed a Machiavellian philosophy of the ends justifying the means so long as it benefited the greater good of his country. Bonnetti quickly gained a reputation for accomplishing missions at all costs and was introduced into the most secret and darkest of the CIA's operations; Opium smuggling.

Since then, Bonnetti has handled or assisted in every aspect of the operation. He ordered the assassination of five competitors and personally murdered two more. He was aboard a smuggling flight into Laos that crashed and the incident left him with a painful limp. Now, Bonnetti does most of his work from his Bangkok office, delegating jobs to trusted subordinates.

Bonnetti manages to keep the opium smuggling quiet thanks to his position leading a task force for dealing with the Hmong and other hill tribes of the Golden Triangle. Compartmentalization within the office, bribes, threats, and allies within the CIA's bureaucracy keeps the curious away and those who know silent. Although not the most senior officer in the region, or even the Bangkok field office, everyone knows that Bonnetti has much more pull than his position would normally entail.

Although skimming from his illegal activities has left Bonnetti a wealthy man, it taken their toll on his health and his spirit. Aside from the painful limp, Bonnetti is cultivating a crop of stomach ulcers and a heart condition. His hair departed early in his career and the remaining fringe is thin and gray. His increasing consumption of alcohol, Bonnetti's personal narcotic of choice, has left him with a bulbous red nose and a liver on the verge of mutiny. Despite his tailored suits, he somehow always looks like he is wearing somebody else's clothes.

Bonnetti has become a chronic insomniac that can find sleep only after large amounts of alcohol. On those nights he does sleep, his father returns in his dreams to accuse him of betraying his ideals. Thoughts about the damage his smuggling has done to his country plague him during the day too but Bonnetti ignores them, usually with the help of a bottle.

Bonnetti speaks fluent Thai and Laotian and a smattering of Cantonese.



**James Bonnetti**

49-year-old Caucasian male  
183cm, 89 kg  
greying hair, brown eyes, tan skin

<b>Int</b>	64	<b>Sen</b>	53
<b>AgI</b>	43	<b>Cor</b>	45
<b>Con</b>	45	<b>Str</b>	44
<b>Per</b>	54	<b>App</b>	43
<b>Bra</b>	61	<b>Wil</b>	60

Perception	56
Base Speed	14
Dam. Rating	5
Mass Factor	0.9

Acting	35	<b>40</b>
Con	15	<b>55</b>
Aim	30	<b>35</b>
Small	15	<b>60</b>
Auto	10	<b>45</b>
Long	10	<b>45</b>
Anthropology	45	<b>51</b>
Computer Op	35	<b>41</b>
Civil	10	<b>51</b>
Security	5	<b>46</b>
Diplomacy	45	<b>51</b>
Lying	21	<b>73</b>
Prying	18	<b>69</b>
Coercion	20	<b>71</b>
Electrics	40	<b>46</b>
Electronics	20	<b>66</b>
Hiding	40	<b>45</b>
Shadowing	17	<b>62</b>
Perception	30	
Unarmed H-to-H	40	<b>45</b>
Punch	15	<b>60</b>

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD
S&W 1006	0	<b>70</b>	18
Colt 9mm	6	<b>69</b>	17
Punch	0	<b>60</b>	5



## **AN COY WIN** *Vietnamese Party Official*

The future of Vietnam is a hotly debated subject inside and outside the country. Many of the old guard fear the changes that have come in the last decade, primarily the opening of Vietnam to foreign businesses. An Coy Win, a retired Army officer, is one of the old guard who is not afraid of the future, but approaches it with cautious optimism. Because of his ties to both the old and the new generation of Vietnamese communist party members, Win acts as a conduit for communication and compromise between the two sides. In turn, Win has gained respect and considerable power within the government and is one of the most influential members of the party.

Like most of his generation from North Vietnam, Win was conscripted into the North Vietnamese Army during the American phase of the Vietnam war. He fought in several actions, was wounded many times, and was eventually given a field promotion to Lieutenant. Through good fortune and skill, Win was able to make it to the end of the war in one piece and witnessed NVA tanks storming Saigon in 1975. Win remained in the Army, seeing action in Cambodia and against China in the 1980s. He eventually retired with the rank of Major and took a seat within the National Legislature.

During the disastrous early 1980s, Win saw his country starve thanks to inept social planning and lack of resources. Worse, he correctly saw Vietnam falling behind while other countries in Asia were becoming economic dragons. Always a pragmatist, Win was one of the first to support changes in the economic structure of Vietnam to include a limited free market. Although this gained him many enemies, the success of his reforms contrasted with the dismal failure of the socialist programs and Win was promoted within the Legislature to the influential Resources Committee. Using his seat on the Resources Committee, Win promoted further change and was key to opening Vietnam to foreign investment.

Win is a pragmatist first and foremost. Although he believes in the communist party as a political structure he also recognizes its shortcomings. The success of the free market, even under the difficult times of the worldwide depression, has brought his people a better life and so he will continue to champion it. However, Win also recognizes that foreign corporations do not always have the best interests of Vietnam at heart and is vigilant against abuse.

Win also recognizes that he has enemies within the Communist Party and the National Legislature. There are many who would like to see the popular politician disgraced and Win maintains an active network of spies and information sources. Although the network is very low key and clandestine, Win's spies have stolen information, destroyed files, and released damaging photos and information about his enemies. Win allows himself the belief that by staying in power he is helping his country and there is very little he would not do to prevent a loss in personal power.

Unlike most of Vietnam, Win is aware of the food shortage and is looking for solutions from any area he can find. His ties to conservative communists in the National Assembly have alerted him to possible military actions, something he is not in favor of but would not oppose if productive.

Win no longer wears the drab Mao suit of the communist party of the past. He favors business suits, tailored to fit his expanding waistline, and European watches. He will occasionally wear his old uniform, also recently tailored, on holidays or when he wishes to remind people of his service. A widower thanks to cancer, Win is considered handsome and is often seen with attractive young women in Ho Chi Minh City's fashionable restaurants.

Win speaks Russian fluently but must rely on translators for other languages when entertaining foreign dignitaries and investors.

### **An Coy Win**

51 year-old Vietnamese man.  
171cm, 68kg  
Grey hair, brown eyes, tan skin

<b>Int</b>	49	<b>Sen</b>	62
<b>AgI</b>	28	<b>Cor</b>	41
<b>Con</b>	39	<b>Str</b>	31
<b>Per</b>	66	<b>App</b>	59
<b>Bra</b>	46	<b>Wil</b>	71

Perception	57
Base Speed	11
Dam. Rating	4
Mass Factor	1.0

Aim	<b>34</b>
Smallarm	<b>45</b>
Diplomacy	<b>49</b>
Prying	<b>61</b>
Coercion	<b>64</b>
History	<b>30</b>
Journalism	<b>26</b>
Research	<b>34</b>
Military Sci.	<b>38</b>
Strategy	<b>48</b>
Tactics	<b>53</b>
Unarmed H-to-H	<b>35</b>
Punch	<b>49</b>

weapons	speed	roll	DF/DD
Punch	11	<b>49</b>	1.0
RSA PSM	10	<b>60</b>	19

## SATTORN PASSAVONG *Thai Police Detective*

With the level of government-sponsored violence in Southeast Asia, it's easy to forget that there is plenty of personal crime and violence as well. Even Bangkok's financial district is not immune to crime and that falls under the jurisdiction of Detective First Class Sattorn Passavong.

Passavong comes from a middle-class family and entered the National Police Academy in 1982, when the greatest threat to peace in Bangkok was American servicemen on leave. Since hitting the streets as a traffic monitor and patrolman, Passavong has seen many changes come to Bangkok, and most of them have been for the worse.

Most people are surprised when they meet Passavong. His tendency to squint combined with his chubby face gives people the impression of a sub-standard mind. Adding to this is that fact that Passavong is a quiet man and gives short, clipped answers. Those not familiar with him tend to dismiss him as not very bright or even mentally retarded. In fact, this is an illusion fostered by Passavong, who uses it to better conduct his investigations. Passavong is actually one of the smartest and most successful of Bangkok's detectives.

Passavong's big break came during his first year as a detective. A series of violent bank robberies rocked the financial district, each time the bandits striking on the day that the banks had the most cash on hand. An inside job was suspected but Passavong had his doubts. After observing the bank at work, Passavong concluded, contrary to his superiors, that the connection was not at the bank but elsewhere. Passavong determined that the link was a brothel on nearby Patpong Road. He discovered that on the days that the largest deliveries of cash to the bank were made, an extra team of drivers and guards were used. On their lunch hour, the extra guards would visit the brothel, alerting the prostitutes, who would then pass on the information to their bank-robbing boy-friends. All involved in the robberies were quickly arrested and Passavong receive a promotion as well as earning the respect of his superiors.

Passavong's precinct covers most of the financial district, including the notorious Patpong Road. Although he now specializes in homicide cases, Passavong is known to cover robberies, theft, and even minor crimes, if he feels they fit a case he is working on. Like the vast majority of police in Bangkok, Passavong is not above taking a minor bribe for information or to overlook a minor crime, but will refuse substantial bribes that cover major crimes.

Passavong is short, even by Asian standards, but stocky and muscular. He still attends the kickboxing gym where he learned the martial art in his youth, and is a major competitor in the police tournaments. He keeps his dark hair long and in a ponytail tied behind his head. Because of his build and low paycheck, Passavong has a hard time finding clothes that fit. As a consequence, he always appears disheveled and unkempt. He is aware of this fact and uses it to aid his illusion of being slow-witted.



**Sattorn Passavong**

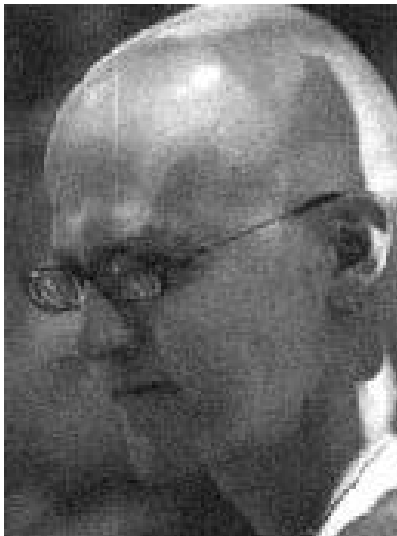
34 year-old Asian man  
154cm, 60kg  
Black hair, brown eyes, brown skin

<b>Int</b>	62	<b>Sen</b>	75
<b>Agl</b>	45	<b>Cor</b>	43
<b>Con</b>	62	<b>Str</b>	59
<b>Per</b>	38	<b>App</b>	21
<b>Bra</b>	42	<b>Wil</b>	46

Perception	73
Base Speed	14
Dam. Rating	6
Mass Factor	1.1

Aim	<b>29</b>
Smallarm	<b>43</b>
Diplomacy	<b>42</b>
Prying	<b>60</b>
Drive	<b>30</b>
Auto	<b>41</b>
Journalism	<b>35</b>
Research	<b>52</b>
Kata	<b>43</b>
Muay Thai	<b>64</b>
Military Sci.	<b>18</b>
Tactics	<b>23</b>
Mini. Mech.	<b>36</b>
Locksmithing	<b>51</b>
Perception	20
Police Science	<b>47</b>
Psychology	<b>30</b>
Deviant	<b>42</b>
Unarmed H-to-H	<b>51</b>
Block	<b>66</b>
Kick	<b>72</b>
Punch	<b>76</b>
Elbow Strike	<b>76</b>

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD
FN Hi-Power	14	<b>57</b>	17
Elbow Strike	14	<b>76</b>	1.0
Kick	14	<b>76</b>	1.0
Punch	0	<b>76</b>	1.0



## QUON SHA *Chinese Businessman/Triad Troubleshooter*

Like all large business organizations, the Red Sash Society Triad occasionally finds it useful to have an outside opinion of their operations; someone who can see the large picture without internal ties and can offer solutions not obvious to those involved in the day-to-day workings. Quon Sha is one such consultant. His extensive knowledge of international corporate law, as well as the practical realities of a criminal enterprise, makes him the perfect choice when a particular unit of the society requires a “crisis manager”. His cold personality and willingness to do whatever is required to accomplish his task makes him dangerous, particularly to those he comes to manage.

A native of Bangkok, Sha is the second son of a middle-class factory manager, and grew up in the city’s residential district of Sukhumvit. As he attended primary school, it was recognized that Sha had a gift for mathematics and he received special training. He prepared to enter college in 1986 but political unrest resulted in riots, during which the factory Sha’s parents managed was burned down. Although he had a scholarship, it was insufficient to allow him to travel to America to attend school and his parents, now unemployed, could not help. When Sha’s future seemed bleak, a Chinese social organization stepped forward and offered to pay Sha’s school expenses in return for services rendered after graduation. Sha gladly accepted and eventually received a degree in international business law from Columbia University.

Sha’s return to Bangkok was his introduction to the Triad. Shan Wa Lin, a wealthy Chinese businessman, hired him to consult on matters of business and law. He quickly determined that not all of Lin’s businesses were 100% legal and learned to make the proper “adjustments” to their records. After only four years under Lin’s wing, Sha made his vows to the Red Sash Society and became a full member.

Sha has come a long way from his naive introduction to the Triad. He no longer makes distinctions between legal and illegal and is as comfortable with gang-bangers as he is with corporate CEO’s. To him, people are merely resources that can be moved, adjusted, and, if necessary, eliminated. His philosophy is evident in his management style. Sha receives assignments to Triad operations in trouble and takes command like a monsoon wind, dismissing ineffective members (who are sometimes executed), promoting underlings, and instituting strict regulations. In some cases, Sha must call in muscle to deal with outside problems, and he directs them in the same manner- precise, calculated, and completely effective.

Sha is approaching his late thirties in style. He has adopted the American style of a shaved head and goatee beard and has a diamond stud earring. When on business he always wears a tailored silk suit, usually blue or dark gray and immaculate in appearance. His back and upper arms are covered in tattoos, each a symbol of his power within the Society but he never shows these in public. Sha despises uncleanness and disorder not for sanitary reasons but because he views it as a symptom of personal ineptitude and wastefulness.

Thanks to his time in America, Sha speaks English with almost no accent. He also speaks Thai, Chinese (Cantonese), some French, and a few words of German.

### Quon Sha

37 year-old Thai male  
158cm, 63kg  
shaved head, brown eyes, tan skin

<b>Int</b>	74	<b>Sen</b>	64
<b>Agl</b>	33	<b>Cor</b>	32
<b>Con</b>	32	<b>Str</b>	36
<b>Per</b>	56	<b>App</b>	53
<b>Bra</b>	55	<b>Wil</b>	72

Perception	47
Base Speed	12
Dam Rating	4
Mass Factor	1.1

Aim	25	<b>30</b>
Small Arms	10	<b>40</b>
Business	42	<b>49</b>
Finance	21	<b>70</b>
Law	51	<b>58</b>
Civil/Business	21	<b>79</b>
Criminal	14	<b>72</b>
International	12	<b>70</b>
Diplomacy	38	<b>44</b>
Coercion	16	<b>60</b>
Unarmed H-to-H	28	<b>32</b>
Punch	10	<b>42</b>

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD
Berretta 92F	0	<b>57</b>	17
Punch	0	<b>42</b>	4



## MONIVONG VANG *Hmong Village Leader*

Monivong Vang is one of the reasons that the Laotian People's Revolutionary Army travels only in large groups. From his village of Chakravant, located in the hills above the Mekong River in central Laos, Vang leads his band of guerilla soldiers in a struggle that is becoming increasingly complex. Although he has no formal training in warfare, he is a quick study and his political skills and leadership qualities make him a dangerous enemy and a valuable ally.

Vang doesn't have many memories of his childhood in Laos. Like hundreds of thousands of Hmong refugees, his family made a frantic escape across the Thai border. Bullets fired by Pathet Lao troops felled his mother and two sisters and gave him a permanent scar across his left thigh. The rest of his young life was spent in Thai refugee camps and finally resettlement in America when he was eleven. He adapted quickly to his new home in California and by the time he was seventeen, he had become valedictorian of his high school. By the time he was twenty-nine he had a small chain of seafood restaurants and had amassed a small fortune.

The memory his family being cut down festered in his heart and he developed a hatred of communism in general and the Laotian communist government in particular. After a business partner embezzled funds and forced Vang into bankruptcy, he decided that his real destiny lie in his homeland. He traveled to Thailand and from there found his way back into Laos and to his family home in Chakravant.

Vang's appearance is unremarkable. Although somewhat taller than the average Hmong his only outstanding feature is a pair of wire-frame eyeglasses. He prefers to wear a traditional wrap around his waist and a t-shirt. Vang's quiet manner encourages his subordinates speak during village conferences. When making decisions, he always considers the consequences with the greater good of his villagers foremost in his mind. When in the field, he allows others with more experience to formulate tactical plans but he decides which one has the most merit. His leadership and personal rapport with the troops motivates them to overcome the most dangerous obstacles.

Although Chakravant, like most Hmong villages, relies on its annual production of opium for survival, Vang is trying to encourage his people to plant other crops. The rocky, red soil has yet to produce enough to feed his people but Vang continues to hope. In the meantime, he arranges the cultivation, harvest, and sale of the opium to the highest bidder.

If Vang has an Achilles Heel, it his fanatical devotion to his remaining family. His grandmother, a handful of cousins, and his wife and three young children live in the family house and he places their safety above all else. He has lost one family and refuses to lose another.

Vang speaks Thai, Laotian, some French, and English with a strong California accent.



**Monivong Vang**

35 year old Hmong male  
135cm, 54kg  
dark hair, brown eyes, dark skin

<b>Int</b>	50	<b>Sen</b>	64
<b>AgI</b>	43	<b>Cor</b>	52
<b>Con</b>	72	<b>Str</b>	43
<b>Per</b>	64	<b>App</b>	34
<b>Bra</b>	45	<b>Wil</b>	46

Perception	73
Base Speed	14
Dam. Rating	4
Mass Factor	1.2

Aim	40	<b>45</b>
Autofire	20	<b>65</b>
Longarm	13	<b>57</b>
Smallarm	8	<b>53</b>
Foraging	50	<b>56</b>
Equatorial	21	<b>77</b>
Hiding	44	<b>50</b>
Concealment	15	<b>65</b>
Creeping	8	<b>58</b>
Military Science	35	<b>40</b>
Hardware	11	<b>51</b>
Tactics	17	<b>57</b>
Perception	30	
Survival	25	<b>31</b>
Equatorial	12	<b>43</b>
Tracking	22	<b>28</b>
Equatorial	11	<b>39</b>
Unarmed H-to-H	25	<b>29</b>
Punch	12	<b>41</b>
Kick	10	<b>39</b>

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD
AK-47	8	<b>91</b>	18
Makarov PM	0	<b>67</b>	16



## **DR. AMEL KABILA** *Exhausted WHO Doctor*

The Kingdom of Cambodia has one doctor for every 14,000 people, one of the worst such ratios in the world. In an attempt to compensate, the World Health Organization sponsors doctors from other countries who can offer their desperately needed services. Few are dedicated enough to serve outside the capital, let alone in the dangerous north. Dr. Amel Kabila is one who dares.

Amel Kabila became a doctor to find redemption. As a teenager in his native South Africa, Kabila was involved with the violent terrorist group African Unity Front and was instrumental in several murders. His last assignment with the terrorist group was the delivery of a bomb to a government office building. Kabila, nervous and paranoid, believed he was being followed by police, and dropped the bomb in the street. To his horror, the bomb detonated moments later, shredding a passing school bus. Although he was wounded in the blast, he spent the next hour assisting rescuers in pulling tiny bodies from the scorched hulk. He vowed to never again be an agent of death and eventually became a doctor and sought out the places where he was needed most. In 1991 he came to Cambodia.

The clinic he has built in the Siem Reap UN safe zone is the only medical facility within hundreds of miles. Understaffed, with few supplies, and in desperate need of help, Dr. Kabila and his staff of personally trained assistants work fourteen-hour days and still must turn people away. He makes time to visit surrounding communities, offering basic sanitary advice and children's checkups. Kabila charges only what his patients can afford, usually very little, but isn't afraid to gouge a patient who he thinks can contribute more.

He is not immune from the fighting and in 1997 was kidnapped by Khmer Rouge soldiers to treat their wounded. At their hands he suffered beatings and torture for each death that he was unable to prevent. After nearly three months he was able to escape during a firefight, but only by picking up a rifle and killing his guard. Although it was necessary for him to escape, the fact that he broke his personal vow has caused Kabila great grief. He was given the opportunity to leave Cambodia for another WHO assignment, Kabila declined, refusing to give up what little good he had created.

Those who speak to Kabila are struck by how tired he is but few realize how deep his exhaustion goes. Kabila is depleted in both body and soul. Kabila's actions are more automatic reflexes than anything else and he has taken to using amphetamines to keep himself going. He refuses to stop, believing that if he does, he will allow innocent people to die. At the same time, he knows that no matter what he does, he cannot stop the death and misery that surrounds him. In his subconscious, Kabila believes that it is his destiny to die in Cambodia, to pay a final price for his past.

Dr. Kabila looks much older than his forty-four years would suggest. Days on end without sleep and the constant struggle to save patients under primitive conditions have wrinkled his face and grayed his hair. Most of all, his eyes reflect his loss of faith in his own ability to make a difference.

Dr. Kabila speaks his native Afrikaans and English fluently and has learned Khmer (Cambodian), some Vietnamese, and Thai.

### ***Dr. Kabila's Clinic***

Located in the Siem Reap UN safe zone, Dr. Kabila's clinic has ten beds and room for another seven in the halls. The clinic has an operating room and two examination rooms as well. Electricity is supplied by an aging generator and is limited to the amount of diesel fuel that is on hand. Medical supplies are delivered once a month by airdrop but for the past two months the containers have been stolen by Khmer Rouge soldiers before Kabila can reach them. To supplement his meager rations, Kabila buys medicine off the black market or begs whatever he can from the British units that rotate through the safe zone. The clinic is almost always full with patients suffering from jungle diseases and wounds from the fighting.

### **Dr. Amel Kabila**

44 year-old black male  
202cm, 99kg  
gray hair, dark eyes, black skin

Int	<b>62</b>	Sen	<b>44</b>
Agl	<b>45</b>	Cor	<b>51</b>
Con	<b>34</b>	Str	<b>44</b>
Per	<b>33</b>	App	<b>46</b>
Bra	<b>45</b>	Wil	<b>59</b>

Perception	46
Base Speed	14
Dam Rating	5
Mass Factor	0.7

Aim	35	<b>39</b>
Smallarm	5	<b>43</b>
Drive	45	<b>49</b>
Automobile	21	<b>70</b>
Foraging	39	<b>43</b>
Equatorial	17	<b>60</b>
Medicine	54	<b>59</b>
Emerg. Med.	26	<b>85</b>
Gen. Practice	24	<b>83</b>
Veterinary	10	<b>69</b>
Perception	22	
Pharmacy	52	<b>56</b>
Surgery	47	<b>53</b>
Survival	24	<b>28</b>
Equatorial	12	<b>40</b>
Unarmed H-to-H	39	<b>43</b>
Punch	17	<b>60</b>

weapon	speed	roll	DF/DD
Colt M1911A1	1	<b>58</b>	19
Punch	0	<b>60</b>	5