
MUTANT
CHRONICLES
CAPITOL™
PRIDE AND PROFIT

CAPITOL™



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It was an age of Darkness. It was an age of Light. It was a time when people reached for the stars while grubbing in the dirt for gold. It was a time of new beginnings and old endings. It was a time of scientific alchemy, when humanity molded worlds, yet could not overcome its own base desires. It was an age of mass migration, when men and women left the poisoned rubble of their ancient home to seek a new destiny among the stars. It was the Age of the Megacorporation.



First and mightiest among the great corporations was Capitol. Peace, profit and prosperity were its aims. The greatest good for the greatest number was its goal. Its people were free. Its citizens equal. Its leaders were strong. Its vision was clear. Its message of hope appealed to the huddled billions tired of endless war and endless famine.

On great ships, the Pioneers set forth to make landfall on the newly reshaped worlds. First to Luna and then to Mars, Capitol's people flowed outward. The deserts bloomed. The factories churned forth chattels. For a brief moment, it looked like a new age of peace and prosperity had dawned on all the worlds. It was not to be.

Other corporations had risen. New rivals dogged Capitol's heels.

Rivalry led to tension. Tension led to conflict. Conflict escalated to war. An age of strife descended as the four great corporations fought with every resource at their command. Then the wars reached their height, and the great collapse came.

Complex systems became unreliable. The ancient thinking machines ran out of control. All the vast and complex technologies humanity had surrounded itself with, and placed faith in, failed at once. It was a cataclysm the like of which had not been seen before in all of human history. New diseases ran rife. Core systems melted down. Entire populations were wiped out at a stroke.

For a time, it seemed that all knowledge would be lost, that humanity was doomed forever to barbarism or extinction. For long ages, the survivors struggled merely to stay alive. Then came Nathaniel, the blessed, the first Cardinal, the bearer of words of hope and righteousness. He spoke, and people listened. Eventually the great corporations emerged into a new age led by a new force, the blessed Brotherhood, which brought the word of Nathaniel to all humanity.

The people of Capitol were among the first to recognize the truth and justice of the Cardinal's words, and they clamored for their leaders to build them a Cathedral as a sign of their faith. It was completed in the first year of the reign of Cardinal Petrus the First, and soon the people would have need of its comfort, for in the following year, the Dark Legion arrived on Mars.

Because of Imperial's base treachery, Capitol's forces failed to prevent the building of the Citadel of Saladin on Mars. This evil Nepharite was to prove the greatest of all Capitol's enemies. Then the moons themselves became omens of terror, marked forever with the evil runes of Muawijhe and Semai. But the folk of Capitol never faltered. They girded the Citadel with fortifications, and they poured warriors and munitions into the circle until the Darkness was pushed back and contained. And they waited, knowing that evil brooded now over their ancient home. And they prayed for a sign that they might be delivered.

— Extract from the Eighth Chronicle: The Cartel and the Megacorporations, by Lucius Marcellianus.

INTRODUCTION

Capitol is easily the most democratic, egalitarian and open of all the megacorporations. Its people are brought up in a culture that preaches personal responsibility, tolerance and a flexible approach to new ideas and situations. The essence of the Capitolian message is that anyone can succeed, providing they are smart enough, tough enough and, above all, work hard enough. It is really true that anyone can become President. In reality, the process is incredibly difficult, but it can be done.

Several Presidents have started with nothing and progressed all the way to the top of the Board of Directors. Capitol is the corporation of opportunity. Capitol's employee-citizens are encouraged to improve themselves at every turn. Indeed, the idea of personal improvement is, along with the idea of teamwork, at the very core of the Capitolian way of life.

Capitol is the only of the original megacorporations that is not led by a hereditary aristocracy. All Capitolians believe that, if you work hard enough and have sufficient talent, you can reach the top. From birth, Capitolians are encouraged to be all they can be, by one of the age's most powerful media machines and a corporate culture that rewards excellence.

The people of Capitol believe that they should respect differences. «From diversity comes strength—in diversity lies freedom» is one of the principles enshrined in the corporation's Charter. Capitolians are taught to respect the beliefs of others and to solve problems through negotiation rather than conflict when that is possible.

The other great principle is that «the business of Capitol is business». Capitol exists to do business. Its culture rewards successful entrepreneurs, and Capitol is only too pleased to incorporate successful freelance operations under its wing.

Unlike Imperial, for example, Capitol never takes over other people's assets by force. It will, however, make a fair offer for them under the Cartel's agreed rules for company takeover. This constant process of assimilation has led to Capitol becoming the largest, if not wealthiest, of the megacorporations. It also means that it is most freelancers' dream to become wealthy by selling an operation to Capitol. Thus the corporation enjoys enormous goodwill among the independent operators.

What's more, Capitol possesses the largest and most powerful media machine in the history of humanity. The average Capitolian grows up in an environment which is completely saturated with the Capitolian message. This awesome media industry makes sure that Capitol is seen to reward the qualities it admires in its people. Success stories are always brought to the public's attention. The overwhelming message is always positive. Capitolians are brought up to believe they can succeed, and their corporation lets everyone know when they have.

And yet despite this relentless propaganda, all Capitolians know that something has gone wrong with the dream. Every day, before their very eyes, the Capitolians see the evidence of it. Perhaps it is the influence of the baleful moons overhead. Perhaps it's because people are diminished in these lesser, later days. All know that the dream is dying. Violent crime is rife. Corruption is endemic. The poor and the disenfranchised throng the streets of the megacities. Capitol's mighty security agencies struggle to keep the peace in their own territories. War with the other megacorporations erupts along every frontier. And beyond all this lies the ever-present, lurking threat of the Dark Legion.

In this age, now more than ever, Capitol needs heroes.

CREATING A CAPITOLIAN CHARACTER

Capitolian characters are created in a very similar manner to those in the *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook. Capitol characters should use the new Capital Adolescence Events Table and Capital Special Events Table. They may choose to follow some new careers contained in this book, but they also have the option of following any career in the *Mutant Chronicles* RPG or *The Freelancers' Guide*. Capitol is enormous and has many diverse subdivisions.

FAME

Fame is a new concept introduced in this sourcebook to reflect the style of Capitolian life. To understand the nature of Fame, you must understand the nature of Capitol and its media.

Fame in the Capitolian world does not simply mean being well known. It means that you have been taken up by Capitol's media industry and used as a role model. Once you encounter this



RIOT

All around, the sirens blared. The red lights on top of the police cars flickered. Overhead, an autogyro whizzed, the roar of its blades audible even over the sirens' wail and the chanting of the crowd. The green clouds of emetic gas started to clear, their fog torn apart by the cold night breeze. Many of the crowd lay groaning on the ground, clutching their stomachs, their threadbare clothes caked in their own vomit. Some of them, the smarter ones, had covered their faces with handkerchiefs. Still more and more people entered the square. Their thin, haggard faces were drawn and angry. A few brandished clubs. Others held home made petrol bombs. Lasky leaned against the side of his Rat and wondered where they came from.

Scum, he thought. That's what you are. You stand there, and you shout protests against the Directors, and you really don't have a clue. You shout about the war with Imperial, and you protest against the killing. You don't want us to fight. Idiots! Don't you know that if we don't fight, the other corporations will eat us alive. You call yourselves idealists, but really you are just fools.

«Ready, Lieutenant,» said Sergeant Trask. Lasky looked at him and then at his men. The Armed Interdiction Police Squad was drawn up in a disciplined line, their riot shields interlinked, their nightsticks held ready. Their rebreather masks made them looked ominous and insect-like in the gloom. Pride filled Lasky's



heart. The contrast between these disciplined defenders of the Capitolian way and the ragged rabble of the protesters could not be greater. Stretcher bearers were already carrying casualties both from the crowd and the police toward the waiting ambulances. Lasky thought that, if he had his way, he would dump the wounded protesters on the Mound. It was the best

process, your life will change beyond belief. If you become sufficiently famous, your story will be analyzed in depth. Books and articles and films will be made about you. Your life story will be given a slant that carries the message that Capitol means it to have.

If you started off poor and succeeded, your life will be a rags-to-riches story. If you started off rich, lost all your money and then performed a heroic deed, your life story will tell a tale of fall and redemption. The message is always positive. The famous are always portrayed as admirable. You will be made into a role model for all those others just like you out there.

As far as player characters are concerned, all of this is reflected in their Fame rating. Everyone's Fame rating starts at zero, and it's not necessarily an advantage to have a rating greater than this. But it is worth knowing about.

Fame can be acquired in two ways: during the process of character creation and during play. During the character creation process, if you roll a 1 when rolling 1d20 to continue in your present career (the re-employment roll), then you have achieved a «perfect success». This means that



place for rubbish like that.

He walked over to one of the stretchers and looked down at the scared face of its occupant. «What's your name, boy?» he demanded.

«Wheeler. Anthony Wheeler. I'm a Capitolian citizen. I demand a lawyer.»

Lasky grabbed him by the throat and pulled him upright. The injured boy groaned. «Lawyer, boy? Lawyer? You're gonna wish you'd never been born. It's the Brigades for you!» The kid looked faint. Lasky let him drop and gave his attention back to the crowd.

you've done something outstanding during the course of that two-year term. If you're a soldier or a cop, you're decorated for bravery. If you're a reporter, you won an award for your government corruption exposé. If you're a lawyer, you won a trial that saved an innocent person from execution, and so on. While it's perfectly possible that such actions are all in a day's work to your character, a perfect success means that a particular deed has come to the attention of the Capitol media. Your face becomes better known. Articles are written about you. Your Fame rating increases by one.

Your Fame may also be increased by events from the Capital Adolescence Events or Special Events Tables.

During play, if you succeed in performing some particularly good work, your Game Master may reward you by increasing your Fame rating. So if you save the life of a prominent politician or perform acts of heroism against the Dark Legion, you might qualify.

THE EFFECTS OF FAME. Being famous is a big thing in Capitol. The corporation claims that it has no aristocracy. but this is not quite correct. The famous are its ruling class. Being famous will help you get a job, a good table in a restaurant or even a date.

This is reflected by adding your Fame rating to any Communications SVs involving Capitol citizens or the corporation. It's also added to your PER roll when you apply for a job or roll to continue in your present one. Of course, there are situations in which no amount of Fame will save you. An assassin is not going to stop and ask for your autograph if there is a contract out on you. The police will give you no special treatment if you are found standing over a murder victim with a smoking gun in your hand. Generally, though, in most social situations, Fame works to your advantage.

There is a chance you'll be recognized by complete strangers. Roll 1d10. If the result is under your Fame rating, you've been spotted. This can be quite embarrassing if you are working undercover and are not in disguise.

Fame also means money. Your Social Status need never be lower than your Fame rating if you choose to cash in on it. You can always earn money doing product endorsements, making personal appearances, and so on. Capitol rewards Fame.

Fame can have its dark side. If you are famous and then perform a criminal act, your Fame rating becomes negative. You have fallen from grace and are publicly reviled as a black-hearted villain. Your negative Fame still acts as a modifier in your dealing with Capitolians—it just works against you. For purposes of being recognized, you should treat negative Fame as if it were positive.

PROSPERITY

Capitol looks after its citizens. Because it provides so many opportunities and is such an upwardly mobile society, you can opt to add +1 to the die roll when checking whether your Social Standing increases or decreases during character creation. You don't have to do this if you don't want to. Not everyone wants to be successful.

NETWORKING

Since Capitolian society is so open and people can progress so freely within it, networking is very important. People often establish networks of contacts within their professions. These people can be called upon to provide help, information or influence. The downside of all this is that you can be asked to reciprocate.

In game terms, this means that, if you choose, you can maintain a contact in any of the careers you have followed. If you have been a journalist, you still have contacts in Capitol's media. If you have been in the AFC, you still know someone on the inside. You should note all these contacts on your character sheet. Remember, though, it cuts both ways. If you choose to maintain the contacts, the GM is at liberty to have them ask you for favors, too.

CRIMINAL RECORD

Capitolians abhor crime, and for good reason. A criminal record means that you lose all the privileges of Capitolian citizenship. You cannot vote in elections. You cannot serve in the AFC (except in the Freedom Brigades), and you cannot have a license for firearms. You cannot invoke the prosperity rule (see above), and most of your networking contacts will shun you. Those who maintain the contact are most likely interested in having you perform criminal activities on their behalf.

A criminal record actually works against you in Capitolian society. When rolling for Social Status variations during character creation, you must subtract 1 from your roll.

If you have acquired any Fame points, these become negative. You still have them, but they apply as a negative modifier in all your dealings. This holds until you either prove your innocence (assuming you are innocent) or atone for your crime. Atoning for your crime means performing some act of great heroism in the service of the corporation. Alternatively, you might choose to join the Freedom Brigades and start life afresh.

PROMOTION

Being a soldier in the AFC often means a hard time, but if you're successful, it can be quite prosperous. You'll be decorated, gain ranks and maybe be transferred to an elite unit.

This is all handled in the re-employment roll. As stated in the «Fame» section above, a roll of 1 is a perfect success, meaning renown and promotion. A successful roll also promotes you, while an unsuccessful roll usually means you're sacked from the AFC! A fumble (an unmodified 20) can be devastating for your career!

These rules for promotion apply only to the military. The different ranks used in the AFC are found elsewhere in this book. These rules can also be used for the military of the other corporations

PERFECT SUCCESS. If you roll a perfect success on your re-employment roll, you are decorated in some way (GM's choice). Also, you have four options:

- Brag about it and gain 2 ranks and 1 Fame point.
- Stay modest and gain 1 Fame point and be transferred to a higher-status unit. (The GM should present a number of choices and allow the player to choose. For example, this is the normal way of becoming a Doomtrooper!)
- Lay low and gain 1 rank.
- If you're a Grunt, you may choose to be promoted directly to 2nd Lieutenant.

SUCCESS. If you make your re-employment roll, you automatically gain one rank. That's it.

FAILURE. If your re-employment roll fails, you may roll another 1d20 or simply take an honorable discharge as described on the table below.

ROLL RESULT

1-3 Dishonorable discharge due to complete incompetence. You are demoted to private and may never again choose a military background. (Except for the Freedom Brigades.)

4-10 Honorable discharge due to lack of potential within your area of expertise. You keep your rank, but may not choose a military background during the next repetition. (Except for the Freedom Brigades.)

11-15 You are demoted one rank, but you may pursue the same background the next repetition anyway.

16-20 You are demoted two ranks, but you may pursue the same background the next repetition anyway. However, you are automatically transferred to an inglorious, front-line unit (like the 15th Cesspool Digger Company).



FUMBLE. If you roll an unmodified «20» on your re-employment roll, you must roll another 1d20.

ROLL RESULT

1 Your mistakes result in the death of 10,000 troops or half a dozen generals. You receive 1d10 negative Fame points. You are also sentenced to death or 10 years in the Freedom Brigades.

2-10 Dishonorable discharge. You are found guilty of a minor crime and lose all your stripes (you're demoted to private or junior cadet) and are sacked. You may never again choose a military background. (Except for the Freedom Brigades.)

11-15 You are found guilty of a serious crime, and you are sentenced to death or 10 years in the Freedom Brigades.

16-20 Grave insubordination. You prove yourself unworthy of wearing the AFC uniform. However, in the meantime, you win an award for heroism and may choose to enlist in the Free Marines! (If you have such an award already, this result automatically applies.)



«Apes, murderers, killers!» they shouted. They were recovering from the gas now, and they were ready to charge the line again.

Apes, you call us. Lasky liked the sound of that. It suggested strength and brutality, and these troubled times called for both. I'm proud to be an Ape, if that's what people like you call us. Someone has to stand up for the way of our forebears. If it wasn't for us Apes, people like you would see the dream of the Pioneers defiled and destroyed by our enemies. You would hand them our world and our lives on a silver platter. You are all traitors. You should be lined up and shot. The Directors are too soft on people like you.



You are just lackeys of our enemies. We need more people like General Sinclair. He's a man. He's not afraid to stand up to those grasping Imperial scumsuckers.

A wave of stones pattered like rain off the riot shields. A blazing arc marked the progress of a petrol bomb. It landed before the police line and exploded in a shower of glass and flame. The line wavered for a moment but held. Suddenly, Lasky had plain had enough. His face mask felt tight on his face. He lovingly stroked the handle of his officer-issue Bolter.

«All right men,» he shouted. «Forward. Maximum force. Let's teach these scumbags a lesson they'll never forget.»

He saw the men nod in agreement. Rats revved up. The line opened to let the tracked bikes through and then marched forward behind them. Nightsticks rose and fell. Skulls split. Blood flowed. The chanting stopped. The screaming started.

CAPITOL ADOLESCENCE EVENTS TABLE

2D20 ADOLESCENT EVENT

2 DISABLED•. You have had a terrible accident which almost cripples you. Your Movement Allowance values should always be read from the line above the normal on the Combat Statistics Table.

3 WIMP•. In pressing situations, you tend to dither and dawdle because of stress. Read your Actions per Round from the line above the normal on the Combat Statistics Table.

4 WEAK BONES•. Subtract 5 from your total Body Points.

5 DIMWITTED•. Your Defensive and Perception Bonuses should always be read from the line above the normal on the Combat Statistics Table.

6 SERIOUS CRIME COMMITTED. Guilty or not, you have been sentenced for a serious crime. You must serve 1d4+1 two-year terms in prison or join the Freedom Brigades. See result 8, too.

7 MINOR CRIME COMMITTED. You were found guilty of a minor crime for which you must serve two years in prison or volunteer for the Freedom Brigades. See result 8, too.

8 CRIMINAL RECORD•. In Capitol, a criminal record is a very bad thing. You cannot vote or hold a firearms license or public office. You can expunge this criminal record by serving five terms in the Freedom Brigades.

9 OWE A FAVOR TO A HIGH-RANKING POLITICIAN•. You are in the debt of a high-ranking member of Capitol's political elite. In the future, you will be called upon to perform a service for him or her. If you refuse, you will have made a powerful enemy.

10 ORPHANED•. Both your parents died in a terrible accident, and you were sent to an orphanage. Reduce your Social Standing by 3. (1 is the minimum.)

11 INFLUENTIAL GODFATHER•. You have an influential godfather with connections everywhere. The first time you apply for a job, you may ignore any entrance requirements. You still have to make the die roll to pass the interview, though.

12 POLITICAL PATRONAGE•. Your local politician takes a very strong interest in your future. His or her influence enables you to enter any career or college of your choice, ignoring any entrance requirements and the need for an interview. You may call on this person's influence 1d3 times. Be warned that this debt may be called in later. See result 9.

13 MILITARY HERITAGE•. Your family has a long, proud tradition of serving in the AFC. You will be accepted into a military college even if you do not meet the normal entrance requirements. Increase your INT to 7 if it is lower.

14 TECHNICAL TALENT•. You have shown enough technical aptitude to win a scholarship to a technical university even if you do not meet the usual entrance requirements. Increase your INT to 12 if it is lower.

15 BUSINESS FAMILY•. You come from one of Capitol's well-established entrepreneurial families. You may enter a business school without meeting any of the entrance requirements. Raise your INT to 10 if it is less, and add 1 to your Social Standing.

16 MEDIA FAMILY•. Your family has a long history of involvement with Capitol's media machine. You may enter a media college without meeting any of the normal requirements. Increase your INT to 10 if it is lower.

17 CHILD STAR•. You have been in several Capitol movies or TV or radio broadcasts. Even through adult life, your fame will haunt you. If you want to enter the Star career, you may ignore the normal requirements. Increase your Fame by 1.

18 POLITICAL CONNECTIONS•. Your family has many links with Capitol's political establishment. Should you choose to take up the Politician career, you may ignore any of the usual entrance requirements.

19 WHIZ KID•. You embody that Capitolian ideal, the youthful go-getter. Even from an early age, you were doing deals and making money. Add 1 to your Social Standing and Fame. If you want to go to a business school, ignore any entry requirements.

20 LOCAL HERO•. You performed an act of such exceptional heroism that it was picked up by the corporation's media. Add 1 to your Fame and 1 to your MST.

21 SAFE JOB•. You don't have to make any INT/PER rolls the *first* time that you want to be employed.

22 OWED A FAVOR. Someone in high places owes you a favor. You can call this in once, for almost any purpose. It will get you a job or let you ignore a prison sentence or failing to be employed. If you do not use it during character creation, you may save it for a later time in play.

23 SLICK SPEAKER. You get +1 on all Communications SVs.

24 NATURAL TECHNICIAN. You get +1 on all Technical SVs.

25 SLENDER BODY. You get +1 on all Movement SVs.

26 WEAPONS FANATIC. You get +1 on all Firearms SVs and +1 on your Weapons Systems SV.

27 MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING. You get +1 on all Combat SVs and may make one free pick from the Combat field of expertise. Add +2 to PER.

28 ANATOMICAL SIXTH SENSE•. Somehow, you always seem to hit people where it hurts. Add +1 to your Offensive Bonus.

29 SUPERB SENSES. You get +1 to your Perception and Avoid SVs.

30 STRONG WILL. Add +1 to MST and +3 to your Interrogation SV.

31 CHARISMATIC VOICE. Raise your PER and all Communications SVs by 2.

32 GOOD BODY CONTROL. Raise COR by 1 and all Movement SVs by 2.

33 CONTACT WITH MEGACORP. You have a contact within one of the other mega-

corporations. (Roll a d6: 1=Bauhaus, 2=Mishima, 3=Cybertronic, 4=Imperial, 5 or 6=the Brotherhood.) The GM decides exactly how this contact works, but it should be a considerable advantage whenever you want information about that organization's doings, if you want to get an entrance pass to one of the organization's official buildings, if you want bailed out when arrested by one of the organization's security agents, and so on.

34 LUCKY STIFF. You win a fortune in the lottery. Raise your Social Standing by 3. Add 1 to your Fame rating thanks to the attendant publicity.

35 RELATIVE IN THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE. Should you ever get into trouble with the law, roll 1d20. If the result is lower than your PER, the case is immediately dismissed. If you've already got a record, make the roll anyway. If you succeed, your name's been cleared.

36 RESISTANT TO PAIN. Add 1 to your Body Points in each body part.

37 SOLE HEIR TO WEALTHY RELATIVE. Add 5 to your Social Standing.

38 GIFTED STUDENT. You may repeat your elementary education.

39 PHYSICALLY GIFTED. You may add 3 to any basic capability.

40 SPECIAL FORCES TRAINING. You have been drafted into the Capitol special forces unit of your choice. Add four years to your age and 2 to all your basic capabilities. Take two picks from each field of expertise and four free picks. If you still do not meet the minimum requirements, they'll take you anyway. You are now part of the unit. Congratulations.

CAPITOL SPECIAL EVENTS TABLE

2D20 SPECIAL EVENT

2 DISABLED•. You have been involved in a terrible accident which almost cripples you. Read your Movement Allowance from the line above the normal on the Combat Statistics Table. An operation to put things right costs about 100,000 Crowns.

3 BONE DISEASE•. You have picked up an extremely nasty, wasting disease. Subtract 5 from your total Body Points. Treatment costs about 50,000 Crowns.

4 SEVERE CONCUSSION•. You will never quite be yourself again after that last blow to the head. Read your Defensive and Perception Bonuses from the line above the normal on the Combat Statistics Table.

5 INVOLVED IN A SERIOUS CRIME. Guilty or not, you have been convicted of a serious crime. You must serve 1d4+1 two-year terms or join the Freedom Brigades. See result 8.

6 INVOLVED IN MINOR CRIME. You were found guilty of a minor crime for which you must serve two years in prison or join the Freedom Brigades. See result 8.

7 POWERFUL ENEMY•. Somehow, you managed to gain yourself a deadly enemy who, unfortunately, happens to be quite powerful. It might be your former commanding officer, a prosecutor, an ex-girlfriend or a business rival.

8 CRIMINAL RECORD•. In Capitol, a criminal record is a very bad thing. You cannot vote or hold a firearms license or public office. You can expunge your record by joining the Freedom Brigades.

9 SACKED•. Times are hard for the Department of Capitol you currently work in. You have been made redundant. If in the military, you have been discharged for disorderly conduct. Now might be a good time to volunteer for the Free Marines if you have acquired any Fame points.

10 INTENSE EDUCATION. Subtract two years from your age. This represents the fact that you began studying earlier or have since studied harder.

11 PART OF UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM•. Should you ever become unemployed, you may automatically choose the Student background instead, regardless of entrance requirements. You do not have to make an INT/PER roll to get into the school type of your choice. Capitol is very good about retraining its citizens.

12 GOOD NEGOTIATOR. You always have +2 on your Social Standing rolls.

13 GLAMOROUS EMPLOYMENT•. You have a particularly high profile in your line of work. Add 1 to your Fame rating.

14 CONTACT WITH A MEGACORPORATION. You have a contact within one of the other megacorporations. (Roll a d6: 1=Bauhaus, 2=Mishima, 3=Cybertronic, 4=Imperial, 5 or 6=the Brotherhood.) The GM decides exactly how this contact works, but it should be a considerable advantage whenever you want information about that organization's doings, if you want to get an entrance pass to one of the organization's official buildings, if you want bailed out when arrested by one of the organization's security agents, and so on.

15 SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING. You can have two free picks—one in the Firearms and one in the Combat fields of expertise.

16 TECHNICAL CRASH COURSE. You may have two free picks from the Technical field of expertise.

17 ADMINISTRATION COURSE. You may make two free picks from the Communications field of expertise.

18 GYMNASTICS CLASSES. You may make two free picks from the Movement field of expertise.

19 EVENING CLASSES. You may make one free pick from any field of expertise.

20 INTERESTING CHARACTER. Your experiences always seem to fascinate people. Add 1 to your PER value.

21 INTENSE PHYSICAL TRAINING. By dint of rigorous physical exercise, you have added 1 to your STR value.



INVESTIGATION

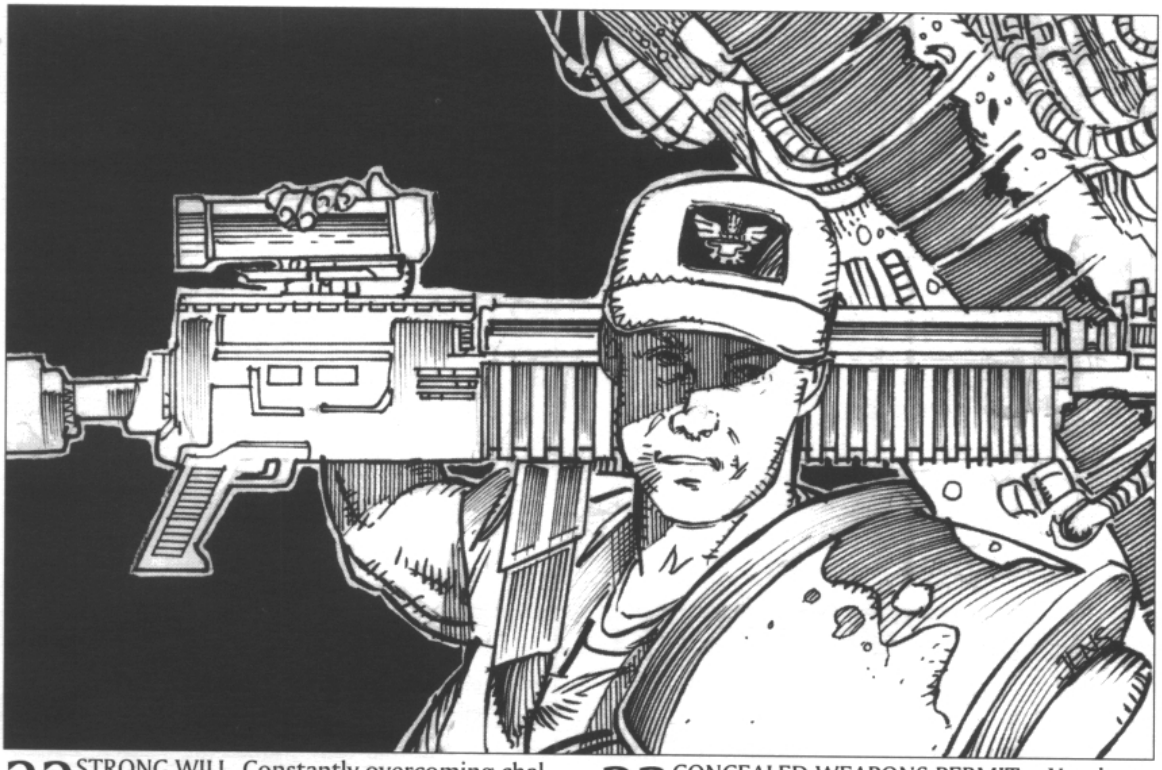
Outside the apartment, two scared cops chattered in hushed tones about the killing. Quietly, Agent Tanner shut the door and surveyed the carnage. The room was exactly as the CSS had found it. It had been sealed. No one had been in or out since he'd given the order two hours ago when the name Dalton had scrolled down his computer screen. After that, he'd come as quickly as could.

Looking at the room, he suddenly felt old. In thirty years in this dirty business, he had never seen worse. Jenny Sue Dalton had not died easily.

The small flat had been torn apart, just like the girl's body. Pictures and underclothes and furnishings were strewn everywhere. Blood painted the walls and caked the mirrored ceiling above the shattered bed. Tanner leaned down and picked up the picture that lay under his polished wingtip shoe. It showed the girl, much younger. She was smiling and looked startlingly beautiful. She was wearing a cheap summer dress. She was with some old man in expensive clothes and a lot of gaudy jewelry. The man wasn't smiling. He'd been a famous mobster in his time, before Tanner took him down.

Tanner shook his head sadly, reminded of how she had looked when he had first blackmailed her into being his informant all those years ago. Sorry, Jenny Sue, he thought. I'm sorry I got you into this.

«Well, war hero, looks like somebody wanted something pretty bad.» said Boorman.



22 STRONG WILL. Constantly overcoming challenges has toughened your mind. Add 1 to your MST value.

23 HEALTH CARE. All that attention to a healthy diet and lifestyle is paying off. Add 1 to your PHY value.

24 HOBBY GYMNAST. Add 1 to your COR value.

25 GOOD IMMUNE DEFENSE SYSTEM•. Your body is extremely resistant to alien organic substances. Add 5 to your PHY every time you have to make a roll against disease, parasites, etc.

26 EXTRAORDINARY CHEMICAL RESISTANCE•. Your body is extremely resistant to artificial substances. Add 5 to your PHY every time you have to roll to resist poisons, drugs or gas.

28 WEALTHY BOY/GIRLFRIEND. Your chosen partner of the moment is both extremely wealthy and extremely generous. Add 1 to your Social Standing.

29 PERFORMED HEROIC DEED. Intense media coverage increases your Fame by 1. If in the military, you have been decorated for valor.

30 HOBBY ATHLETE•. Add 2 to your STR and PHY. Should your Social Standing ever drop beneath 4 (or its current value if that is less than 4), you must remove these bonuses.

31 CHANCE OF A LIFETIME. You have been given the opportunity of your life to atone for your past. You may rejoin any career from which you were previously sacked, or you may turn any negative Fame you possess into positive Fame once more. You truly have been given a second chance. Don't blow it.

32 CONTACT WITHIN A SECURITY AGENCY. You have acquired a contact within one of the big security organizations. (Roll a d6: 1 or 2=MIC, 3 or 4=CBI, 5 or 6=CSS.) These contacts can be incredibly useful for getting you out of scrapes.

33 CONCEALED WEAPONS PERMIT•. You have been granted a license to carry a concealed weapon.

34 HARD WORK REWARDED. Add 1 to your Social Standing. If you are in a career that allows promotion, then increase your rank by one step.

35 LONG LEGS•. Read your Movement Allowance from the line below normal on the Combat Statistics Table.

36 MEDIA ATTENTION. You get a lot of media coverage in your line of work. Add 1 to your Fame.

37 PROMOTION. Add 3 to your Social Standing and PER. As usual, the maximum is still 10.

38 SUBJECT TO EXPERIMENTS•. You volunteer to take part in a secret medical experiment which succeeds. Add 5 to your MST.

39 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL CONTACT•. You have made friends in very high places. Like a politician, you have the ability to make a few calls that can work miracles in dealing with Capitol's bureaucracy. The same limits apply to you as apply to a politician. If you are a politician, increase your Fame by 2 instead.

40 SPECIAL FORCES TRAINING•. You have been drafted into the Capitol special forces unit of your choice. Add four years to your age and 2 to all your basic capabilities. Take two picks from each field of expertise and four free picks. If you still do not meet the minimum requirements, they'll take you anyway. You are now part of the unit. Congratulations.

NOTE: Under Capitolian law, serving a prison term generally means being stuck in a cell or doing hard labor on a work gang. Don't roll any Special Events during these periods. You are stuck!

NEW CHARACTER TYPES



There are several new character types available to the Capitolian character: Agent, Politician and Star, plus Capitolian versions of the Special Forces Trooper. The requirements for all of these are given below.

AGENT

You are one of those people who work for Capitol's shadowy and justly feared intelligence services. Each of Capitol's eleven great Departments has its own intelligence division. Player characters are usually drawn from one of the four major Departments. The training given usually reflects sphere of interests of the agency they work for.

All agents, regardless of who they work for, are issued with concealed weapons permits as a matter of course. They are usually allowed to keep these permits when they leave their Departments, unless they do something particularly stupid (e.g., were sacked or lost their job through criminal action.)

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CORPS. You work for the MIC. This agency keeps Capitol's armed forces informed about the military strengths, capabilities and weaknesses of the corporation's rivals. MIC agents chiefly act outside the corporation's sphere of influence.

You ruthlessly infiltrate enemy corporations. You commit acts of sabotage against military and industrial targets. You fund terrorist groups in enemy territory. You also gather intelligence on the Dark Legion and prevent heretical scum from undermining the strength of Capitol's armed forces. You may also be called into Capitol's internal affairs when issues of security are at stake, such as if weapons prototypes have been stolen from a Capitol factory complex.

Because they must often infiltrate enemy areas unarmed and in disguise, all MIC agents are trained to kill with their bare hands. You may choose to pick the Commando Training and Silent Killing skills, even though these are normally limited to the special forces.

The MIC is a part of the Armed Forces of Capitol and reports ultimately to the Supreme Commanders. All agents hold officer rank and progress through the ranks as normal. In the field, they can issue commands to and require aid from all soldiers of equal or lower rank.

CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION. You work for the CBI. The Bureau is an offshoot of the Department of Education, Law Enforcement and Justice (DELEJ), but it has grown to be almost a law unto itself.

You catch criminals within Capitol territory. You hunt down the crooks responsible for organized crime and search for spies and saboteurs placed within the corporation by external powers. You help compile the extensive files and records the CBI keeps on Capitol's citizens. You have extensive powers of surveillance. You tap phones, bug apartments and eavesdrop on radio calls. You can override the decisions of local cops. Your job is to get the job done, no matter what it takes.



The Bureau is part of DELEJ, and its agents ultimately report to the Bureau Chief, who reports directly to the Director of DELEJ. Bureau agents count as police officers and are promoted as such (see RPG page 136). They can demand support from any local CSS operation or precinct, regardless of their rank.

EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. You work for the EIA. The duties of External Intelligence Agency in many ways overlap with those of MIC. In theory, the EIA is responsible for monitoring other corporations and the Dark Legion. In practice, it has many agents in

REQUIREMENTS:

MAXIMUM AGE 25. NO CRIMINAL RECORD. ANY HIGHER EDUCATION. INT 12.

PSS:

THE ABOVE, PLUS: MINIMUM SV 13 IN TWO FIREARMS AND TWO COMBAT SKILLS.

	MIC	CBI	EIA	PSS
COMBAT:	1	1	1	1
FIREARMS:	2	2	2	1
COMMUNICATION:	1	1	1	1
MOVEMENT:	1	1	1	2
TECHNICAL:	1	1	1	2
FREE:	2	2	3	2
SOCIAL STANDING:	2d6	2d6	2d6	2d6
PER-MODIFICATION:	+1	+1	+1	+1



«You don't say,» said Tanner, «you must have passed top of your class in forensics.»

Tanner sometimes wondered where the Bureau got people like Boorman. The young man was checking the set of his hair in the broken mirror, making sure he looked good. Tanner shook his head. When he had been Boorman's age, he had been fighting house to house and street to street in Valley Forge, trading shots with Imperial Blood Berets across a landscape of blasted buildings and the wreckage of burned-out cars. He had been decorated for it, taking two wounds dragging his commanding officer out of a burning APC. For a moment, he wondered if maybe he hadn't been as stupid as Boorman when he was that age.

He had to admit that Boorman was tough as they came, though. Tanner had seen him kill three men in a point-blank-range firefight. Afterward, Boorman had been more worried about the bloodstains on his designer suit than the bullet in his arm.

He looked at the room

place in other corporations and is renowned for its intelligence gathering and assassinations of Capital's enemies.

As an agent, you most likely work under deep cover in an enemy corporation, and you have the nerve-wracking task of maintaining your cover day in and day out. Alternatively, you may organize covert operations in enemy territory. Or perhaps you are an assassin trained in stealth, firearms and putting the blame for the killing on someone else.

The EIA is a part of the Department of Public and InterCorporate Relations (DEPICOR). It reports directly to the Department's Director.

PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE. You work for the PSS, a small, highly-trained organization that reports only to the President and the Board of Directors. Your duties often involve bodyguarding the President and other high-level functionaries. You have been brainwashed to such a peak of loyalty that you will put yourself between your charge and a bullet if necessary. You have special powers to investigate anything you feel may be of interest to your superiors or threaten their safety. You usually work undercover and on your own. You often cooperate with the Brotherhood's Second Directorate (the Inquisition) when investigating possible Dark Legion involvement. It is rumored that PSS agents are licensed to kill at the President's order. You are one of the few people who know this is true.

The PSS is ultimately responsible only to the President. They have very wide discretionary powers. You may demand aid from any Capitol citizen, department or force. Since your authority springs directly from the President, this is usually given.

POLITICIAN

REQUIREMENTS:
ANY HIGHER EDUCATION. INT 12. PER 12.

COMBAT:	—
FIREARMS:	—
COMMUNICATION:	3
MOVEMENT:	1
TECHNICAL:	—
FREE:	3
SOCIAL STANDING:	1d20
PER-MODIFICATION:	+1

You belong to the class of professional politicians and administrators that Capitol has spawned. You are adept at pleasing the voters and fighting for whatever special interests you represent. You have specialized in communications skills and are proficient at dealing with people and the Capitol bureaucracy.

You are familiar with the labyrinth of sleaze, patronage and corruption that is Capitol's political system. You have extensive contacts within it. If you don't know the appropriate person needed to get something done, you know somebody who knows somebody. In practice, this means that, if you make an INT roll and «make a couple of phone calls», you will be able to apply your influence in a situation. This influence can open the right doors, encourage police officers to drop charges and get information out of obstructive bureaucrats. The



GM should apply appropriate modifiers according to the situation. These could range from –2 to get to see the local police chief to –10 to get a murder charge dropped or an interview with the President. Fame modifiers apply here.

The GM can make these requests count as favors that the character owes to the person granting them. These favors may well be called in someday.

And, of course, there are certain things that no amount of influence will get you. If you have just shot the President on prime time TV or want to see the ultra-classified archives of the Bureau, you're just out of luck.

STAR

You are one of the many stars of stage, screen or radio that Capitol's giant media machine has produced. You work in the entertainment profession, which means that you are part of the most glamorous, corrupt and highly rewarded sections of Capitol's citizenry. Your talent may win you a legion of adoring fans and access to some of the highest-level members of Capitol's political elite who seek your endorsement whenever election time is near. If you star in the sort of action

REQUIREMENTS:
PER 12.

COMBAT:	—
FIREARMS:	—
COMMUNICATION:	3
MOVEMENT:	1
TECHNICAL:	—
FREE:	3
SOCIAL STANDING:	1d20
PER-MODIFICATION:	+2

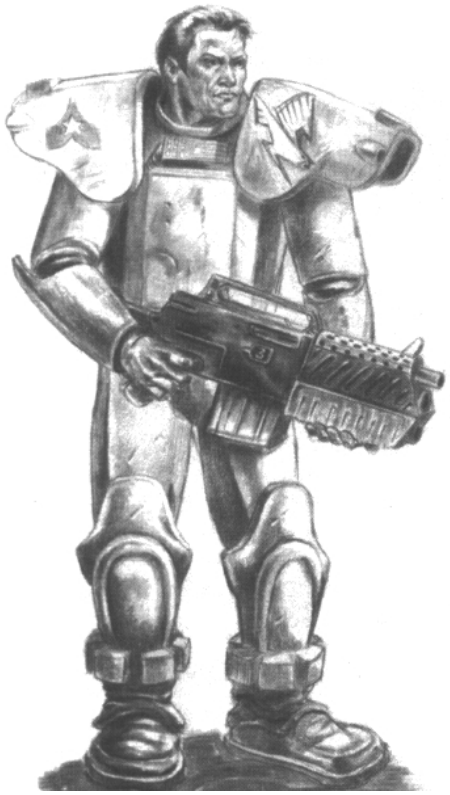


adventure movie that Capitol's film industry produces so well, you may have acquired special abilities rivaling any soldier.

As a star, you have the opportunity to become very famous indeed. Every two-year period you are employed, roll 1d10. If the result is greater than your current Fame rating, increase it by 1.

THE SPECIAL FORCES

The Armed Forces of Capitol have many special forces units. If, during the character creation process, you want your character to join the special forces, you should follow the procedure below. First, you must meet the minimum requirements, then you must apply. If you succeed, you receive the appropriate benefits.



The first requirement is that you have served at least two years in the Armed Forces of Capitol. You can't just join the special forces straight from college—unless you get a result on the Capitol Adolescent Events or Special Events Tables that says you can.

In addition to this, because of the dangerous and physically demanding nature of their duties, the special forces demand certain minimum characteristics. Many require that you possess a high level of competency in certain skills. Most ask that you pass some sort of entrance test, as well as the interview. A few have more demanding and esoteric requirements.

	GRUNT	OFFICER
COMBAT:	1	1
FIREARMS:	2	2
COMMUNICATION:	—	1
MOVEMENT:	1	1
TECHNICAL:	1	1
FREE:	1	2
SOCIAL STANDING:	2d4	2d6
PER-MODIFICATION:	+2	+1

To join the special forces, you must meet all the minimum requirements, and then you must re-enlist in the military to keep your old job. Then apply to join the special forces just as you would for any other job. If you succeed in your roll, you're in. If you fail the interview, you keep your old job in the military. You can only make one enlistment attempt with any special force per two-year stint.

Once you have joined the special forces, you can collect the appropriate benefits for every two-year hitch you serve. These can take the form of improved characteristics due to intense training and the acquisition of specialist skills. These benefits are in addition to the normal skill picks you would get for following your career.

When it comes to time to re-enlist in the special forces, make the roll as usual. Success keeps you in. If you fail, you are disgraced and must leave the military or join the Free Marines (if you can). Any Fame you have acquired becomes negative. Good luck. Once you've left a special force you can't apply to join a special force again.

The minimum requirements and benefits for joining the special forces are covered in the chapter «The Armed Forces of Capitol».

THE FREEDOM BRIGADES

The Freedom Brigades are a uniquely Capitolian institution. They are among the most famous fighting units in the system. The Freedom Brigades are made up of two types of people.

First are volunteers who were not born into Capitol and yet want to acquire citizenship. To do this, they must serve ten years in the Freedom Brigades. These are special units of the regular army which take such volunteers. As outsiders, they are constantly monitored by the MIC to make sure they are not infiltrators. Many start out that way but are so taken by the comradeship offered by their unit and by the Capitolian way of life that they become loyal citizens.



again. There was something here. He could feel it. Something was not quite right. It was almost as if Jenny Sue was trying to tell him who her killer was.

Suddenly, he could stand it no more. He threw open the glass sliding doors and stepped out onto the balcony. The night and neon of the city slapped him in the face. The huge signs of the casinos danced and beckoned. The sound of music and traffic assaulted his ears. Far off, the Shallow Sea reflected the lights like a black mirror.

From up here, it looked so enticing, a playground for the rich and the beautiful, but down there, he knew it was different. Down there, a thousand pretty girls like Jenny Sue showed up with big dreams that died in the meat markets of Tallahoe Street, and hundreds of broken men begged the price of a ticket home and were always still there the next day no matter how much money you gave them. And down there now was a monster, the monster who had killed this apartment's owner and who-knew-how-many others. Maybe it was watching him now.



Second are Capitol citizens who have committed crimes and thus have been stripped of all the usual privileges of a Capitol citizen. Those criminals who have not committed truly dreadful crimes are given a chance to atone for their misdeeds. They may choose to either serve on a work gang or join the Freedom Brigades. Those who survive five terms in the Freedom Brigades are given all the privileges of a Capitol citizen, even if these rights were lost through criminal activity. On joining a Brigade, recruits are given new names and new documents. Their past lives are erased. They are, in effect, reborn.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

COMBATANT:
STR 9, PHY 9

NON-COMBATANT:
NONE.

	COMBATANT	NON-COMBATANT
COMBAT:	1	—
FIREARMS:	2	—
COMMUNICATION:	—	—
MOVEMENT:	1	—
TECHNICAL:	1	3
FREE:	1	1
SOCIAL STANDING:	spec.	spec.
PER-MODIFICATION:	+2	±0

Life in the Freedom Brigades is harsh. Most of the enlistment period is spent either fighting the Dark Legion along the McCraig Line or else in isolated railroad forts in the Outback or on lonely islands in the Graveton Archipelago. Discipline is strict, and surveillance is constant. Live ammunition is only issued at the discretion of officers and is instantly reclaimed after the crisis has passed. During induction, Freedom Brigadeers are injected with a potent, slow-acting nerve toxin. This will eventually kill them unless they get regular doses of the temporary antidote. This is normally administered monthly by the officers, who are all veterans with distinguished careers behind them. Redeemed soldiers are given the permanent antidote. This is a highly secret formula and can be administered at only one place: Camp Burroughs on Mars.

Despite all this (or perhaps because of it), morale in the Brigades is surprisingly good. Brigadeers have a particular camaraderie rarely found elsewhere, and every one of them knows that survival is rewarded with Capitolian citizenship and all its privileges. Also, the strange kind of companionship often applied to «partners in crime» seems to hold true, especially for most of the convicts in the Brigades.



NON-COMBATANTS. As with all other military units, the Freedom Brigades have a horde of non-combatants taking care of such things as logistics, hospitals, liaisons, intelligence evaluation, maintenance, cooking, etc. In the Freedom Brigades, this staff is composed of criminal brokers, ex-accountants, Mishima nurses, Bauhaus engineers, Imperial school teachers, and other characters who simply don't have the physical abilities to serve in a trench.

SPECIAL RULES. You do not have to roll to enlist or re-enlist in the Freedom Brigades. You simply announce that you are joining. Also, if during adolescence or while pursuing another career you receive a criminal record or a prison sentence, you may automatically opt to serve in the Freedom Brigades instead. Once enlisted, you're in until you have redeemed yourself, either by serving 5 terms or by acquiring a Fame point in the course of duty (due to a Special Event or an unmodified 1 on the «survival roll» [see below]). After that, you can remain in the Brigades until you choose to leave.

Once you leave the Brigades, you are a citizen. Any criminal record you had is wiped out, and you can profit from all of the benefits of fame and networking.

Promotion within the Brigade is handled the same way as in any other military unit. You can never be an officer in the Freedom Brigades, only a grunt. While in the Brigades, you have a Social Standing of 2. When you are discharged, you are given a lump sum that gives you a Social Standing of 4.

Re-roll any Special Event, such as «Sacked», that would force you to leave the job. Also, you cannot acquire a criminal record while you're in the Brigades. The only Special Event that can get you out of the Brigades is «Special Forces Training», and that puts you straight into the Free Marines. Good luck!

SURVIVAL. Life in the Freedom Brigades is extraordinarily hazardous. You're rarely out of the line of fire. The only leave you get is when you're hospitalized, and sometimes brutal officers may even «forget» to give you your antidote.

All this means that, instead of a re-enlistment roll, you have to make a survival roll at the end of every two-year term. If you roll more than your PHY characteristic, then you lose 1d3 from either your PHY or MST characteristics permanently (your choice). If either of these characteristics goes below 5, you're killed in action. However, if you roll a 1 on your survival roll, this means that you have performed some act of great heroism and have redeemed yourself. You are awarded the Military Gallantry Medal and one Fame point and may immediately return to civilian life with a clean slate. Congratulations. Non-combatants do not make survival rolls.

NEW SKILLS

COMBAT

COMMANDO TRAINING

BASIC CAPABILITY: STR
You have been trained to kill people with your bare hands. This skill is similar to Brawling, but it allows you to do 2d3 damage with your fists or 2d4 with your feet when you score a successful hit.

This skill is available only to those who have served in Capitol's special forces. Every second skill pick spent in this skill automatically adds an additional skill pick in Parrying.

SILENT KILLING

BASIC CAPABILITY: COR
Again, this skill is taught only to Capitol's special forces. Before it can be used, you must approach your victim unawares (make a Stealth roll or take the victim by surprise). If you succeed, you can score double damage either with your fists or with a knife. *This applies even if you don't have this skill.* If you then successfully make a Silent Killing roll, you have made no noise. This is a useful skill for taking out sentries or enemy officers in their camps.

COMMUNICATIONS

LAW

BASIC CAPABILITY: INT
You are familiar with the workings of the Capitolian legal system. Not only is this a very useful way of making a living, but it enables you to take part in trials and defend your friends or clients. (See the section on «Law Enforcement».)

MOVEMENT

SCUBA DIVING

BASIC CAPABILITY: COR
You are familiar with all the techniques of using underwater breathing equipment. You can repair such equipment with a successful skill roll, and in critical situations, such as when your airline is cut, you won't panic (with a successful skill roll), but will know what to do.

SAILING

BASIC CAPABILITY: COR
You are familiar with the handling of waterborne vessels. You can race them in combat and navigate. This skill has several sub-skills (see *The Freelancer's Guide* for all about sub-skills): Inflatables (used by commando units), Sail-powered Vessels, Powerboats, Ships and Submarines. You won't get very far in the Venusian navy without it.

ROCKET PACK

BASIC CAPABILITY: COR
You are familiar with the use and maintenance of the rocket pack used by the Martian Banshees and certain air-dropped regular units of the Capitolian Army. The rocket pack is extremely dangerous and unstable and can *only* be used by people who possess this skill.

TECHNICAL

DEMOLITIONS

BASIC CAPABILITY: INT
You have been trained in the correct placement of explosives to do the maximum amount of damage to existing buildings and structures. You know exactly how big a charge is needed to destroy an objective, and you know just where to put it. You are also skilled in bomb disposal. With a successful skill roll, you may disarm any existing explosive device or set it off in a controlled explosion.

SURVIVAL

BASIC CAPABILITY: INT
You have been trained in how to survive in dangerous and inhospitable terrain. You have been taught how to live off the land and find shelter from the elements. You can detect and avoid any terrain hazards, and you can read the sky to tell the weather. You know which animals are dangerous and which are nutritious.

There are several different versions of this skill including Jungle Survival, Desert Survival, Mountain Survival, Polar Survival, etc. Each one is a sub-skill of survival.



«I hate Vega.» Tanner said to no one in particular.

«Someone sure went to a lot of trouble to kill her. Pity, she was one good-looking—»

«Enough!» said Tanner angrily. The kid was trying to rile him. It was his way. Theirs was an uneasy partnership. Boorman knew just as well as he did that if Jennie Sue had just been one more murdered girl, they wouldn't be here. It would simply be another unsolved mystery for the local CSS cops, not for the Special Crimes Division of the Bureau. «She was one of our best informants. She was General Sinclair's mistress. And he's the one we're investigating.»

«You've got a bee in your bonnet about old Sinclair, haven't you, war hero?» Tanner sighed, wondering how he could explain his hunch to Boorman. He knew Sinclair was a wrong one. All the trails on this investigation pointed to him, and yet they all led to a blank wall. They needed evidence. You couldn't just go accusing a general of the AFC on a hunch. A man like that could swat them like a flies.

Then, in a flash, it came to him what was wrong in the room. He walked back in and checked. He was right. The red light on the stereo player was still on. His heart pumped. Blessed Light, let me be right about this, he prayed. He was. Knowing what was coming, Jenny Sue had triggered the recorder, even as her door had opened. She had preserved the last fifteen minutes of her life for posterity.

Tanner replayed the tape. It was bad. The girl's interroga-



tor had not even been human. His voice was eerie, evil and resonant. It was the voice of a demon from the Dark. The girl's screams echoed once more around the room. By the end of the tape, even Boorman was pale. He had forgotten all about his hair.

«So Sinclair talked in his sleep, eh? And her last words: burning sky. What in the Cardinal's name do they mean?»

Tanner shivered. He knew what they meant. He had seen them in old memos and heard them discussed in whispered tones at his old unit's HQ.

«Operational code,» he said. «Full scale assault on the

NEW RULES

ADVANCED VEHICLE COMBAT

The rules in the *Mutant Chronicles* cover what happens when you shoot at vehicles, but they do not address what happens when two vehicles are in involved in combat. In the Capitolian territories, the two most likely situations to occur are car chases and dogfights.

CAR CHASES

Car chases happen all the time in Capitolian cities. People flee from the police and from each other, so you need some way of handling these situations. Here's how:

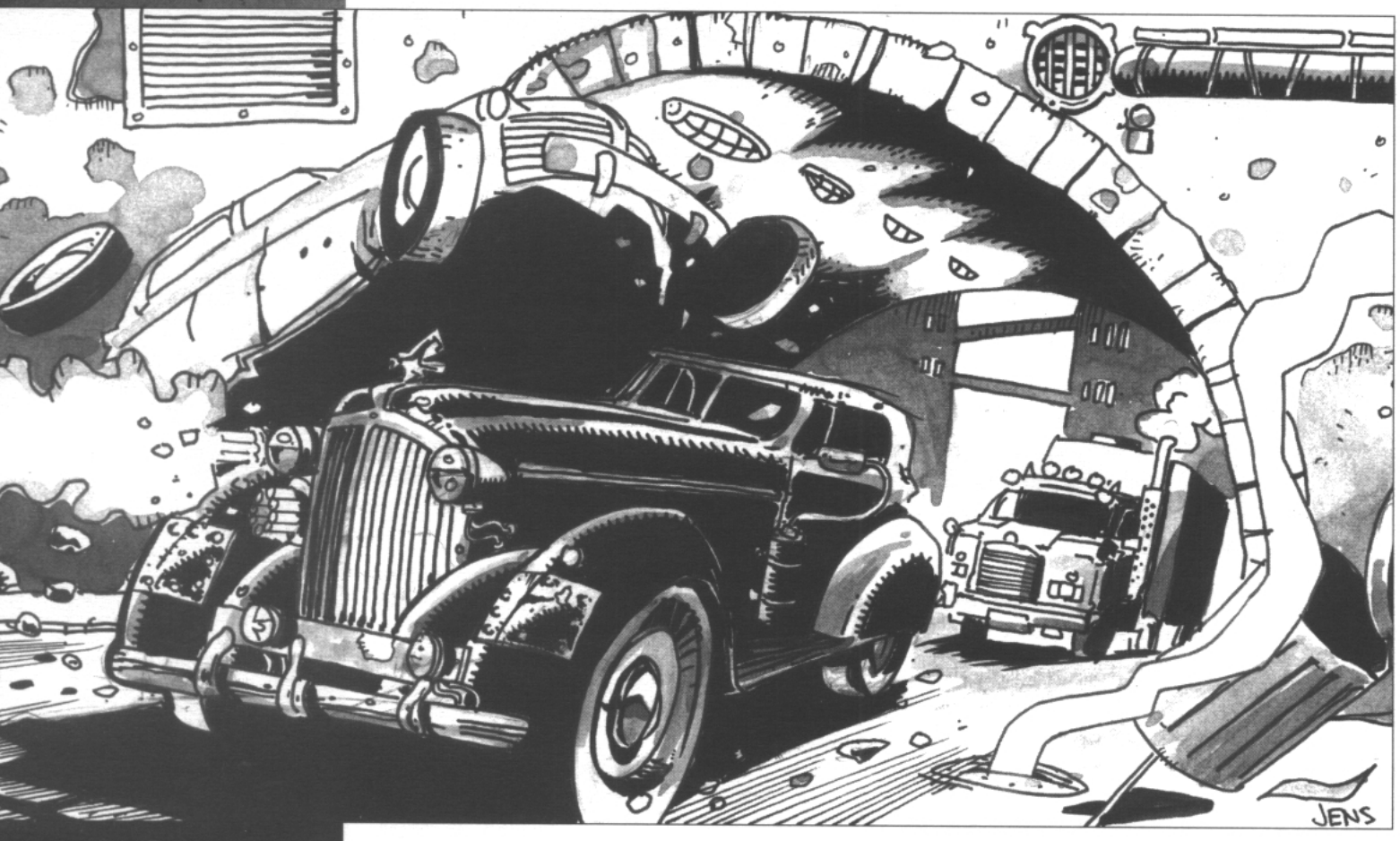
All other things being equal, the fastest car will always overtake the slowest car. However, things are rarely so uncomplicated, so when a car chase occurs, the following rules should be followed.

The GM should decide how far apart the two vehicles start. Figure the number of squares and inform the players (if you really can't decide, roll 1d100 and add 20 to determine the distance randomly).

At the start of each combat round, both drivers should roll 1d20 and add their Ground Vehicles SVs. The person with the highest score is the winner. The winner can choose to increase or decrease the number of squares between the two vehicles by the difference between the two scores. This is called the Chase Roll. It comes before any other actions and does not use up any actions on the part of either driver.

There are certain modifiers to this. If one vehicle is faster than the other, the driver can add 2 to his or her roll. If one vehicle is more than 50% faster than the other, that driver can add 4.

Other factors that modify this roll are covered below.



FIRING FROM A MOVING VEHICLE

After the range change has been decided, both sides may shoot. This follows the normal combat procedure with the following modifiers:

- Providing they can lean out a window, passengers in either vehicle can open fire. Their shots are at –3 if their vehicle is moving at less than 30 MPH or at –5 if it is moving at more than 30 MPH. Range penalties apply. You can choose to shoot at either the enemy vehicle or at anyone shooting at you. If you choose to shoot at an individual, the target counts as being in cover. (Note that this modifier reflects the fact that both vehicles are moving.)
- Drivers can shoot, too, but they must state their intentions before the Chase Roll. If they intend to shoot, both their Ground Vehicles roll and their Firearms roll will be at –4. You can only shoot one-handed weapons when driving a car.

OBSTACLES

Sometimes car chases take place in crowded streets or busy freeways. At the start of each combat round, the GM decides if there are any obstacles. Both drivers must then make a Ground Vehicles roll with the appropriate penalty. This happens before the Chase Roll.

SITUATION	MODIFIER
Light Traffic	–2
Dense Traffic	–4
Tight Bend	–1
Hairpin Bend	–3
Roadblock	–6

All penalties are cumulative.

If both drivers make their rolls, play proceeds as normal, and the drivers must make their Chase Rolls. If one driver fails and the other makes the roll, the driver who succeeded can change the range between the cars by 20 squares. No Chase Rolls are made. If both drivers fail, the range remains unchanged, but Chase Rolls are still made (potentially affecting the range). Anyone in a car whose driver fails the Ground Vehicles roll is at –4 when shooting. If a driver fumbles, the car spins out of control and crashes at the side of the road. Roll 3 times on the Vehicle Damage Table (RPG p. 162).

EVASIVE MANEUVERS

Before the Chase Roll is made, drivers can decide whether or not to make an evasive maneuver. If so, the driver slews the vehicles from side to side to avoid being hit. This subtracts 3 from the Chase Roll, but also subtracts 3 from the chance to hit of anyone shooting at the car.

BUMPING

If the range between the vehicles has been reduced to 3 squares or less, the player who wins the Chase Roll can try to force the other car off the road. Both players must roll again. The larger vehicle adds 4 to its score. If the vehicle is much larger (such as a truck versus a car), it gets to add 8. If the person who instigated the collision wins, the other car is forced from the road. Otherwise, combat proceeds normally. A vehicle that is forced off the road has crashed. Roll 3 times on the Vehicle Damage Table.

ENDING THE CHASE

A chase is over when one or both vehicles has crashed. Or when one vehicle is so far ahead that it will never be caught. Or when the driver of either car is hit. Or by consent of both parties.



Imperial Mandate. Ultimate commitment. Sinclair means to drag us into war with Imperial.»

«But that's insanity. If we go for Imperial, the Dark Legion will break out from…»

Boorman's jaw dropped.

«Exactly,» said Tanner, realizing at that moment that something new was wrong. He couldn't hear the chatter of the CSS cops outside the door. He checked the action of his Punisher. He could hear the slow sound of heavy footsteps on the stair. He guessed that Jenny Sue's killer had returned. Slowly the door opened. Something large and dark and terrible was there. Two broken-necked policemen flopped in its mighty grip.

Boorman whipped out his pistol. Tanner was already firing.

DOGFIGHTS

Dogfights take place between aircraft. Dogfight combat is a little more abstract than car chase combat. It's assumed that all involved aircraft are in constant motion and seeking any advantage over their opponents.

The combat round consists of two simple steps—a Dogfight Roll and (if any weapons bear on a target) attacks. When combat is resolved, start a new round with another Dogfight Roll.

At the start of the combat round, both pilots roll 1d20 and add their Flying Vehicles SVs. This is called the Dogfight Roll. The faster plane adds 2 to its score. If the plane is 50% faster, it may add 4.

The side with the highest total is the winner. The winner can choose to make the following maneuvers:

GAIN HEIGHT. If you gain height, you are now above your opponent. You can add 2 to any subsequent Dogfight Rolls until you dive or your opponent gains height, too. You are also at +2 when you shoot, and your opponent is at –2 to evade.

TAILGATE. You move into position behind your foe. Unless it has turrets that can rotate or which cover its back, the target plane cannot shoot at you. Your opponent is at –2 to evade.

DIVE. If you are above your foe, you can swoop down, losing the advantage of height but gaining +4 to your shooting for this round. Your target is at –4 on all evasion rolls. You can only dive if you are above your foe. If your opponent has broken off combat, you close the distance again automatically.

BREAK OFF COMBAT. You begin to move away from the fight. Both you and your foe are at –4 to your shooting rolls. If you can break off twice, you are out of the fight.

CLOSE RANGE. If your foe has managed to open the range by breaking off once, you can close it again.

RANGE

In a dogfight, it's assumed that both sides are moving into optimum range for their weapons.



NOTHING PERSONAL

It was a pity about the old man, Wade thought, looking down at the stripped corpse. He'd seemed like a nice, old codger. Friendly, eager to please, to tell about his experiences fighting for the Lord Heir in the jungles of Venus. Well, he wouldn't bore anybody else with his reminiscences, ever again. Wade had killed him simply to get his waiter's uniform.

He checked himself in the mirror, adjusted the white bow tie and the fit of the cutaway jacket. Everything was perfect. His hair was dyed exactly the right shade of black. The contacts made his eyes a warm brown. He smiled at his reflection. It was a warm, friendly smile, the smile of a man people would trust. The old man had trusted him last night after Wade had struck up a conversation with him in the bar. He hadn't

Therefore, there are no range penalties in dogfight combat unless one side has broken off combat.

Anti-aircraft guns are designed to fire at long-range targets and have aiming devices intricate enough to compensate for range. Therefore, they don't get any range modifiers either.

SHOOTING

Once the Dogfight Roll is made, both sides can shoot with any weapons that bear. Shooting consists of three steps—attack roll, evasion roll and damage check.

THE ATTACK ROLL. If your aircraft has fuselage-mounted guns, average your Flying Vehicles and Weapon System SVs. Gunners in turrets use their Weapon Systems SV. If more than one turret can bear, make one attack roll for each of them. If any attack rolls are successful, the defender gets to make an evasion roll for each hit.

THE EVASION ROLL. Roll once to try to avoid each successful attack. Average the target pilot's SVs in Flying Vehicles and Avoid. Apply any modifications from the above maneuvers. If a roll is successful, that attack is avoided.

DAMAGE CHECK. For each attack that goes in, roll damage and check the Vehicle Damage Table to determine its effect.

MULTIPLE DOGFIGHTS

When more than two planes are involved in a dogfight, each plane should be paired of with an enemy plane. If one side is larger than the other, any extra planes can join in whichever dogfight they like.

If more than one plane is involved in a dogfight, the best pilot of that group makes the Dogfight Roll, adding a bonus of +2 for each additional plane. If that pilot wins, all the planes on that side may choose their own maneuver. Any bonuses these maneuvers give in the next round apply to them individually. All planes in a group may fire at their target, except if that target is tailgating them.

MULTI-ENGINE PLANES

Sometimes aircraft have more than one engine. When result 8, «Engine Damage», comes up on the Vehicle Damage Table, they are not forced to land. Their speed is reduced by 25%, but they can still fly. The next time an engine is hit, assume that it is an undamaged one. Once all the plane's engines have been hit, the plane must crash-land.

Maneuvering a multi-engine plane with one or more engines lost requires an SV in Flying Vehicles of 15+.

EXAMPLE

(Refer to the «Aircraft Mounted Weapons» section below for data on weapon modifiers.)

An AHZ-24 Blackhawk conquered by Bauhaus becomes the easy prey of a Capitol H-17 Mastodon They engage in a dogfight, and Colonel Bull, piloting the H-17, makes his Dogfight Roll: 1d20 plus his Flying Vehicles SV of 16. He gets a total of 29.

The pilot in the AHZ-24, Flight Sergeant Duck, rolls a total of 17 and adds 2, since her helicopter is the faster. Bull wins the initiative anyway and decides to tailgate so that Sgt. Duck can't fire her nose cannon at him. Since he is behind his target and on the same level, Bull may now fire with the H-17's nose, belly and both side turrets. He makes four attack rolls, using the gunners' Weapon Systems SVs—modified by +4 since the cannons are twin-mounted. Bull gets only two out of four hits, despite the modifier, and Duck should now evade using the average of her Flying Vehicles SV (12) and her Avoid SV (8). The target number is modified by –2, since Bull is tailgating, so Duck needs to roll an «8». The first roll is a «6», and the second roll is a «4»! Made it—this time.

Duck, of course, doesn't have any guns that bear on her opponent, so new Dogfight rolls are made. Bull wins again, and this time he decides to Gain Height to increase the hit probability.

The H-17 is now above and behind its target, so it only gets 2 of its 5 twin heavy autocannons to bear (nose and belly). Additionally, he gets +4 for the twin-mount and +2 since he has the height advantage. Naturally, he hits with both! Duck has –4 on her Evasion rolls (–2 since she's in front and –2 since she's below), and both fail!

Bull now rolls 3d10+6 twice (direct hit damage) and gets 25 and 14. The AHZ-24's AV of 6 is deducted, so two rolls should be made on the Vehicle Damage Table—the first with 1d10+19 and the second with 1d10+8. The AHZ-24 goes down in a nasty spin, the smoke forming a Bauhaus cogwheel in the burning air. Tough luck.



NEW EQUIPMENT

GRENADES

Capitol's armaments subsidiaries have not been slow in developing new types of grenades and gas for use in the corporation's wars. Unless otherwise mentioned, a gas mask provides full protection against the gases. All grenades come both as hand grenades (cost given below) and as rifle grenades (cost 5% of the weapon's cost).

SMOKE GRENADE

500 CROWNS, AVAILABILITY B.

These grenades are standard issue to officers and NCOs in Capitol's military. They emit great billowing clouds of smoke that obscure visibility in a 10 square radius. This smoke blocks line of sight and makes it impossible for anybody to shoot accurately through it unless they have some form of infrared sight. Smoke grenades are usually used to cover advances and retreats across open ground.

BOKE GRENADES

500 CROWNS, AVAILABILITY C.

Boke grenades are primarily used for riot control, especially among prisoners. They emit a DL 15 gas over an area 4 squares in every direction from the point of impact. This powerful emetic gas instantly causes nausea and vomiting if the target fails a resistance roll. A target affected by Boke gas must make a resistance roll every round or do nothing except be sick. Most people don't even try and simply end up looking very messy. Effects last 10 turns.

STUN GAS GRENADES

1,000 CROWNS, AVAILABILITY C.

Stun gas grenades emit an odorless gas that puts anyone who inhales it to sleep. The victims must each make a PHY resistance roll against a DL of 10. The gas covers all squares adjacent to the point of impact. If you hold your breath, you can ignore its effects. If you fail the resistance roll, you fall asleep within 1d10 combat rounds.

INCENDIARY GRENADES

1,000 CROWNS, AVAILABILITY D.

These nasty weapons were developed by the Sherman Arms Corporation and first used by Capitol special forces in the Venusian Warzones. Their use against people is now held to be in violation of various Cartel military treaties, although they are still (officially) used against the Dark Legion. Unofficially, they can still be found on the black market. These grenades are treated exactly like normal shrapnel grenades except that when they explode they hit the target with white phosphorous which continues to burn indefinitely on the affected body area until it is reduced to less than 0 points.

Before it can affect the body area, it first eats through any armor covering that area. In the initial rounds, any damage done by these grenades is applied to the armor, reducing its AV permanently. Once the armor is reduced to AV 0, the white phosphorous continues to eat through the flesh of the victim. One way of preventing this is by removing the affected armor. The only way to kill the flame is to suffocate it with inorganic material, such as sand or soil. Water contains oxygen and will only cause the phosphorous to burn even more intensely.

On the first round, the phosphorous can be removed by scraping it off with a knife. This takes one action and a successful COR roll and still inflicts one point of damage on the target area.

SLIME GRENADES

1,000 CROWNS, AVAILABILITY F.

These grenades are filled with Agent Red, which was originally designed as a defoliant but whose special properties were discovered quite by accident during the first Dark Legion incursion. Agent Red has a peculiar effect on the cellular structure of Undead Legionnaires. In about 50% of all cases, it causes the creatures to dissolve into protoplasmic slime in 1d6 combat turns. When a slime grenade is used, it affects all adjacent squares. If there is an Undead Legionnaire present, it must roll 1d20. If the result is 10 or less, the creature is fine. If the result is 11 or greater, the Legionnaire dissolves in 1d6 turns. In the meantime, it can continue to fight as normal. If the result is a 20, the Legionnaire dissolves immediately.



known then that he was going to die. Still, it was nothing personal, thought Wade, slipping the silenced Piranha into the plastic carrier bag. The old man was just one small stepping stone en route to the death of Chairman Ho.

Wade wondered why the Agency wanted Ho dead. Maybe the Mishiman was part of the Golden Wheel Society, the anti-Capitolian militarists who wanted to kick Wade's corporation out of the Graveton Archipelago. Or maybe he had just offended somebody high up in Capitol's corporate elite. Wade smiled again at the mirror. It wasn't for him to reason why. He just followed orders. Two years in the Sunset Strikers had taught him how to do that. Ten years as an assassin for the agency had given him a conscience of ice. Guilt just slid right off it.

He took out Ho's picture and studied it once more, committing every chubby line of the man's fat face to memory, making sure one last time that there would be no mistakes. Then he ran through his plan again. Like all good ones, it was simple.

Ho ate at the same restaurant every high Holy Day. He had a weakness for Graveton Archipelago cuisine. It was a weakness that made him predictable and was going to get him killed. Wade was simply going to show up at the restaurant, claiming that the old man was sick and that he was the replacement the agency had sent. No one would check. On Holy Days, the restaurant was always busy. They would



be grateful that he was there. At seven exactly, Ho would show up, accompanied by the two geisha who were really his bodyguards. Wade would walk up to them, his waiter's napkin covering his gun. He would put a bullet between the eyes of each girl, and then he would unload the magazine into Ho. People would scream. They always did. Things would get confused. They always did. Wade would move quickly back to the kitchen and slip out the back door. Nothing it would go wrong. It was just a job.

Nothing personal.

AMMUNITION

This section introduces variants on the standard sort of firearm ammunition. This ammunition must be bought in clips for the appropriate weapon. Where cost is given, it is as a multiple of the basic ammunition cost per magazine. This is normally 1% of the cost of the weapon. So if cost is given as x2, the magazine costs 2% of the cost of the weapon.

ARMOR PIERCING AMMUNITION

X2 NORMAL COST, AVAILABILITY C.

Armor piercing ammunition uses specially jacketed shells to overcome the armor of the enemy. These shells hit with tremendous penetrating power but normally pass clean through a human body. The effect is to double the damage of the weapon for purposes of penetrating armor, but it then does half the damage to the point of impact.

When fired against vehicles, AP ammo adds 1 to any rolls on the Vehicle Damage Table.

Example: McBride fills his Bolter with AP ammunition. He shoots it at an Imperial Blood Beret wearing heavy corporate battle armor with an AV of 8. McBride hits. The Bolter normally does 1d6 damage. McBride rolls a 5. This is doubled to 10. This penetrates the armor by 2. This is now halved to 1, and the Imperial soldier takes 1 point of damage.

HOT BULLETS

X2 NORMAL COST, AVAILABILITY D.

Hot bullets are another weapon banned for use against humans by the Cartel Conventions of War. Within each is a small amount of white phosphorous. Once the bullet has penetrated the flesh, it explodes, depositing its deadly cargo. Anyone wounded with a hot bullet continues to take 1 point of damage in the inflicted location until he or she receives medical attention or the bullet is dug out with a knife. This painful operation inflicts 1 point of damage to the location and requires a successful COR roll. This is at –4 if you are trying to perform it on yourself. Any inflammable target hit by a hot bullet has a 50% chance of catching fire. You can always tell people who have been victims of hot bullets. Flesh around the wound will have melted and run quite horribly.

SNOWBALLS

NORMAL COST, AVAILABILITY D.

Snowballs are a crowd control weapon designed by the Sherman Arms Corporation for use by local police squads. They contain a mixture of thetapyrenol and somnatine which instantly induces slumber unless the victim makes a PHY resistance roll against the DL 10 poison. Snowballs are a contact poison and must hit flesh to be effective. They can soak through ordinary clothing easily enough, but if they hit an armored location, they are ignored.

HARDBALLS

X3 NORMAL COST, AVAILABILITY F.

Hardballs are another development of the Sherman Arms Corporation and are available only to the Capitol military. These depleted uranium pellets hit like an express train, doing double damage to anything they hit. When used against a vehicle, they add 3 to any roll on the Vehicle Damage Table.

PROXIMITY FUSE ROUNDS

X15 NORMAL COST, AVAILABILITY F.

«A miss is as good as a mile»—unless you have proximity fuses! These nice little autocannon rounds explode when they come within 10 meters of a target. They give you +6 on any attack rolls, but they use the shrapnel damage code instead of the direct hit damage code. However, if you make maximum possible damage in the shrapnel damage roll, a direct hit is scored, and you should make a new damage roll with the direct hit damage code instead!

When used in ground AA-guns, refer to the section «Using Autocannons for Flak».

AUTOCANNONS

For the sake of simplicity, we have divided autocannons into light and heavy. Light cannons are those of with a barrel diameter of 30mm or less. Heavy cannons are of higher caliber than this. The individual cannons described here may very well serve as archetypal weapons from all manufacturers and corporations. Statistics are for high-explosive, proximity-fuse rounds which contain incendiaries (i.e., they may be used at nighttime). «Ballast rounds» of concrete don't have #TA, SR or Shrapnel Damage statistics.

All these weapons are fully automatic and all are vehicle mounted, so weight and length and strength minimums are irrelevant. They cannot be reloaded in flight. They do jam, but they have self-correcting mechanisms that fix themselves in 2d6 combat rounds. Nobody has to climb out onto a wing pylon and unjam them! (Ground based autocannons don't have self-correcting mechanisms, but take 2d6 rounds to fix anyway.) The range is given for use in normal combat (it's not applicable in dogfights).

If you hit in a dogfight, subtract the target's AV from

SHERMAN TRINITY 20 MM LIGHT AUTOCANNON

RANGE	#TA	SR	JF	SHRAPNEL DAMAGE	DIRECT HIT DAMAGE
2,000	1d4	10	7	1d6+2	2d10+4

the rolled damage to get the modifier to the 1d10 roll on the Vehicle Damage Table.

USING AUTOCANNONS FOR FLAK. Only an idiot would use flak against an enemy involved in a dogfight with friendly aircraft. If you want to try anyway, flak is always fired before any Dogfight Rolls are made. Randomly determine which plane you hit. This depends on number of craft involved—the chance is equal to hit each one!

Then, use the gunner's Weapon Systems SV to attack. A hit forces the target to either try to evade immediately—in that case, the enemy automatically wins the Dogfight Roll contest—or to ignore the flak and make the Dogfight Roll as usual, hoping for the best.

Damage is rolled in two steps—first, roll 2d6. If you roll 1 or 12, you scored a direct hit. In that case, roll damage and apply it normally. If both the dice show the same result, the shot is close enough to trigger the proximity fuse (provided you use PF rounds, naturally). Other results are harmless.

USING AIRCRAFT-MOUNTED AUTOCANNONS AGAINST GROUND TARGETS. Use the average of the pilot's Flying Vehicles and Weapon Systems SVs for the attack. Even with a successful attack roll, the bullets always miss a human-size target by 1d20 squares. Only a perfect hit means a direct hit.

Otherwise, treat each round as a grenade and use the shrapnel damage code.



BAUFORCE M/40-48 40 MM HEAVY AUTOCANNON

RANGE	#TA	SR	JF	SHRAPNEL DAMAGE	DIRECT HIT DAMAGE
5,000	1d6	20	4	1d6+4	3d10+6

AIRCRAFT-MOUNTED WEAPONS

AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES

All of the megacorporations use fire-and-forget missiles with three different kinds of homing devices: heat seeking, radar homing and sonic. Once launched, these automatically lock onto their targets, but the pilot or gunner must first succeed with a Weapon Systems roll. However, all missiles gain considerable bonuses to hit. If you hit, subtract the target's AV from the damage code given below to get the modifier to the 1d10 roll on the Vehicle Damage Table.

A *guided* AA-missile inflicts 1d20+10 points of damage and requires successful skill rolls in both Weapons Systems and Flying Vehicles by the attacker. The attacker's Flying Vehicles roll is modified by half the target pilot's Flying Vehicles SV.

Range depends on the specific model, but it's usually between 5,000 and 20,000 meters.

HEAT SEEKING MISSILE. +10 to hit; 75% chance being misled by flares; Damage: 20

RADAR HOMING MISSILE. +12 to hit; 60% chance being misled by chaffs; Damage: 24

SONIC HOMING MISSILE. +17 to hit; 90% chance being misled by sonic buoys; Damage: 12

INFANTRY ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES

These work just like air-to-air missiles, only you must succeed with skill rolls in both Shoulder-launched Weapons and Weapons Systems.

TURRETS

Many aircraft have their weapons mounted in turrets. These turrets will affect where the guns can fire and what they can hit. Often, autocannons in turrets are set in double mounts, increasing the hit probability by +4.

BELLY TURRETS can fire in a 360° arc and at anything below the aircraft and at targets on the same level. They cannot hit targets above.

TOP TURRETS can fire in a 360° arc and at anything above the aircraft and at targets on the same level. They cannot hit targets below.

SIDE TURRETS can fire in a 180° arc at targets on the same level. They cannot hit targets above or below the aircraft.

NOSE TURRETS can fire in a 180° arc at anything in front of the aircraft. They cannot hit targets that are tailgating.

TAIL TURRETS can only shoot at targets who are tailgating.

ARMOR

Unlike many corporations, Capitol has not been slow in making its best armor available to the general public. Although the major buyers are private security agencies, anyone can purchase the following armor via Capitol's extensive range of dealerships. Indeed, for the past few years, it has been quite fashionable to be seen on the streets wearing designer body armor. It is a fashion statement that says much about the dangers of Capitol's cities, though.

All Capitol body armor follows the same pattern. It consists of two or more layers of Impervium Ultraweave, a synthetic and incredibly tough material manufactured by Universal Textiles, between which are sandwiched layers of Adrax. This is a sponge-like material capable of absorbing tremendous impacts, which serves to protect the wearer from the shock of impact of those shells which do not penetrate the Impervium. This also provides some protection during falls.

DOUGHPITS

Suddenly, all was silent. The mines stopped exploding. The guns stopped firing. The dust began to settle. Anthony Wheeler clutched the trigger guard of the M606 and peered out of his foxhole warily. Out there in the tortured no-man's land, nothing moved. There were just corpses among the endless barbed wire and the craters left by the detonated mines. Smoke rose from the barrel of the LMG. Wheeler was glad to let it have a chance to cool down. He let out a long breath. He couldn't believe it. He was still alive.

«Another day, another Dollar,» said Expendable laconically as they watched the blood-red sun rise over the crimson murk. Wheeler wasn't sure, but he could have sworn that he could make out the gigantic, evil silhouette of Saladin's Citadel through the mist. Counting sightings of that evil fortress was a hobby with him, just as it was with all the men of the Freedom Brigades. This was maybe his tenth sighting of this two-month tour.

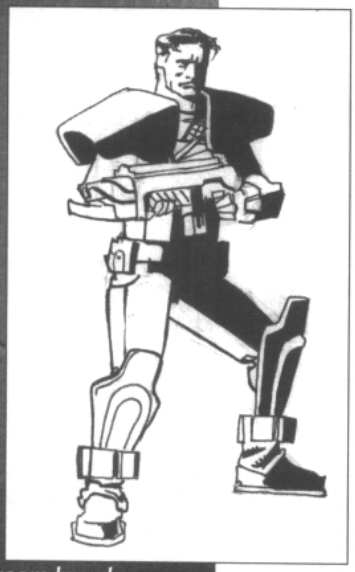
«Greed and mindless violence—is there no end to it?» said the Monk, shaking his head as he scurried down the trench toward them, keeping his head low and out of the



line of incoming fire. Monk had gotten religious since he joined the Brigades. He was as devout as a Sacred Warrior, although rumor had it that back in the real world he had been a pimp, an extortionist and a murderer. Wheeler shook his head. Many men became fanatical in the Doughpits. After what they saw here, it wasn't hard to believe.

«Hey, man,» said Expendable, «greed and mindless violence are what made this corporation great. I won't have anybody badmouthing the Capitolian dream in my foxhole.»

The little man had thrown back the gray hood of his Survivor suit to reveal his tattoo. The word Expendable was inscribed in big block capitals right across his forehead under the three studs he'd had driven right into the bone of his skull during his last R and R. Wheeler knew that Expendable was a maniac. Back in the real world, he'd killed a man in a barroom brawl because the man wouldn't admit that Pizzaworld made the best pizza. Here, he fit right in. Wheeler looked at his two friends and tried to choose which he would rather be like. Maybe neither, he decided.



HARDBACK

COST: 35,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: B. AV: 5.
Produced by Hardback Systems, this is perhaps the most commonly seen armor on the streets. It is used by the feared Armed Interdiction Police (commonly called Apes), Capitol's paramilitary riot control unit. It consists of a thick vest of linked Impervium bands, two shoulder pads and a cap lined with an Impervium band to protect the wearer from stray shots to the head. The britches and boots are also of padded Impervium.

Designer versions of Hardback, complete with the company's warthog logo, are popular among the young and rich of San Dorado.

MILITARY ARMOR

On most military armor, the innermost layer is lined with sensor-webs which monitor the wearer's physical status and relay the information gathered to the soldier's dog tag. Commercial variants of this armor, usually sold to licensed private security firms, lack these complex electronic systems and are correspondingly cheaper. Where a commercial variant of armor is available, two availability classes are given. The first is for the civilian variant. This costs about 90% as much as military armor.

Double Protection, Inc., has been the holder of the Pyramid's contract to provide Capitol's military with body armor for some decades now. Its designs are cheap, mass-produced and effective, and the Tortoise HFMPS range of armor has become a firm favorite with many freelance mercenary companies.

The most commonly available forms of armor are:

HFMPS-93 (TORTOISE MK 1)

COST: 40,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: C AND D. AV: 6.
This is standard issue to most of Capitol's line infantry. It consists of three layers of Impervium™ lined with two layers of Adrax™. The left shoulder pad contains a basic but comprehensive medical kit of painkillers, coagulant sprays, anti-shock drugs, stimulants and other useful stuff. In the right shoulder pad is space for ammunition clips.

HFMPS-94 (TORTOISE MK 2)

COST: 65,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: F. AV: 9.
This is an upgraded version of the basic Tortoise armor, issued only to Capitol's elite field units. It contains all the basic features of Tortoise Mk 1 armor with the following modifications:

- The medical kit has been replaced by a series of autoinjectors containing life support and antitoxin drugs. These are linked to the suit's sensor web and, unless manually overridden, always automatically inject the optimum combination and type of drugs to keep the wearer at peak physical efficiency. On a roll of 10 or less on 1d20, the wearer ignores any effects of poisons he or she has been exposed to. Similarly, on a roll of 10 or less on 1d20, the wearer can ignore the effects of any body area being reduced to less than zero. This roll must be made every combat round until proper medical treatment is received.
- The armor is heat-isolated, and all exposed surfaces are treated with flame-retardant chemicals. This allows the wearer to endure exposure to even the flames of a Hindenberger Incinerator for a short period of time. Basically, on a roll of 15 or less on 1d20, the wearer can ignore any flame-thrower-type weapon. As soon as this roll is failed, the flame-retardant coating is ablated and no longer functions until the armor is recoated.
- The Adrax layers also contain a self-sealing inner coating which vastly improves the armor's durability.
- It uses the latest Impervium 2 technology, which means the armor is 30% lighter than Tortoise Mk 1 armor and yet offers nearly 50% better protection on critical spots. Of course, all of this does little to reduce the costs. Mk 2 armor is not available to the general public.
- The Mk 2B variant of Tortoise armor comes with a fully sealed helmet that provides similar protection to the Survivor armor (see below) against chemical and bacteriological attack. This is in addition to the protection provided by the auto-injector systems, which only kick in once the armor is breached. The Mk 2B variant costs 15,000 Crowns more than standard Mk 2 armor. Plus, its self-sealing systems mean that the armor only counts as breached for the round a wound was suffered. After that, it becomes sealed again.

In battle, most of this armor has standard field camouflage patterns suitable for the terrain. In addition to the armor, officers wear helmets with a tinted glass face-plate on which the officer's heads-up display is projected. Enlisted soldiers wear headbands of Impervium instead.

AJHMPS 12 PANTHER

COST: 40,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: B AND F. AV: 6 ON PROTECTED AREAS.
Panther armor is an advanced, lightweight body armor designed for use in the jungles of the Venusian Warzones and the Graveton Archipelago. Conventional armor is all but useless because the stifling heat and humidity can lead to sunstroke and dehydration.

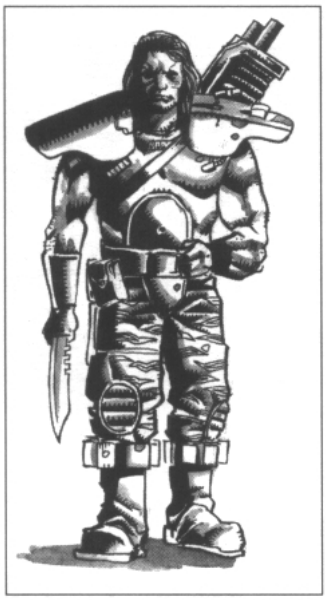
Conventional armor also encourages a lot of foul, fungal growths in areas where sweat pools. These can, in turn, lead to parasitic infestations and death.

Panther armor is designed to be as open and cool as possible and to allow the maximum freedom of mobility. This is an important consideration in tangled undergrowth and rough ground where a lot of climbing might be called for.

Panther armor usually consists of a simple body protector that covers the chest and stomach. There are shoulder pads to contain equipment. Plus, there are thick, knee-length, waterproof boots for wading through swamp. These contain

an integral sheath for a machete or a commando knife. There are also knee guards for protection during climbing and falling. The arms and upper legs are usually left unarmored. (This gives a 50% chance of a shot hitting the unarmored part of a leg.)

This armor is favored by the Free Marines. This being jungle armor, green and black camouflage patterns predominate.



ADMPS 4 SURVIVOR

COST: 200,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: F. AV: 6.
Freedom Brigade version: Cost: 50,000 Crowns. Availability: C. AV: 5.
Survivor armor is used by units operating in the Rust Deserts and the Doughpits of Mars. It is designed to be self-sealing and proof against every form of bacteriological and chemical warfare. It incorporates a complex system of filters and recyclers that allows you to exist on your own recycled wastes for ten days. It has an integral gas mask which also reclaims the moisture you lose when you breath. While it is not pleasant to wear, Survivor armor is effective.

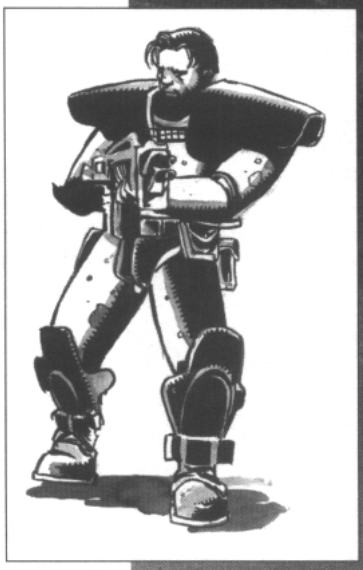
Survivor armor is lighter than conventional Capitolian body armor and does not provide quite so much protection. While it is unbreached, Survivor armor offers complete protection against any sort of chemical or biological attack. The armor is breached when the wearer suffers a hit that causes a wound. Most Survivor armor is self-sealing and only counts as breached on the round a wound is suffered.

This full-body suit has a thick chest protector and heavy boots with kneepads. The recycling system is mounted on the suit's back like a tiny scuba, and two tubes run from it to the wearer's face mask. The Survivor suit has an integral cowl which slips over the wearer's head to provide a sealed environment. Armor used in the Rust Desert is based around a red and black camouflage pattern with a predominance of red. Doughpit armor is red, black and green with a predominance of black.

A downgraded version is standard issue to the soldiers of the Freedom Brigades. This provides no recycling facilities but is still proof against chemical and bacteriological attack. Unfortunately, it is not self-sealing. Once breached, it remains breached until field repairs are effected. This takes 1d6 turns, and the user must have a field repair kit. This is usually provided.

USMBS 73 SEA DEVIL

COST: 60,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: F. AR: 6.
Sea Devil armor is issued to the subaquatic units of the Venusian Naval Rangers. It resembles Tortoise Mk 1 armor, except that the helmet is fully sealed and an integral scuba is built into the rear of the armor's chest plate. Retractable, razor-sharp fins extend from the arm guards, and the boots can extrude retractable flippers. The armor is worn over a thin, waterproof, insulating body stocking. The oxygen supply is good for 30 minutes of continuous use. For longer periods, supplementary tanks are needed.



The integral scuba is connected to the wearer's face plate. A small searchlight is built into the top of the headpiece, and it can be turned on and off with a flick of a tongue switch. This armor can have just about any camouflage pattern, from pure black for night raids to pure white for Arctic units such as the Polaris Tridents.

THE ROCKET PACK

COST: 50,000 CROWNS. AVAILABILITY: F.
This is a highly dangerous and potent device used by certain Capitolian special forces and airborne units. It is basically a backpack-mounted rocket that enables its user to fly at speeds of up to 200 mph for up to 15 minutes. The pack discharges through a directional nozzle that enables the user to guide his or her flight. The nozzle is controlled by a set of palm-mounted switches. By using these controls and by angling your body like a skydiver, you can fly in any direction you like. Some airborne units use these rocket packs instead of parachutes, waiting for the last moment before they hit the ground and triggering them, then swooping in on their foes' positions.

When airborne, all attempts at evasion are made against your Rocket Pack skill. If you fumble, you must immediately make another skill roll or lose control. If you lose control within 200 ft of the ground, you crash taking 1d10 damage in every location (armor doesn't count). If you roll a fumble on this second roll, your rocket pack ignites. Take 1d10 flame damage to your chest and head (armor does count) and then crash as detailed above.

If you are using rocket packs on a tactical map, then you may cover up to 40 squares per round and move over any obstacles. If, however, you are using a rocket pack in a confined space, such as a building, then you must make a skill roll for each move. Any failure results in a crash. If you fumble, the crash also detonates your rocket pack.



Madness and religion were just two of the options available to you in the Brigades. Unconsciously, he fingered the scar on his arm where they injected him with antidote every month. Six days to go, he told himself. Wheeler lived in dread that some supply clerk would make a mistake and send the antidote a day late to an outpost line full of corpses.

«Repent,» said the Monk, «only those shielded by the blessed Light of the Cardinal will survive in this hellish land. Repent, or you'll come to a bad end.»

Monk always said that. It was part of their ritual after a battle, just another way of letting themselves know they were still alive.

«My mama always told me that I would,» said Expendable with a grin, «guess she was darn well right.»

I guess so, thought Wheeler, remembering the endless waves of the walking dead that had come upon them in the night. The leading ones



had just walked into the minefield, detonating the charges with their bodies, clearing the way for those who came behind. On nights like that, it was hard to believe that day would ever come.

I guess we're all going to come to a bad end. Just like all the others. He didn't even think of their names. He didn't want to conjure up their ghosts. Pure superstition, he knew, but on this part of the Line, with its 60% casualty rate, you got real superstitious real fast.

Wheeler clicked open the compartment on his left shoulder-pad and pulled out his last cigarette. Regulations stated that he was supposed to keep his medical kit there, but regulations were a joke. They hadn't seen any medical supplies for a month.

«Those things will kill you,» said the Monk.

Wheeler looked at him in astonishment and then began to laugh. Here they stood in the middle of the largest slaughterhouse in human history, and the Monk was worried about lung cancer. Suddenly, they were all laughing, letting out the tension, tears running down their faces.

«Look alive, you grunts.» Sergeant Wein's voice was harsh and distant over the comm-link. «We've got company. Look's like the big push we've all been waiting for.»

Wheeler fed a new belt into the M606 and looked out into the gloom. Sure enough, twisted shapes were moving across the riven earth. They marched forward like a long line of warrior ants, slowly, relentlessly, inexorably. At their

PLAYING A CAPITOLIAN CHARACTER

Most Capitolians are loyal to their corporation and to its ideals. Therefore, all Capitolian characters share certain characteristics. These should be used as guidelines if you are playing a Capitolian character.

Of course, not all Capitolians are perfect. Not everyone lives by what Capitol considers an acceptable code of conduct, but even the huge numbers who rebel against their corporation are aware of these concepts and are rebelling against them. In some ways, the Capitolian dream is like a religious belief acquired early in childhood. In later life you may reject it, but it has still shaped your character and it still affects the way you think. You should bear this in mind when playing a Capitolian character. Even the cynical ones once believed. The reason they are cynical is because they think they have witnessed the failure of the dream.

IDEALISM

Most Capitolians try to be idealistic. They try to believe in their democracy and that it is a good way of life. From birth, they have been encouraged to be tolerant, cooperative and decent.

This does not mean that Capitolians are stupid or ignorant. They are only too aware of the flaws in their society, but most try to believe that—given time, goodwill and a belief in the democratic process—things will improve. In recent years, this faith has been severely shaken by the coming of the Dark Legion, the increasingly violent crime in the streets and the ever-growing number of cases of corruption and malpractice coming to the public's attention.

Characters who have been part of Capitol's military are often particularly patriotic. For their whole military careers, they have been prepared to lay down their lives for their fellow citizens. This can make them seem arrogant and self-righteous.

SELF-MOTIVATION

Capitolians are brought up to believe that you can improve yourself if you are prepared to work hard enough. This means that they tend to be optimistic about their prospects, which is a rare thing in these dark times, and that they have a can-do attitude. When the going gets tough, Capitolians are far more likely to roll up their sleeves and pitch in than to whine about things.

Outsiders often see Capitolians as obsessed with money, fame and success. They are correct. For the most part, their society lacks the hereditary classes and badges of distinction that dominate other corporations. A person who wants to make a mark in Capitolian society can, but usually only by pursuing fame or money—or both.

Capitolians either admire or simply envy the rich and famous, so it's not remarkable that joining their ranks is a goal in life for the majority of them.

TEAM SPIRIT

Capitolians usually function best as part of a team. The concept of self-sacrifice for the good of the group is another strong part of Capitolian culture. There is usually some conflict between this and the self-motivation element of Capitol's culture, but in the end, most Capitolians will stand by their teammates.

Yet again, this is not to say that there are not loners or selfish people among Capitol's citizenry. It just means that such people are frowned upon as anti-social elements.

ARCHETYPES

The following archetypes give some guidelines for roleplaying Capitolian adventurers. They are not written in stone, and players should not feel themselves restricted to them. You can, if you wish, modify the archetypes or even reverse them. After all, the character is yours, and Capitol is a big corporation with room for every type of person.

GUNG HO VETERAN

Capitol's huge armed forces produce many veterans. You are one of those who have had the time to acquire many combat skills and to see many, many battles.

Death itself does not trouble you, but watching comrades die has hardened you. You are slightly contemptuous of your fellow citizens because they have not seen what you have seen. You particularly despise those politicians who preach peace but come running to the military whenever there is an external threat. You are still idealistic, though, and ready to defend Capitol to the death if called upon once more. You are more patriotic and less tole-

rant than your fellow citizens, and proud to proclaim the superiority of the Capitolian way over all others.

CYNICAL VET

Like the gung ho vet, you have seen a lot of battles and a lot of bars, but somewhere along the way, you lost your faith in what you were fighting for. Perhaps you saw too many friends die. Perhaps you saw too much incompetence on the part of your commanding officers. Perhaps you witnessed some of the terrible atrocities that even Capitolian soldiers are capable of committing. For whatever reason, you are not particularly fond of the authorities and are given to questioning orders and to mocking your more gung ho brethren.

RETIRED HERO

In your time, you were one of the good ones, one of those quiet people who did the job and did it well. People respected you. Wrongdoers feared you. You were dedicated. You collected your awards for bravery and then got on with the job. You thought you had put all that behind you. You were going to live quietly with your family in that nice little town you'd always dreamed of going back to.

But now something has happened. Your kid has been kidnapped or your best buddy killed under mysterious circumstances, or the gang you put away has just broken out of prison and is looking for you. It's time to strap on your gun one last time and do what you have to do, just as you've always done it: quietly, calmly and implacably.

DISILLUSIONED LAW ENFORCER

You may have been a public prosecutor or a good cop. You saw too much corruption, and you spoke out against it. This cost you your job, your family and your friends. Now you are a cynical loner on a single-handed crusade to clean up this dirty town. You know that the system is rotten and that legal methods don't work, and if that means you sometimes have to take the law into your own hands, well, you can handle that.

Despite your obsession, you are a trained law enforcer with good investigation skills and a knowledge of the law and of firearms.

KNIGHT IN TARNISHED ARMOR

To outsiders, you look just like any other private investigator: a seedy person doing a seedy job. You do your best to encourage this because it's useful in your line of work. You are cynical, wisecracking and appear amoral. But you are not. In this nasty world, you have somehow, against all odds, preserved your ideals. You mix with slime, but it does not cling to you. You are not corrupt. You have your own set of standards, and you live by it. You can't be bought off, threatened or intimidated. You do your best to protect the innocent and see that the guilty are punished. You get beaten up, lied to by clients and worked over by the cops. It doesn't matter. At the end of the day, you know you have done your job.

MAVERICK COP

You are the one who always has to bend the rules. Every day, you see the guilty hide behind the law while the innocent suffer. You've had enough. You'll dispense your own brand of justice. Your superiors hate you. Your partners think you're a lunatic. Everybody knows it's just a matter of time before you push things too far and you end up in the Freedom Brigades or dead. Till then you're tolerated.

CORRUPT OFFICIAL

Sure you take the odd bribe. Who doesn't? And so what if you know a few characters whose faces appear in Bureau files? You couldn't have got where you are so quickly if you hadn't. If you hadn't used those contacts, somebody else would have. There's no need to take all that stuff about the sanctity of public office seriously. That's for suckers. Yeah, you believed it once, too, but that was before you saw the world as it really is. It's everyone for themselves now, buddy.

Still, sometimes you have your doubts. Sometimes you ask yourself whether it was all really worth it. And sometimes the sheer nastiness of what you see cracks even your cynical facade. Maybe someday, something will happen, and you'll be forced to confront what you have become. Then again, maybe not.

Regardless of your lack of integrity, you are a skilled political operator. You look good. You have excellent social skills, and you know how to appreciate all those rewards that life brings you. And somewhere down the line, you learned how to dispose of those people who tried to take it all away from you. Hey, you've got to get them before they get you, right?

THE HOTSHOT

You're the best, and you know it. You may be a lawyer or a fighter pilot or a musician. The important thing is that you are great, and you're going to prove it to everyone. First thing's first. You've got to look cool. That's why you wear those shades.

Next, you've got to do business. You seek out opportunities to prove yourself. So what if those older guys say you're just a kid. What do they know? So what if the other guys say you're a glory hound. They're just jealous. So what if people think you're an arrogant pig. They still find you attractive because you're so handsome and confident, don't they?

In your one area of expertise, you are amazingly skilled. Put most of your picks in it. In just about every other area, you have a lot to learn.



head was a larger shape with a three-horned head and a cloak that flapped in the wind. Wheeler sighted carefully at it and opened fire. All along the perimeter, others did the same.

«Man, I love the army,» he heard Expendable shout. Wheeler smiled. He liked a man with a sense of irony.



MARS: A VISITOR'S GUIDE

THE FIXER

Meyer slammed the phone down angrily and surveyed his plush office. He glared at the signed photograph of President Colding and the Capitolian eagle that held down the thick wad of documents on his desk. He knew he was a powerful man, and he wasn't used to the way Irving-Jorgensen had talked to him. Scumsucker, he thought, I'll get even with you one day. His smooth, handsome features were twisted in such a grimace of rage that none of the people who had voted him mayor of San Dorado would have recognized him.

Be calm, he told himself. Give your attention to the immediate problem. Sort things out. If you can solve this, Irving-Jorgensen owes you big time. He forced himself to smile. The thought that one of the Directors of Capitol's Board might owe him a favor did much to restore his calm. By the time he punched the buttons on the phone, he was his smooth, urbane self again. «Get me Chief Dos Santos,» he told the pretty secretary whose face filled the monochrome imager.

«Right away, sir,» she replied.

A moment later the picture flickered, and the lean hard face of Dos Santos filled the five inch screen. Meyer flicked down the magnifying screen and the brown-yellowish picture widened. «Nice suit, Joseph,» Meyer said looking straight into the camera, automatically giving him his best professional smile. He enjoyed the way the police chief winced. Dos Santos had not risen to his present position without learning that the Mayor didn't call him to compliment him on his suits.

Mars is the heartland of the Capitol corporation. Amid its rust red deserts are found most of the corporation's business interests. Here is the vast city of San Dorado and the lesser, yet still mighty, cities founded by the Pioneers. Here are the huge mines and smelters which are the basis of so much of Capitol's wealth. Here are the vast ranches of the Freedom Lands and the enormous factory complexes of Capitol's subsidiaries. Here, too, are the powerful film studios that are the linchpin of Capitol's media dominance.

Mars is the world the Pioneers shaped and which in turn shaped them. Everywhere you can find evidence of the corporation's guiding hand. Great networks of canals fan out from the polar icecaps to irrigate the farmlands of the Freedom Lands. The steel mesh of the Trans-Martian railroad encircles the planet, linking the monstrous smelters of Valley Forge to the ranches of Hope and the mighty megacity of San Dorado.

This is the world of the New Frontier, where countless communities of pilgrims and rebels raised towns in which they could dream of freedom and a better life. Beneath its red-tinged sky and over the endless rusty deserts, Capitol's military doctrine of air superiority and armored warfare was forged.

But not even Mars and mighty Capitol are immune to the scourge of the Dark Legion. Like a cancer eating away at the heart of the world, the power of the Dark Apostles is growing. The towering Citadel of Saladin squats like a monstrous ogre over the infamous Doughpits, one of the mightiest haunts of evil in the Solar System. From this dreadful place, the monstrous minions of the Dark launch massive raids into the megacorporation's territory. Not even the skies, once the place where Capitol held undisputed dominion, are free. Phobos and Deimos, Mars' hurtling moons, are marked with the stigmata of madness and abomination.

Still, at the moment, the evil is contained. The gigantic ring of fortifications known as the McCraig Line encircles the contaminated area, and the soldiers of the megacorporation stand ever ready to do battle. At night, huge flares light the sky as the bombers of the Capitol Air Force drop thousands of tons of high explosives on the enemy. Across the tortured, bomb-cratered landscape, the warriors of the Freedom Brigades clash with the Legionnaires of Saladin. In tunnels and trenches, desperate soldiers fight to stem the encroaching tide of the Dark. Heroes are made in this terrible place.

This then is Mars, a world shaped by humans and scourged by war, the home of the greatest of the megacorporations, ancient and enlightened Capitol.

SAN DORADO

San Dorado is the largest city on Mars and the second largest in the Solar System, after Luna. It sits at the hub of the Trans-Martian Railroad, and its factories feed an endless stream of goods out to the Kittyhawk Skyport and Capitol's off-world customers. Here, under the eyes of the towering Statue of Freedom, the Board of Directors meets to guide the destiny of Capitol's teeming billions. Here, within the massive armored fortress called the Pyramid, the Supreme Commanders of the AFC dispatch orders to the mightiest military machine in human history. From within the eleven great starscrapers of the General Departments, instructions flow to the millions of operations that make up Capitol's far-flung business empire.

Commerce is the lifeblood of San Dorado. Millions are drawn down the steel tracks of the railroads in search of a better life. In San Dorado, everyone seeks the big break that will earn them a better life. From the street corner vendor selling single, hand-rolled cigarettes with tobacco from butts found on the street, to the immaculately dressed businesswoman in the hot seat at Universal Motors, everyone is absorbed in the business of earning a Dollar.

The city streets are filled with the cars produced by Capitol's factories. Threaded like silver wire through the hundred-story-high starscrapers are the thousand lines of the San Dorado monorail system, which carries millions to work each day. Overhead, airships moor at docking towers, and the police autogyros and helicopters patrol the sky.

People swarm everywhere, and the noise is deafening. Street vendors shout. Engines roar. Sirens blare. Tens of millions of voices clamor for attention.



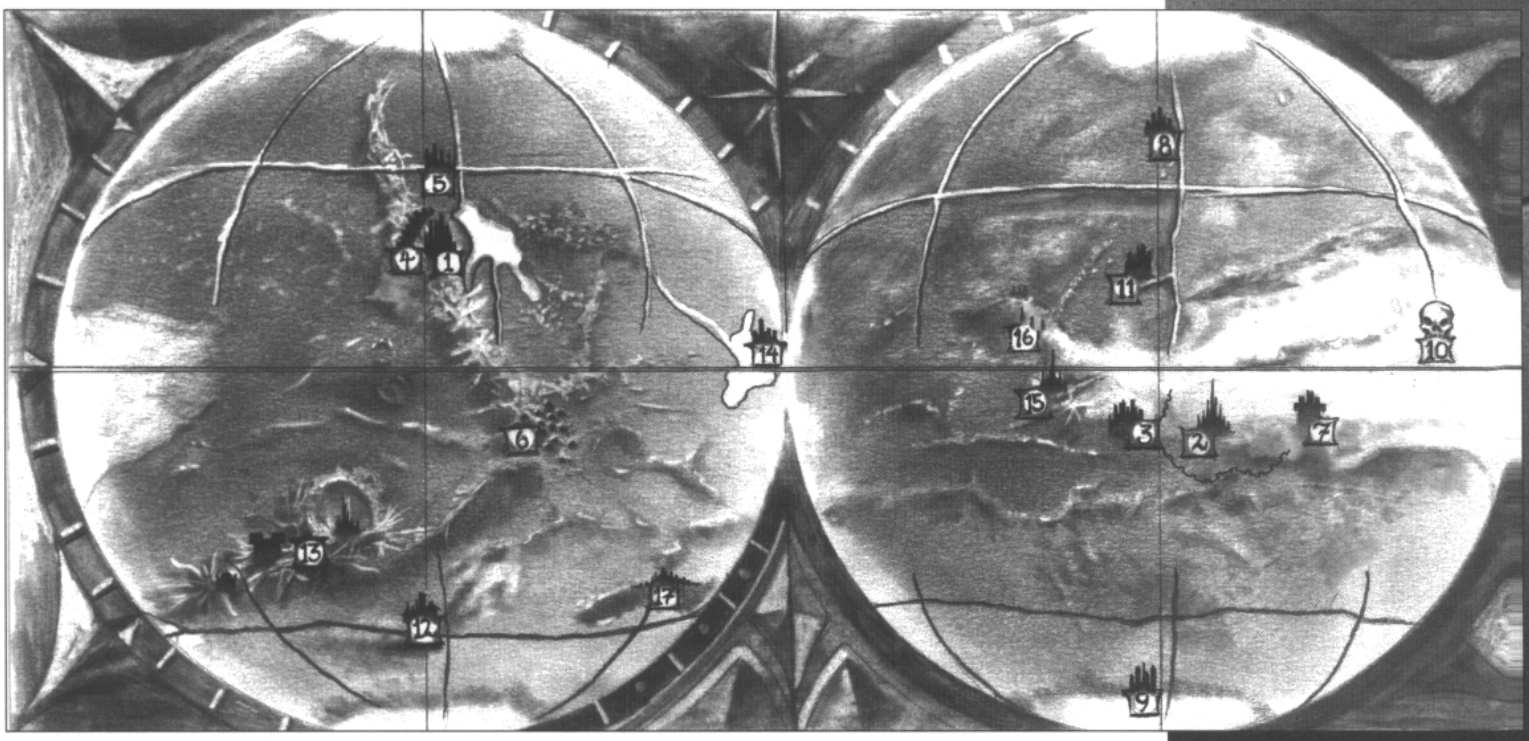
By night, the starscrapers glitter like towers of jewels, and mighty searchlights sweep the sky, illuminating the thousands of towering statues and monuments that decorate the city. Parks and fountains, boulevards and gardenlike roundabouts decorate the city. Huge electronic billboards flicker, advertising the wares of Capitol's thousands of subsidiaries, and even the smallest bar attracts customers with the glow of neon. One famous visitor called San Dorado «the City of Light and Spite», and she was not far wrong.

But even the city of light has its dark underbelly. In the Old City, the underground tunnel network left over from the days of the Pioneers, lies a thriving marketplace where every human desire can be gratified for a price. The well-regarded stock markets on Commercial Street have been tainted by scandal. After dark, the vast slums of the Sprawl are no-go areas for the police, as well as for honest citizens. Organized crime has stretched its tentacles into even the highest levels of Capitol's government. And it is said that even here, at the beating heart of the Capitolian universe, the taint of heresy can be found.



MAP OF MARS

1 *San Dorado*
2 *Citadel of Saladin*
3 *Burroughs*
4 *The Kirkwood Bunker*
5 *Cyberopolis*
6 *Endless Caverns*
7 *Lawrence*
8 *Hope*
9 *Mundburg*
10 *Great Rust Desert*
11 *Valley Forge*
12 *Hosokawa*
13 *Strathgordon, The Karkov Retreat and the Citadel of Absalom*
14 *Vega*
15 *Mount Erebus*
16 *Valley of a Thousand Stones*
17 *Edison*





«What do you want, Clark?» Dos Santos asked warily. Meyer let his smile widen a fraction.

«I just got a call from Mike Irving-Jorgensen. Its seems that daughter of his has been up to a little mischief again.» Meyer was starting to enjoy himself. He would never have called the Director «Mike» to his face, but Dos Santos couldn't know that. The very informality of his statement implied the whole, vast power of the Director was behind him.

Dos Santos's grimace transformed into a look of genuine pain. «I wouldn't call wigging out on thionite and whacking three people with a Bolter a little mischief, Clark.»

Meyer held his gaze steadily. «I'm sure there were extenuating circumstances. Young Michelle has been under a lot of pressure recently.»

«Scratch the fender of her new Phantom, did she?» Dos Santos sounded bitter. «Daddy not buying her enough Favoricci dresses?»

«Come now, Joseph,» said Meyer urbanely. «You and I can't understand the pressures that come from being the sole heir of the I-J fortune. Show a little sympathy for the girl.»

«I'd rather show some sympathy for the kids of the three people she killed,» said the CSS officer.

Meyer shook his head sadly. It was obvious that Dos Santos wasn't going cooperate willingly. He opened his mouth to snap a threat back at Dos Santos, but the fading screen and the scraping in the loudspeaker, due to the usual line disturbances, gave him time to collect himself.

THINGS A VISITOR SHOULD KNOW

The Capitolian Charter asserts that the right to bear arms is the right to be free. Every Capitolian citizen has the right to own a weapon for use in self-defense and the defense of the corporation. The fact that Capitol's armaments industry is one of the most powerful sectors of the corporation ensures that they will keep this right forever.

Don't be fooled by Capitol's seemingly liberal gun laws. It is true that Capitolian citizens have the right to purchase almost any weapon they can afford. The same is not true of non-Capitolians. If you want to purchase a weapon, you need a license from the CSS. If you want to carry a concealed weapon, you need a Beta-permit. To acquire these you, need to visit a CSS station house with identification. You must show good reason for your purchase and an even better reason to carry concealed weapons. Then you need to pay a fee of 1,000 Crowns. Only once the paperwork has been done, and this can take weeks, will you be entitled to make your purchase. If the CSS doesn't like the look of you for any reason, they will refuse the permit.

Capitolian citizens are subject to more or less the same rules, but with one difference. The only reason the police may refuse a firearms permit is if the citizen has a criminal record. Only licensed investigators and bodyguards are ever granted concealed weapons permit. A permit allows you to own and transport a weapon for purposes of sport and self-defense. It is supposed to be kept at home. You are not allowed to carry a weapon on your person unless you have a concealed weapons Beta-permit.

For full automatic weapons, you also need an Alpha-permit, normally never issued to the public. Automatic weapons are normally modified to become semi-automatic to dodge this requirement. This is a simple operation, and changing the function selector can be done in less than a minute. No criminal moves about without one.

The CSS has a very good reputation for courtesy and service. If you are robbed, lost or otherwise in trouble, you should not hesitate to call them. CSS officers are, in general, approachable and fair. Don't try to bribe them though. Unlike some security forces, they don't like it. However, be very wary indeed in your dealings with the Armed Interdiction Police. These officers have a reputation for brutality, and their nickname, the Apes, is well-deserved.

DANGERS AND ANNOYANCES

GUNS. Always bear in mind that Capitolians are the best-armed people in the human system. Over 90% of all Capitolians have a weapons permit of some kind, and the CSS estimates that most permit holders own at least two weapons. It also estimates that there are at least as many guns again in circulation illegally. Furthermore, although less than 1% of the population has the right to carry concealed weapons, the CSS estimates that at least one out of every four Capitolians carry firearms every time they leave home.

The incredibly high crime rate provides some justification for this, but the CSS believes that all these weapons do more to contribute to violent crime than to prevent it. A simple barroom brawl can degenerate into a firefight with appalling swiftness. A man who has just lost his job can return to his workplace and gun down his boss. A woman having a bad day can mow down ten people in a shopping mall. Snipers can fire from almost any rooftop. And because so many people have weapons, these things can swiftly become a general battle with hundreds of people letting off shots at anyone who looks threatening. Then the Apes appear, and things can get really rough.

Still, we'd like to stress that these things are not really all that common in San Dorado. The CSS estimates that you have less than a 1% chance per day of even seeing a shot fired in anger. Of course, these statistics don't take into account the disparity of gunfights in different areas. In the highly policed corporate sectors, the only guns you see will be carried by cops, while some parts of the Sprawl are simply urban war zones. Follow these few simple rules, and you won't come to any grief:

- Don't argue with Capitolian citizens if you can help it.
- Always assume a person is armed unless you know differently, and treat them accordingly.
- Don't go into dangerous areas at night. (Or during the day for that matter.)
- Never argue with an Ape.

CRIME. Street crime is a fact of life in Capitolian society. It is a sad fact that there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. The poor are very numerous and all too often decide to take what they need from those with more than themselves. This is exacerbated by the high incidence of gun ownership and the casual acceptance of violence by the Capitolians themselves. Muggers, armed gangs and violent assaults are all too common in certain areas of San Dorado. Even in the safer parts of the city, pickpockets are common and often work in gangs. Some members distract you while the rest go through your pockets. Wear a money belt beneath your clothing.

More sinister are rumors of the mutant gangs. These deformed monsters are said to lurk in the Undertown and the sewage system and to exist in a big colony beneath the Mound. They go around in packs, emerging at night to stalk the unwary. They can be spotted by their cowled garments and the bandages they wrap round their faces and hands to hide their hideous deformities.

RIOTS AND PROTESTS. Capitolians feel that they have a say in the running of their government and that their government should listen to them. Unfortunately, this desire for self-expression often leads to violent protests where thousands of demonstrators clash with the AIP. These riots can happen for many reasons: rises in bread prices, factory closures, rumors of war or the presence of heretics in the area.

The CSS estimates that there is always at least one riot going on San Dorado at any given time.

The worst of these are the so-called riotwars. These can get very ugly, very quickly. Partisans of other factions often snipe at protesters from rooftops or even attack them with hand weapons. Protesters defend themselves, and things get all out of hand. Buildings and vehicles get set alight, and whole blocks of the city can become warzones. Then the AIP intervenes, and things get real nasty.

If you get caught in the middle of a riot, we have only one piece of advice: get out quickly before the Apes arrive.

A LAST WORD

All this aside, San Dorado is a very nice place to visit and is almost certainly no more dangerous than Luna, for example. Keep your wits about you, and you should be perfectly safe.

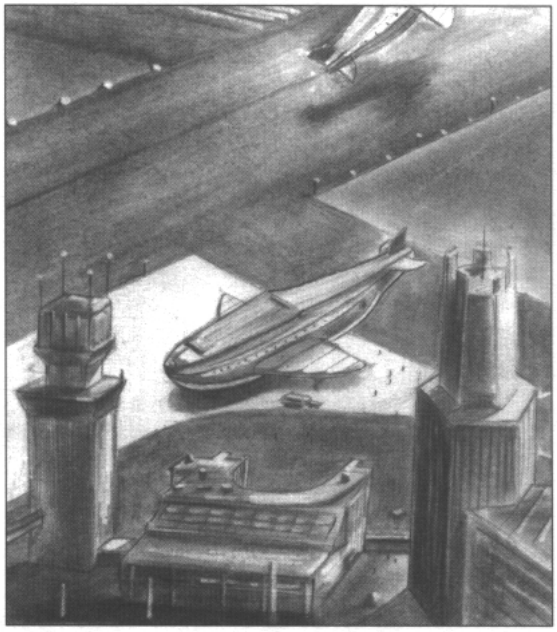
ARRIVING

KITTYHAWK SKYPORT. This is the place where most off-world visitors will arrive. At its center is a vast complex of spacefields where giant shuttles squat waiting to be granted take-off permission. Most visitors simply hustle down the moving pedways to Immigration where their papers are checked by courteous officials. Occasionally some off-worlder is stopped when coming through the Scanner Arches and marched off by blue-uniformed police to be searched for illegal drugs or weapons, but most honest visitors have no trouble. The skyport itself is not a particularly inviting place, but fortunately it is easy to get away from.

At Kittyhawk Aerodrome, you can pick up an airship flight to virtually any major city on the planet. Simply follow the signs once you are through Immigration.

Alternatively, head down to the railway station and buy a ticket to San Dorado's Terminus Station. The ticket will cost you about 50 Crowns. Once there, you will find yourself at the hub of the Trans-Martian railroad, able to get to virtually any populated place on the planet.

The rich among you might like to hire a cab for the two-hour drive into the city. Be warned that this is expensive. The ride will cost you about 1,000 Crowns.

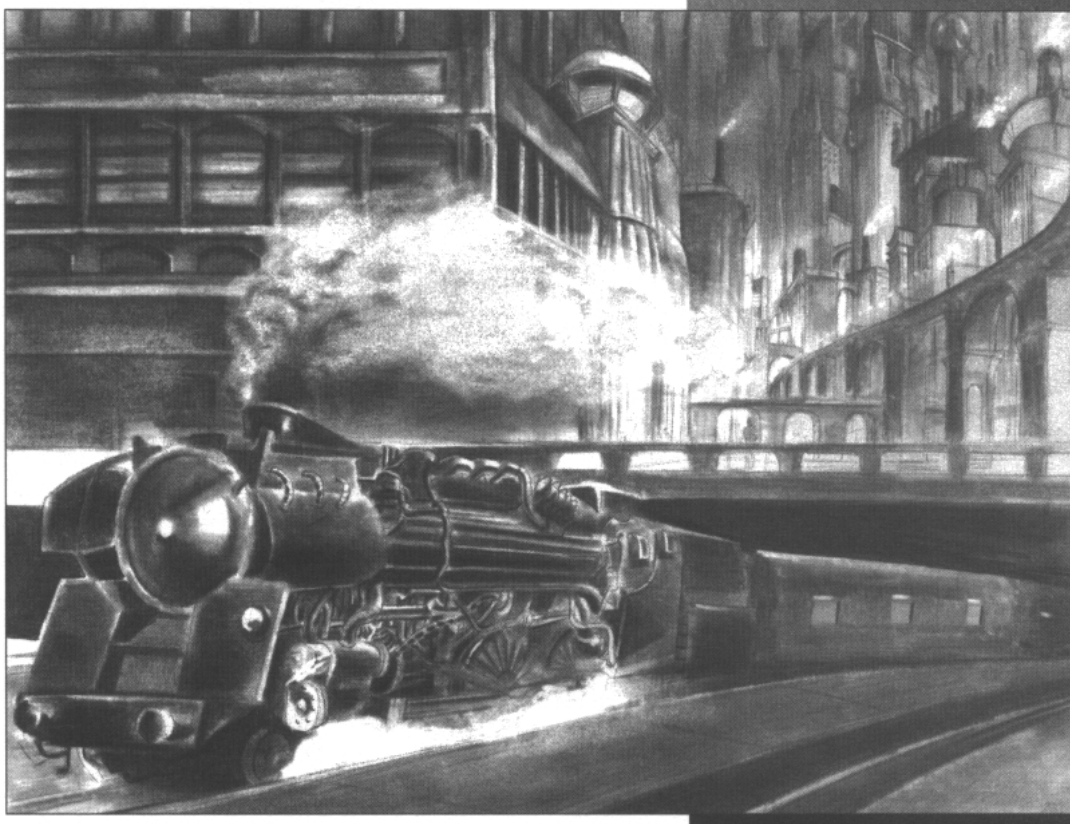


TERMINUS STATION. For most Martians born outside San Dorado, the huge, vaulted dome of Terminus Station is their first sight of the big city. The station itself is one of the wonders of San Dorado. It has over a hundred platforms lined with smoke-belching steam trains. The walls are made of polished sandstone, and the floors are covered in mosaics depicting famous scenes from Capitolian history. From niches in the walls, 50-foot-high statues of past Presidents stare down at passersby. The station is virtually a city within the city, having its own hotels, shopping complexes and police force. Moving pedwalks connect the station to the monorail system.

GETTING AROUND

Once you're in the city, taxis are plentiful, if not exactly cheap. A typical ten-minute ride costs about 50 Crowns. Tipping is expected.

A better way to see the city is by monorail. This goes just about everywhere, and tickets cost a flat 60 Crowns per journey. A trip on the monorail is worth the cost just for the experience of rushing across the gaps between skyscrapers and looking down at the street 1,000 feet below. This is an experience best savored at night.





«I'm sorry you're taking that attitude, Joseph. That girl's like a daughter to me. I would be very, very upset if she got into any real trouble.»

«Her father can afford a good lawyer.»

«You know as well as I do that the girl's on parole, Joseph. Another case comes to court, and it might well be the Freedom Brigades for her. She's a sensitive soul. You wouldn't want anything to happen to a poor, misguided young girl.»

«It might do her some good. Hell, she might even enjoy it. She's killed six people already this year. She's got a talent for it, and I'm sick of watching her walk.»

No, Meyer decided, Dos Santos wasn't going to be any help at all. It was time to apply the big stick.

«How old are you, Joseph?»



ORIENTATION

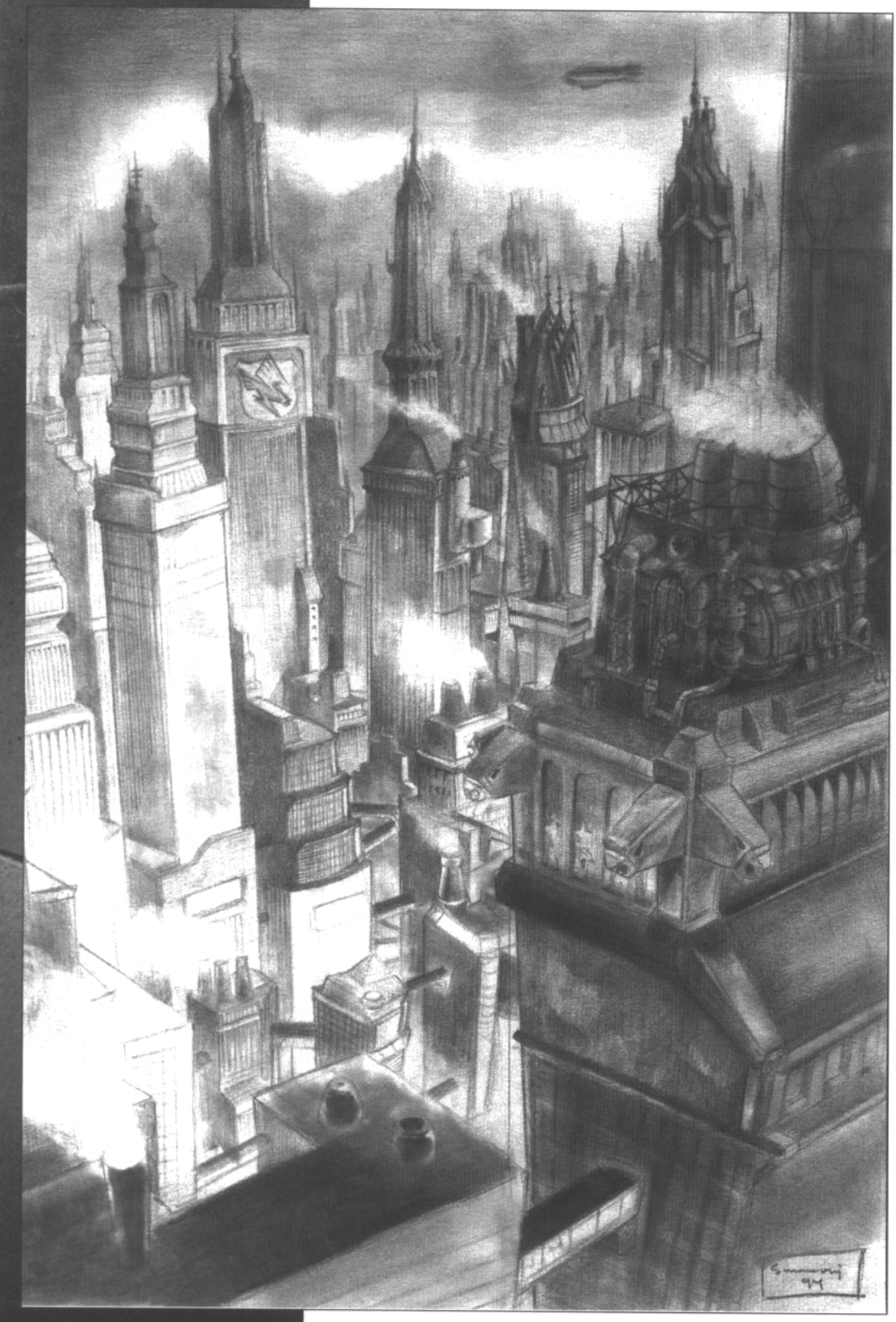
The setting of San Dorado is spectacular. It is nestled beneath the towering peaks of the mighty Kirkwood mountains. These frame one of the greatest of all humanity's megalopolises and can provide a welcome retreat when the teeming city proves just too much for you.

San Dorado itself is huge. You should always bear this fact in mind when trying to see the city. It covers an area of several hundred square miles. Fortunately, it is laid out with a certain logic, and all the main sights that you might want to see are fairly close to the center.

The hub of San Dorado is the Government Sector centered on the Statue of Freedom in Liberty Square. Here you will find the Presidential Palace, the Eleven Towers and the Cathedral. To the west, you will find the sprawling Commerce Park. Encircling this whole area in a twenty mile circle is the business district. Here you will find the starscraper towers that house the head offices of Capitol's many subsidiary companies. You will also find the business districts dominated by the other megacorporations. These are, respectively, Imperial Park, Mishima Palace and the Bauhausstrasse.

These virtual enclaves of non-Capitolian power are policed and maintained by the other megacorporations. Each of these areas has its own stop on the monorail and its own private aerodromes.

Beyond the Business Circle, you reach the Outer Ring. This is divided into twenty segments. These are alternatively zoned for residential building and industrial development. Most of San Dorado's citizens dwell in the residential zones and commute to work either in the center or in an adjacent industrial zone. Beyond the Outer Ring is the Sprawl, an area where sweatshop factories mingle with slum housing and the occasional fortified mansion of some rich entrepreneur or gangster. This is a lawless area where most police forces fear to venture. On huge pylons, the mighty railways of the Trans-Martian run out through the Sprawl. Beyond this area, to the northeast, is Kittyhawk Skyport. To the east is the Wonderland theme park. To the north are the mines and wells serviced by Industrial Zone One.



ARCHITECTURE

Like all the megacorporations, Capitol's architecture is monumental. Its buildings are *big*. The downtown area in particular is designed to impress the visitor with the power and grandeur of the corporation. Capitol's Universal Construction subsidiary did most of the work.

There are a few things that distinguish Capitolian architecture from that of the other megacorporations. The classic Capitolian design is all clean lines. A few areas might be adorned by a single Capitolian eagle, but mostly the Capitolians let the scale of the buildings speak for themselves.

The second thing that distinguishes Capitolian buildings is the use of light. The facades of most starscrapers are underlit with searchlights. Neon signs and giant billboards are everywhere,

competing for the eyes of consumers. Capitol is the corporation of commerce, and everywhere potential consumers are encouraged to buy, *buy, BUY!* This means that Capitolian areas are aglow with neon by night.

SHOPPING

San Dorado is a great place to indulge in conspicuous consumption. It is regarded as the shop window of Capitol's many subsidiaries. Huge department stores can be found in every sector. Enormous malls contain a plethora of Capitol-owned chain stores. In San Dorado, you can find goods from every corner of our system, and cut-throat competition keeps prices low. It is a particularly good place to buy Capitolian products. You can buy just about anything manufactured by Capitol for 10% less than the listed price.

FOOD

San Dorado is also a great place to eat whatever your budget can handle. Street vendors are everywhere, selling hot dogs and hamburgers. Corner diners will sell you a filling meal cheaply. High class restaurants provide every type of cuisine imaginable. Probably the best food is to be found in the Mishima Palace district around Hundred Pagoda Park. Here you can find many Mishiman specialties cooked to a standard that would not be out of place on Mercury. Also popular are places that sell the hot and spicy food of Venus' Graveton Archipelago.

ENTERTAINMENT

You are now in the entertainment capital of the Solar System. There are thousands of moviedromes showing the latest releases from Capitol's studios. There are thousands of dance halls and nightclubs where you can hear jazz and swing bands. There are over fifty TV channels and a hundred radio stations. There are museums and opera houses and concert halls and theaters. There are public readings by poets and political meetings organized by the citizens. There are thousands of magazines to buy and restaurants to visit. The only trouble with entertainment in San Dorado is that there is so much of it. By the time you've decided what to do or where to go, the night will be half over.

THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood has a strong presence in San Dorado. Capitolians are devout, and 90% visit the Cathedral at least once per week. In addition, Missionaries flood the streets of the Sprawl, running soup kitchens and free hospitals and preaching the Cardinal's word. Around the Business District, you will often see agents of the Brotherhood going about their business. Amid the billboards and the neon, you will find signs exhorting you to walk in Light and to beware the Dark. There are two 24 hour Brotherhood TV channels—the Cardinal Entertainment Channel and the Holy News Network—and several Brotherhood-supported radio stations.

Because of Capitol's commitment to freedom and its citizens' rights, the Inquisition is less in evidence in San Dorado than it is in Luna. The Second Directorate is still here, but it tends to work closely with the CSS and Capitol's other security agencies. Indeed, it is a little known fact that any Inquisitor on Mars is automatically deputized into the CBI and has the same powers as any other agent.

SEEING THE SIGHTS

Most people visiting San Dorado have a list of the things they want to see. Fortunately all are easily accessible by monorail.

SAN DORADO CATHEDRAL. This is the third largest Cathedral in the Solar System and the fourth to be built. It is a gigantic building and a tribute to the engineering skills of Capitol's Universal Construction division. Within its walls are inscribed the Fourth Chronicle: *The Arrival of Semai and Muawijhe* by Lapidius Asolvos. A constant stream of pilgrims passes through this gigantic structure. They come to wonder at this vast monument to humanity's faith in the Brotherhood. The Cathedral is located on the south edge of Liberty Square.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. This is the official residence of the Chairman of the Board. It is a huge, ivory building adorned with hundreds of statues of the Capitolian eagle. In the penthouse at its very peak dwells William Colding who is, after the Cardinal, arguably the most powerful person in the Solar System. The lower floors of the Palace are open to the public and contain many relics of Capitol's past Presidents, right back to the time of the founding. The palace is right on the north edge of Liberty Square.

THE STATUE OF FREEDOM. Standing right in the middle of Liberty Square is the Statue of Freedom. For many, this statue symbolizes the Capitolian dream. It stands five hundred feet high and looks down vigilantly on the Presidential Palace. In one hand the statue holds a set of scales, symbolizing fair trade, in the other she holds a massive Bolter symbolizing Capitol's determination to stay free by armed force if necessary. The statue was built several centuries ago with funds provided by the Sherman Arms Corporation. Visitors line up for hours to view the city from the observation gallery in the muzzle.

THE PYRAMID. This massive fortress stands on the north-western edge of Liberty Square. It is a monstrous, reinforced concrete building with no windows. One huge eye is carved in the side that looks out over the square, symbolizing the military's desire to watch over freedom. The Pyramid itself is



«Thirty-five.»

«Five years till your pension?»

«I hope that wasn't a threat, Clark.»

«In the Cardinal's name, no. Just remember, I can't give you any backing on this. I'm up for re-election this year, and Mike is a very powerful man with very powerful friends.»

Dos Santos smiled cynically. «You won't back your own police chief?»

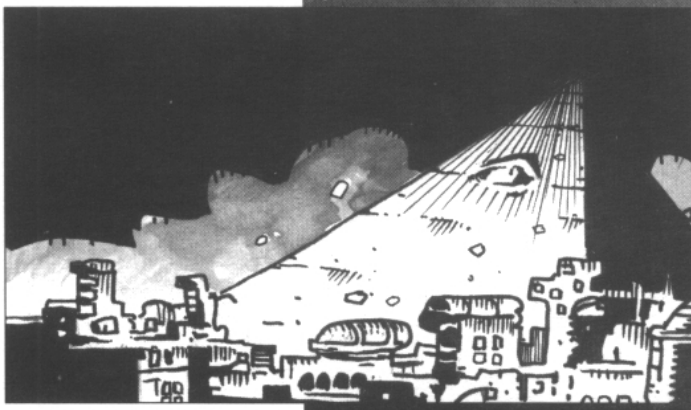
«What can I do when he insists on prosecuting a poor, innocent young girl who was defending her honor from three scumsucking attackers?»

«They were unarmed, Clark. It's in the reports.»

«It was dark. They might have been armed. How was that poor girl to tell?»

Dos Santos shook his head. Meyer could see he was under pressure. Everyone knew just how powerful Irving-Jorgensen was and just how vindictive. The stick had been shown. It was time for the carrot.

«Mike was saying he's looking for a new security chief. You know how well Universal Steel pays.» The Director had never mentioned any such thing, but Meyer was sure that Irving-Jorgensen would think it a small price for saving his precious little girl from the Freedom Brigades.



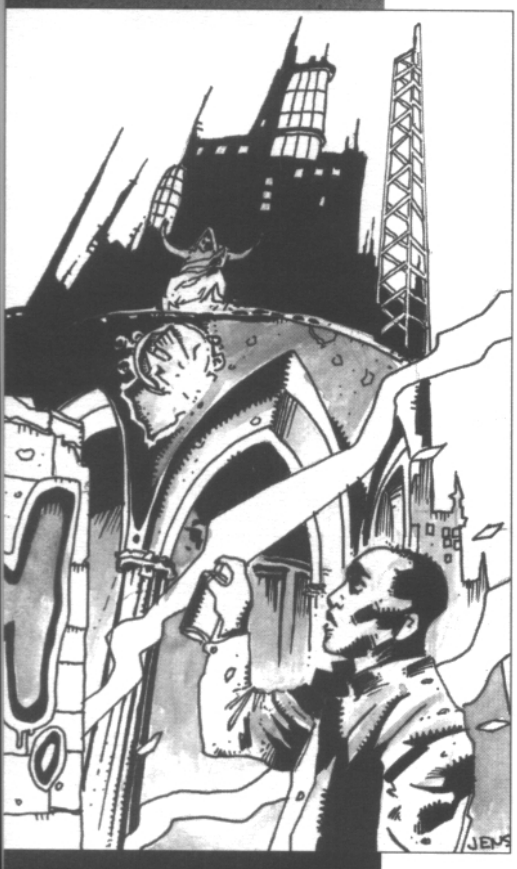


Dos Santos smile became more genuine. He could see something in this situation for himself now. It's true, Meyer thought. Everybody has their price. You've just got to be able to pay it. For a moment, he felt almost proud. Wasn't that the Capitolian way?

«It was dark,» Dos Santos said. «Mistakes could have been made. I'll have to have a word with the detectives on the case.»

Meyer smiled in return. The business was resolved. It was time to get in touch with the Director and start negotiating his own reward. He got through on the Irving-Jorgensens' private line almost immediately.

«Mike,» he said. «Good news.»



exactly 1,000 feet high and contains nearly six thousand offices. But like one of the fabled icebergs, most of it is beneath the ground. The entrances to the Pyramid are constantly guarded, and there is no access without a pass. Still there is something about this stark and brutal building that stirs the soul of most viewers.

Beneath the Pyramid are enormous barracks where over ten thousand of the elite Presidential Guard stand in constant readiness to defend the Chairman from any threat.

THE ELEVEN TOWERS. These towers are all to the east of Liberty Square, looking down on the Statue of Freedom. They are all linked by a web of private monorails and pneumatic message tubes. They house the offices of each of Capitol's eleven General Departments. From them, Capitol's Directors govern the entire megacorporation.

When these mighty starscrapers were first built, interdepartmental rivalry meant that each tried to be larger than the next. This led to extensions being built on and an ever greater number of floors being added. Eventually this led to disaster when six of the Towers toppled during the Age of Catastrophe. The President at the time ordered that when the buildings were reconstructed each should be exactly the same height: 1,100 feet. And so they are.

CAPITOL CORPORATE MUSEUM. This huge building sits in the shadow of the Pyramid and covers an area of some 10 square miles. It is famed throughout the Solar System for its collection of pre-Catastrophe artifacts. It has hall after hall containing some extremely well-preserved examples of ancient machines. It is also one of the Solar System's finest repositories of art. Within the sculptor's gallery, you can view Bannon's *Fear and Terror*, Kozlovski's towering *The Pioneers* and, of course, the famed *Eagle of Freedom*. You can also view the original Charter of Capitol which is preserved within a crystal case. In recent years, security has been tightened at the museum, as persons unknown have made attempts to steal the valuable artifacts. Indeed, after the last raid, the museum acquired its own cell of Inquisitors from the Brotherhood, the members of which vigilantly guard certain artifacts.

DONALDSON RADIO TOWER. This is the first and arguably the finest example of one of Capitol's great entertainment complexes. The tower itself is the home of Station One, San Dorado's favorite radio and TV station. Its needlelike transmitter aerial dominates the skyscraper. In the base of the building is housed the famous Radio Tower dance hall. Live concerts go out from here every night. There are several dance halls and restaurants. All the greats of Capitol's recording empire have played here.

COMMERCE PARK. Right at the heart of San Dorado is Commerce Park, a hundred acres of unspoiled park land in the very center of the city. San Doradans come to relax beside its seven artificial lakes. They can wander though its miles of pathways, past the towering Pioneer Monument which shows a group of early Pioneers raising the Capitolian Flag on Mars. This is said to mark the spot where the first Pioneers set foot on Mars. It is traditional to throw a coin in the Fountain of Freedom and wish for your heart's desire. Commerce Park is no longer safe after dark. A growing army of the homeless make camp here.



WONDERLAND. It is the dream of every child to visit Wonderland, the gigantic amusement park at the edge of San Dorado. Among its many attractions are the Solar System's largest Ferris wheel, the highest Big Dipper ride and the so-called Tower of Terror, where animatronic monsters chase children through darkened corridors. This amusement park has been made famous in a thousand movies. It was here that the monster Megazilla made his final stand in *Megazilla's Return*. It was atop the Big Wheel where Jack Slade duked it out with the Nepharite Absalom in *The Big Dark*. It was in the Tower of Terror that Doctor Eva Kane confronted the mad psycho-killer Damian in *Murder Most Foul*. It was in the Ruby Chapel in the Lake of Love that Father Avunculus married Liza Bergman and Carlos Manolito.

Admission costs 100 Crowns. There are lines for most of the rides.

TECHNIKHAUS. This bizarre building is one of the strangest of Bauhaus's creations. It is a vast steel skeleton in the heart of the Bauhaus zone. It was designed by the so-called Mad Architect, Ernesto Spinoza, just before his mysterious death. It resembles a skyscraper turned inside out. Inside are many modular buildings fixed within the skeleton. A huge maze of piping is threaded through it. The elevators are all transparent pods that run up the sides of the steel columns. Atop the whole thing is a vast aircraft landing zone in the shape of three interlinked Bauhaus cogwheels. These can be made out from high in the air above. People come to the Bauhausstrasse just to gawk at this weird building.



HUNDRED PAGODA GARDENS. This is said to be the finest example of Mishiman landscape gardening outside Mercury. It is only a tenth the size of Commerce Park, but it is just as popular. It contains acres of rare flowers, stone gardens, carefully designed lakes and streams crossed by ornate lattice bridges. There are a hundred pagodas scattered throughout the gardens, often used by lovers for meetings. There are many private areas where people can talk without being overheard. The Mishiman ambassador has denied the persistent rumors that the Crimson Lotus Society, the Mishiman Intelligence Service, has all of these areas bugged. Located in the heart of the Mishima Palace district, the gardens are surrounded by hundreds of Mishiman restaurants and thousands of food vendors selling Mishiman meals from little stalls.

THE CYBERTRONIC ZIGGURAT. This is a five-step pyramid made of black glass. At night, some strange holographic effect makes the Cybertronic logo visible inside its walls. The logo just seems to float there, visible from almost any angle. This building houses Cybertronic's offices on Mars. Around it are many department stores filled with Cybertronic's goods. It is located on the eastern edge of the Bauhausstrasse.

THE ARCH OF VICTORY. Right in the heart of the Imperial Park district is the Arch of Victory, built to commemorate Imperial's many victories over the Dark Legion on Mars. The arch is five hundred feet high and aligned exactly so that if you look through it you can see the spire of the Cathedral. On its sides are inscribed the names of all the Imperial soldiers who have fallen on Martian soil, and three dozen masons are constantly at work carving new ones. Under the arch burns the eternal flame commemorating those who have given their lives in defense of the Imperial way. This is a place of pilgrimage for many Imperial citizens who have lost friends and family in the Martian wars. The flame is guarded night and day by an honor guard of Imperial soldiers. There have been several terrorist bomb attempts. The Imperial Armed Forces have not been popular in San Dorado since the Citadel Founding Night Massacre.

INDUSTRIAL ZONE SEVEN. IL7 is the rather prosaic area code of one of the most famous places in the Solar System. It is better known as Movietown, the hub of Capitol's far-reaching media empire. All of the seventh Industrial Zone is occupied by the famous studios. Here, on giant lots and sound stages, the most-watched films in human history are made. Here are the homes of Universal Motion Pictures, Independent Films, Mogul Studios and all the other giant motion picture combines of Capitol. This is the place to which tens of thousands of young hopefuls are drawn in search of fame and fortune—the place where a million dreams were made. The mansions in Residential Zones Seven and Eight that border Movietown are among the most expensive and luxurious places to live in the whole Solar System.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM. Right across from the Arch of Victory is the Imperial War Museum. In this huge and spectacularly ornate building, you can find examples of all of Imperial's military equipment, up to and including the famous Bauhaus Bully war-machine. You can also find some spectacular holographic displays of Imperial campaigns, including their doomed attack on Valley Forge, which the Imperials portray as a fine example of tenacious Imperial heroism in the face of overwhelming odds. The fact that Imperial started the war with an overwhelming surprise attack is not mentioned. The great library in which the records of all of Imperial's campaigns are kept is constantly updated. A new volume is added at least once per week.

The museum is guarded by a company of retired veterans from various Imperial units. All wear the ornate and antique costume of the Museum Watch. Imperial has denied persistent rumors that there is an ISC HQ in a bunker in the museum's basement. It is undoubtedly true that some visitors have disappeared within the museum's restricted areas, never to be seen again.

VENUSIAN GARDENS. Right in the heart of the Bauhaus corporate zone are the three huge interlinked geodesic domes of the Venusian Gardens. Within their sealed environment is a faithful replication of the Venusian jungles, minus some of their more dangerous wildlife. The entire gardens area, covering an area similar in size to Hundred Pagoda Park, is climate controlled. The section on narcotic plants is particularly popular and is something of a meeting place for San Dorado's disaffected and drug-addicted youth, much to the disgust of the Homebuilders. There are persistent rumors of a whole troop of deranged Venusian veterans who live in the parks, reliving their experiences in the warzones. Bauhaus fervently denies this, and it is true that only a very few people vanish mysteriously here each week.

PALACE OF THE SKIES. Towering over Hundred Pagodas Park is the huge white-walled fortress known as the Palace of the Skies. It is an exact duplicate of the Palace of the Skies in Hosokawa. This enormous, fortified complex is the official residence of Lord Heiress Mariko when she is in San Dorado. In deference to her status, Capitol allows nearly ten thousand armed soldiers of her guard to reside in the palace. Within its walls, the Lord Heiress's word is law. Although no one is allowed into the palace without express invitation, visitors still travel from all over Mars to marvel at the 100-meter-high walls and the ceremonial changing of the guard at the Dragon Gate.

Those who have visited the palace record that it is a place of unrivaled beauty and luxury, containing a thousand individually decorated apart-



ments to suit each of Mariko's moods. During times of tension between Mishima and Capitol, the palace is often besieged by hordes of angry (and armed) Capitolian citizens. Such attacks are futile, since the walls are nearly 20 meters thick, reinforced and armored and divided into bulkheads. Just beyond the Dragon Gate is a memorial to the 500 Capitolians shot dead by the Heiress's guard during the last confrontation. By long tradition, even in times of all-out war, the palace remains inviolate. It has often been the scene of peace negotiations between the President and the Heirs.

PLACES TO AVOID

UNDERTOWN. This underground area runs below the center of San Dorado. It is said to be the most ancient part of the city, dating from the shelters burrowed by the original Pioneers to protect themselves from the great dust storms. It certainly looks ancient. It is lit by fitful flickering gaslights, and there are many unlit areas where a visitor can be ambushed and robbed. In the heart of the Undertown maze lies the sleazy red-light zone of bars and private clubs where anything can be had for a price. There are rumors of cells of heretics being found down here. Despite many attempts by the CSS and the Brotherhood to clear this area, the low-life element always returns. There is a thriving black market in forged papers, unregistered guns and other less mentionable things down here.

Whatever you do, do not accept the services of locals claiming to be guides. They will most likely guide you to an isolated spot where their confederates will be waiting to rob you.

THE SPRAWL. This is the vast sprawl beyond the city proper. Here are streets of crumbling tenements, lined with huts built from cardboard, crates, corrugated iron and other industrial debris. The most permanent structures are the gin houses and unlicensed bars where the poor drown their sorrows. Most of the population are unemployed casual laborers. Many are former citizens who have sold their last share and are now on the down and out. Such factories as exist are sweatshops producing cheap goods and components. Often the streets are open sewers. The most infamous landmark in the Sprawl is the Mound. This is the city dump where all the trash of San Dorado ends up. It is also a small city, home to thousands of families who pick through the garbage, looking for something to sell.

Much of the Sprawl is controlled by paramilitary gangs such as the Raiders and the Urban Militia. On their own turf, these gangs are the law, and they often fight bitter territorial wars for control of huge swathes of the city. The Brotherhood and the CSS only step in when the fighting threatens to escalate to massive proportions. The Sprawl is undoubtedly one of the most dangerous places in the system. Don't go there if you value your life.

WHERE TO STAY

LUXURY CLASS

For some people, only the best is good enough. They need spacious suites, an army of servants and the best and most discreet management that money can hire. They need to stay at luxury hotels. Needless to say, San Dorado has hundreds. The ones mentioned here are only a tiny selection, but they represent those that we feel give the best value.

All these hotels have comparable costs. A room here costs 5,000 Crowns per night. A suite costs 200,000 Crowns per night.

UNION HOTEL. Located just off Liberty Square, this super-ritzy place is as close as you can get to all the sights and to Capitol's hub of political power.

This gigantic building is often patronized by Capitol's movie stars and is occasionally the scene of lavish parties thrown by the studios. The hotel is rumored to employ over 6,000 staff. These can be distinguished by their blue uniforms with an eagle on the right breast. The restaurant is justifiably famous.

IMPERIAL GRAND. This is located in the center of the Imperial Park district, just opposite the Arch of Victory. It is one of the Imperial Grand chain, famed as having possibly the highest standards of service of any hotel chain in the system. The massive building is the same height as the arch and done out in the typically ornate style favored by Imperial architects. Inside, it is all wood paneling, thick carpets and padded, leather armchairs. Ultra-discreet personal servants are assigned to every guest and, working in shifts, are on call twenty four hours a day. The rooms and corridors are decorated with tapestries, old weapons and suits of armor. The hotel lobby is a masterpiece in marble and wood. The Grand is famous for its banquets and its selection of whiskies, reputedly the best in all the system.

THE HOUSE OF BLOSSOMS. Although briefly fashionable after a spate of Mishiman martial arts movies, the House of Blossoms has neither the size nor the reputation for luxury of the Union or the Grand. What it does have is superb Mishiman architecture, beautiful wooden-floored rooms, excellent futons and an in-room courtesan service that few businessmen or -women are able to resist. The Mishiman restaurant is the best in San Dorado. The security is second to none. The House of Blossoms nestles in the shadow of the Palace of the Skies.

MID-RANGE HOTELS

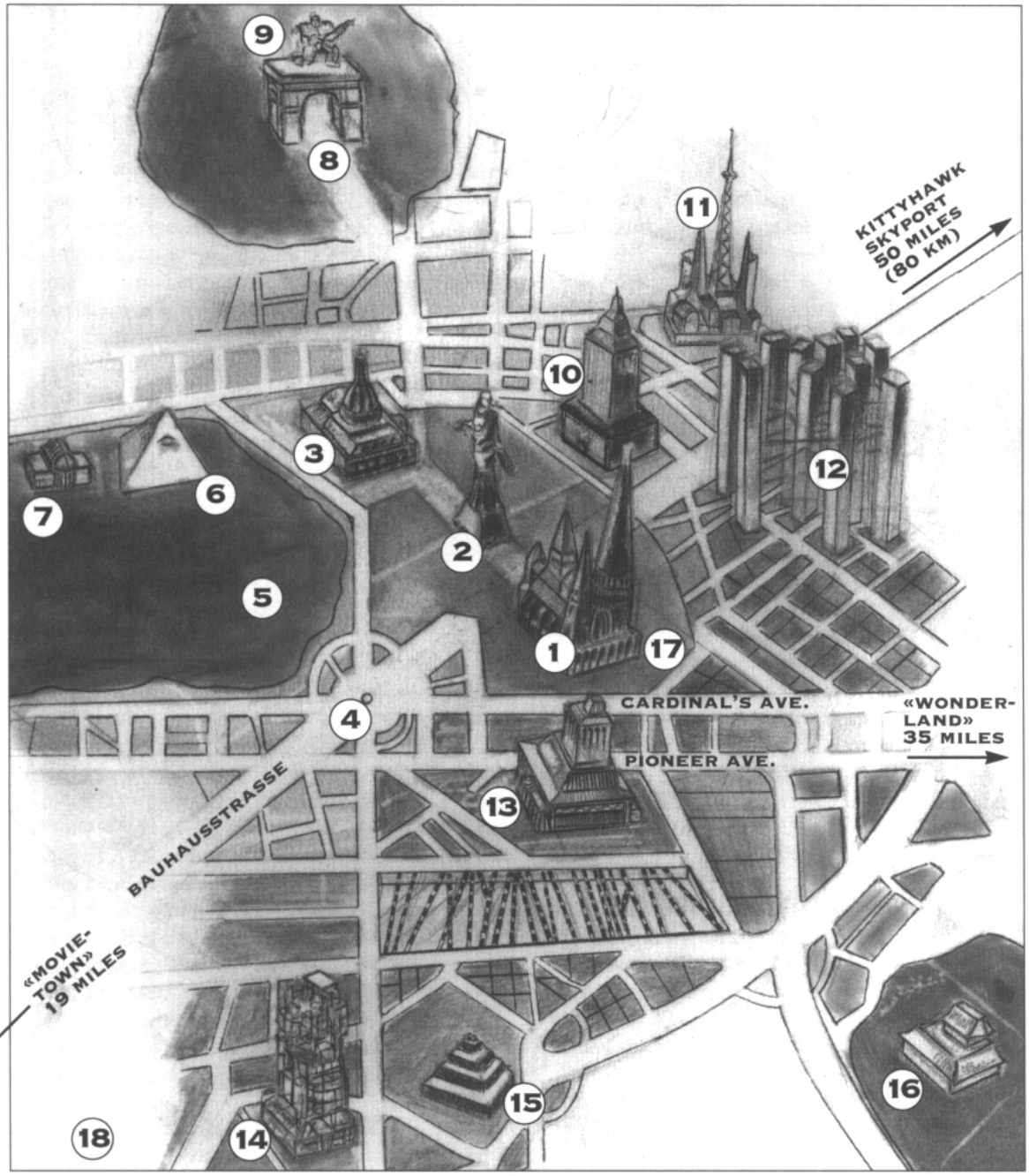
There are thousands of mid-range hotels in San Dorado. Any taxi-driver knows dozens. Any CSS cop can direct you to ten. All are comfortable, offering high standards of accommodation at reasonable prices. The one named here is just

given as an example. If you don't like it, look around and you're bound to find something to your taste. Costs are broadly similar here. A room costs about 300-500 Crowns. The example given below is one of the best known and best loved.

NEWMAN'S. This is located in the center in the shadow of the Cathedral. It is a favorite with pilgrims. The proprietor and his family are very devout and can answer many questions about the Cathedral or the Brotherhood. They are proud of a family tradition that means at least one Newman has served as a Brother for the past ten generations. Newman's is actually located on Cathedral Street, and there are several similar places along this road. If Newman's is full, just try along the street.

CHEAP HOTELS

The best of these are found bordering Industrial Zone One, the northern factory area that services the oil fields and mineral mines. They are mostly hostels for itinerant workers, but they are clean and cheap. A room can be found for 100 Crowns a night. Everywhere you go in San Dorado, you can find such cheap hotels. Just ask a cop or a local resident. Avoid the dives of the red-light area of Undertown. They may be cheap, but they are also dangerous.



SAN DORADO

1 *The Cathedral*
2 *Liberty Square and the Statue of Freedom*
3 *The Presidential Palace*
4 *Richthausen Roundabout*
5 *Commerce Park*
6 *The Pyramid*
7 *Capitol Corporate Museum*
8 *Arch of Victory*
9 *Imperial War Museum*
10 *Union Hotel*
11 *Donaldson Radio Tower*
12 *The Eleven Towers*
13 *Terminus Station*
14 *Technikhaus*
15 *The Cybertronic Ziggurat*
16 *Palace of the Skies and Hundred Pagoda Gardens*
17 *Newman's*
18 *Venusian Gardens*

BEYOND SAN DORADO

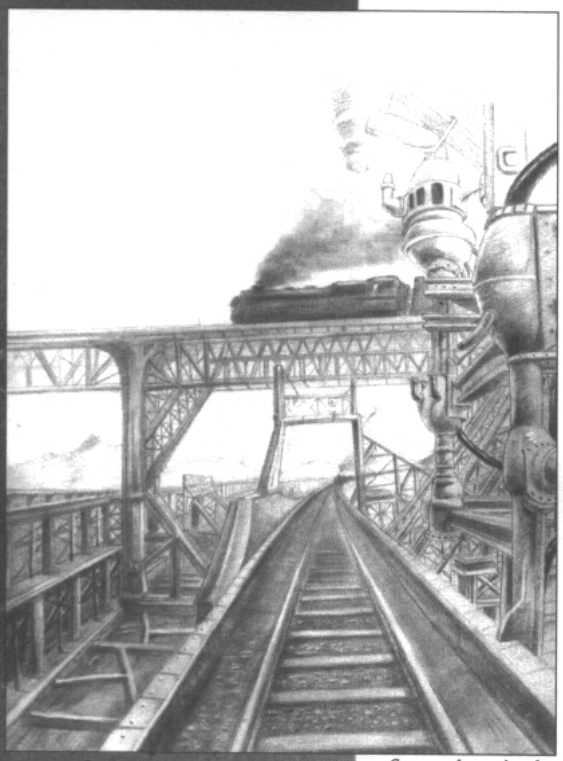
San Dorado is the most important place on Mars, but it is far from the only one. The Red Planet has an enormous land area, and there are many sights to be seen. To get to them, you will probably use the railroad.

THE TRANS-MARTIAN RAILROAD

This is one of the most impressive works of engineering ever created in the Solar System. It runs



right round the planetary equator and from pole to pole along the 36th and 324th longitudes. Branch lines run out from these major routes and serve every small town and major city on Mars. Many towns were built because of the railroads, and there are thousands of small communities that exist only because they are supplied by them. The Trans-Martian Railroad is still the most important artery of trade and communication on Mars. Millions travel on it every day, and billions of tons of freight are carried by it.



Steel from Valley Forge finds its way to San Dorado. Off-world luxury goods are distributed to every distant town. Food from the Freedom Lands is rushed to the cities. Medical supplies and clothing flow back in return. The Trans-Martian has a unique place in Capitol's mythology. The first lines were laid by the original Pioneers, and entire populations have migrated along it to settle the New Frontiers.

The Trans-Martian also serves a valuable military function. From the Burroughs hub, a spur rushes troops and equipment to the McCraig Line. A branch has been built that runs right around the line, enabling Capitol to reinforce it at any point. In military terms, the Trans-Martian also has contributed to Capitol's mythology. The movies have made us all familiar with the railroad fort, that isolated desert fortress garrisoned by the desperate soldiers of the Freedom Brigades. These forts really do exist, and in profusion. Regular patrols from them guard the strategically vital railway lines from intruders.

Trans-Martian Railways also provides an invaluable service for travelers. It maintains a network of cheap hotels in virtually every town touched by the railroad. For as little as 100 Crowns per night, railway passengers can put a roof over their heads.

KIRKWOOD BUNKER

High above the city of San Dorado soars the enormous Kirkwood Bunker. This is a hollowed-out mountain bristling with gigantic missile launchers and enormous particle beam weapons. It shields San Dorado from any spaceborne attack and is also the barracks and headquarters of Capitol's 4th Army. In times of civic emergency, this army can be rushed to San Dorado by helicopter to keep the peace.

Deep within this mighty fortress is the sealed bunker to which the President is taken in times of war. Here also is the huge war room from which any surface war fought on Mars is controlled. It contains a holographic map of the entire planetary surface and representations of all the military forces known to be present.

CYBEROPOLIS

Located on a spur of the main San-Dorado-to-Hope rail line is the Cybertronic complex known as Cyberopolis. This cluster of giant geodesics was built on land leased from Capitol, and it is the site of one Cybertronic's main production plants. This area is off limits to visitors and is accessible by invitation only. People tempted to sneak a look at the most advanced production plant on Mars should think again. This is one of the most heavily fortified areas on the planet. A complex web of sensors and electronic scanners lies for miles around. Patrols of cuirassiers make regular sweeps, and robot-controlled drone aircraft scour the skies, searching for intruders with unblinking camera eyes.

The whole area is dotted with fortified bunkers containing the dread T2000 heavy combat robots and all sorts of automated defense systems. No one knows what Cybertronic is really doing here, but they certainly seem to fear anybody taking it away from them. It is said that one of the reasons that Cyberopolis was built so close to San Dorado is because the new corporation has a secret defense treaty with Capitol to protect the installation. It is certainly true that Cyberopolis manufactures many advanced components which the Capitolians are incapable of building for themselves.

THE ENDLESS CAVERNS

At the southern tip of the Kirkwood Mountains on the edges of the South Martian Warzones lie the Endless Caverns, a spectacular series of cave complexes that run for hundreds of miles through the very heart of the mountains. The largest of these caves is over a mile across and a hundred feet high. The smallest is barely large enough for an adult to squeeze through. Gold and precious minerals have been found here in abundance, a festering source of dispute between Capitol and Mishima.

With their greater experience of underground building, the Mishimans have stolen a march on their Capitolian rivals and begun to enlarge the caves. At the very mouth of the caverns, they've laid the foundations of the new city of Asaka. Capitol wants to lease the caves to Mishima in the same way as Mishima leases Fukido to Imperial, but Mishima denies that the caves are Capitol's to rent out. The Lord Heiress Mariko also claims that, since Mishima is taking all the risks, Mishima should take all the rewards. So far, the Capitolians and the Mishimans have not come to blows over this, but it does strain their relationship at times.

THE CANALS

These are another legacy of the original Pioneers, a vast web of waterways that fan out from the polar icecaps. These, as much as the railways, have shaped Martian society. They irrigate the fertile Freedom Lands that surround the icecap and are the breadbasket of Mars. With the canals, Capitol has made the deserts bloom and transformed arid wilderness into one of the most productive areas on Mars. It was the vast land reclamation projects

of the early Pioneers that made the settlement of much of present-day Mars possible. Following the disastrous series of South Martian Wars, many of the canals silted up, and in consequence, much of Southern Mars is now uninhabitable.

The major canals are enormous in size. Some are a thousand miles long and a mile wide. Seen from the air, the networks resemble enormous Venusian river deltas. Only their regularity and the webs of smaller irrigation canals that run off them gives away the fact that they are not of nature. In places, the canals feed into huge lakes such as the Shallow Sea and Lake Vega. These lakes act as reservoirs for many great cities and are constantly replenished by water pumped down from the polar icecaps. Dotted along every hundred miles or so are titanic pumping stations, each with its own fortress. These stations keep the waters flowing. Many are near huge locks which move ships from level to level on the canals. In times of war, these are often military targets.

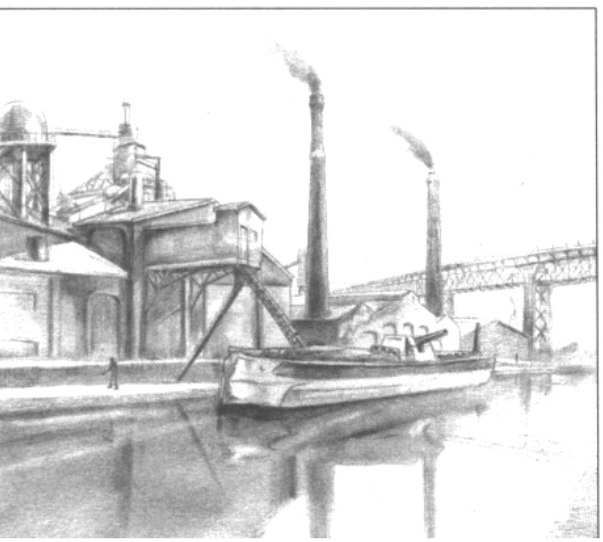
The canals carry a tremendous amount of shipping. Gigantic grain barges carry food from the Freedom Lands to the railroad hubs. The lakes are plowed by factory ships seeking fish and kelp transshipped in from Venus. Many smaller pleasure boats and passenger ships carry tourists and sightseers along the great waterways.

One entire General Department is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the canals. It employs a corps of nearly a hundred thousand builders full time to repair and survey them. The Waterways Department has its own enforcement arm, the Canal Police, whose powerful launches cruise the waterways in search of pirates and other malefactors.

In the southern hemisphere, the Department is doing its best to reclaim and rebuild the great canals, but it's slow work, hampered by continual interference by the other corporations and the Dark Legion.

THE FREEDOM LANDS

The Freedom Lands are the vast, cultivated areas irrigated by the northern canals. They are a thinly populated area of ranches and tiny communities serviced by the canals and the railroad. They are responsible for over four fifths of all Capitol's food production, and are extremely well protected by the AFC. Military bases are dotted right throughout the Freedom Lands, and the CAF makes regular scouting sorties.



The Freedom Lands cover most of the northern hemisphere of Mars. They are the most famous examples of Capitol's doctrine of tolerance. Here are enclaves of settlers from all over the system, who have come here to escape persecution and practice many strange faiths and philosophies. The only things forbidden here are involvement with Dark Symmetry and gross violations of others' civil rights. Despite the vigilance of the Brotherhood and the CBI, there are persistent rumors of entire towns that have gone over to the Dark. Now and then, travelers report sighting towns that have been bombed flat, so perhaps these rumors contain some truth.

HOPE

Hope is the capital of the Freedom Lands. It is another huge city. Hope is the hub where cattle from the ranches are slaughtered and grains and wheat from the factory farms are bought and sold. It the home of Capitol's huge food industry, churning out every sort of processed food imaginable.

Hope is also the home of the famous Hope University, the largest academic institution on Mars. Over two hundred thousand students study here, and many times that number would like to. The business school is famous, having produced more Presidents than any other seat of learning. Hope is a strange blend of frontier cattle town and ivory tower. There are constant rumors that a new Cathedral is going to be built there, but so far this has not happened. Hope Field is the home of the CAF's famous Air Combat Training School, the so-called Top Gun academy. Planes of the Capitol Air Force constantly fly over the city.

VEGA

Situated along the shores of Lake Vega is the gambling city of Vega. This is a huge city given over completely to hedonism and the pursuit of a quick Dollar. The city streets are lined by enormous casinos. Over each casino, five-hundred-foot-high holograms flicker and twist, each showing the logo of the pleasure palace below.

Inside the casinos, no expense is spared to create an atmosphere of luxury and easy spending that soon separates most visitors from their money. Drinks are free to gamblers. Food is cheap and subsidized from profits. Beautiful people are everywhere. Every form of gambling game imaginable, from blackjack to roulette to slot machines, can be found in these places. There are no clocks, and artificial daylight prevents the visitors from ever thinking about what time it is. The lake swarms with casino ships. The red-light district around the docks is the most infamous on Mars. People come here from all over and gamble away large and small fortunes.

There is a whole cut-throat industry given over to providing the visitor with everything he



WARLORD

All around, gunfire crackled. Bright muzzle flashes flared in the Sprawl night. Obadia Stern smiled grimly. The Red Wolves were putting up quite a fight, but in the end it would make no difference. The Urban Militia were more numerous, better armed and better trained. Soon they would overrun the enemy position, and the Wolves would have to sue for peace, beg to be incorporated into Urban Militia territory or be summarily executed with a bullet to the back of the neck. The firing continued.

«They won't surrender, Supreme Warlord. They say they'd rather die,» whispered Riki, her favored lieutenant and lover. Stern shook her head in disbelief. The Wolves came from Imperial stock. They were showing the same stubborn tenacity as their forebears. Stern admired that.

«Tell them that can be arranged,» she whispered.

«They've got that old warehouse fortified with steel plate, Supreme Warlord. It would cost too many lives to go in after them.»

«Bring up the missile launcher. The one with the special warhead. We'll show them who are masters of this city.»

«Instantly, Supreme Warlord.»

Stern lifted the launcher onto her shoulder and sighted at the building. Lovingly, she squeezed the trigger. Fire ripped the curtain of the night. The backblast knocked her off her feet. Her face felt as if it were alight. Consciousness left her.



«Those scumsuckers must have had an ammo dump in there,» whimpered Riki. Stern staggered upright and studied the building. It was a crater. Fire was spreading down all the tenements and shacks of the street. From overhead, she heard the thunder of a dozen helicopters. From down the street, she heard the roar of fifty Rat bikes. An amplified voice bellowed out: «Surrender instantly. This is the Armed Interdiction Police. You will be given no second warning.»

They were for it now. That blast had got the attention of the cops. This level of violence was too much for even them to permit, so close to a residential zone. Stern dived for cover and began to run. The rest of the Urban Militia followed. A few snapped off shots at the Apes pouring out of the landing helicopters. The police opened fire. A bullet caught Stern in the neck. She died instantly. Thus passed Obadia Stern, Supreme Warlord of the Urban Militia.

The police report gave her estimated age as 13.

or she might want, legal or illegal. Gangsters and crime are common, but surprisingly, Vega has a much lower crime rate than any other city in Capitolian territory. Nobody wants to do anything that might scare the suckers away, so murders are usually limited to gangland hits on rival mobsters. Independent robbery is strongly frowned upon, and the justice dispensed by the gang lords is rougher and swifter by far than that of the corporation.

The Brotherhood strongly disapproves of Vega, but since the city is in the Freedom Lands, there is little that can be done about. The Directors don't protest too much because Capitol gets a huge chunk of revenue from this operation.

THE GREAT RUST DESERT

Stretching halfway around the Martian equator is the Great Rust Desert. This area has not been irrigated and is still a wild and untamed wilderness populated by nomads and prospectors. Since the South Martian Wars destroyed much of the southern canal network, the Rust Desert is slowly expanding south again, turning once-fertile land back to desert. Here great sandcrawlers move across the desert, sucking in the iron-rich dust and extracting the ores. These all congregate on the enormous town of Valley Forge. Since the coming of the Dark Legion, there are rumors of giant beasts tunneling below the Sand Seas and emerging to swallow sandcrawlers at a gulp. At the moment, the truth of these rumors has yet to be confirmed.

The Great Desert is also the home to the Nomad tribes. These are descendants of the pioneers who opted for a wandering lifestyle in the earliest days of settlement. Many are religious fanatics. The most famous of these are the Zealots, who believe that the end of humanity is near and that the arrival of the Dark Legion heralds the onset of the Apocalypse. Some of these tribes are hostile.

Often, on zeppelin flights over the Rust Desert, you will see great caravans of vehicles and beasts moving from lake to lake. The lakes are formed from impact craters made when the world was originally sculpted. They may be fed by underground wells or some other strange process. Many have their own micro-climates. Some of these lakes are home to Brotherhood monasteries.

VALLEY FORGE

This is called «the town steel built», and it is the ultimate company town. It's owned by Capitol's Universal Steel subsidiary, and it is given over entirely to the production of steel and the refining of metal. At night, the flames of its vast smelters light the sky for hundreds of miles. The stink of its forges can be smelled twenty miles away. From its great mills, the metals that go into Capitol's cars, planes and railroads roll off the assembly lines. It is reported that 25% of all the steel in the Solar System is produced here. Because of industrial pollution, it is not a pleasant place to visit. Worth seeing though, is the Valley Forge Monument, an enormous steel spire a thousand feet high on the outskirts of the town. This was made from all the scrap collected from the battlefield of Valley Forge. It marks the site of one of Imperial's greatest and most ill-fated attempts to annex Capitolian property. Over a hundred thousand soldiers lost their lives when Imperial troops attempted to seize the town. The siege of Valley Forge lasted over a year, and the fighting was from house to house and factory to factory before the city was finally relieved.

MOUNT EREBUS

Mount Erebus is a rare sight, an abandoned Citadel of the Dark Legion. Of course, it is much smaller than the Citadel of Saladin, but it has one great distinguishing feature. The mountain on which the Citadel was built has had one entire face carved and sculpted into the resemblance of the features of the Nepharite Malakhai. Whatever process created this abomination also renders it immune to the best efforts of Capitol and the Brotherhood to deface or remove it. Everything has been tried—explosives, drilling, the Art—but nothing has worked. The leering evil face still remains and terrifies all viewers with its grim majesty. Mount Erebus is visible from the main San-Dorado-to-Burroughs rail line, although few care to view this evil colossus for more than a few minutes. A small force of Brotherhood warriors maintains a vigil over the ruins of the shattered Citadel and warns away all trespassers.

THE VALLEY OF A THOUSAND STONES

Situated near the small town of Clarkesville on the very edge of the Rust Desert is one of the great wonders of the Solar System, the Valley of a Thousand Stones. Here in this secluded valley are a hundred thousand hexagonal pillars varying in height from one hundred to one thousand feet high. The sides of each are inscribed with hieroglyphs in some alien script. Capitolian scientists have dated these pillars as being over five million years old, but so far, no one has explained how they got there. Nowhere else on Mars is there any trace of an alien civilization. The most commonly accepted theory is that they are some sort of monument left here by alien travelers passing through from system to system. The second most common theory is that they are some sort of relic of the Dark Legion, although Brotherhood observers have found no trace of Dark Symmetry about them.

THE SOUTHERN LANDS

During the terrible time of the Dark Ages, before the Cardinal emerged to unify humanity, other corporations cast covetous eyes upon the rich lands of Mars. Richest of all Capitol's domains were the Southern Freedom Lands. It was these the other corporations desired. First the Mishimans landed, then the Imperials, then last came the Homebuilders of Bauhaus.

So began the terrible series of South Martian Wars and the dreadful time when corporation fought corporation in a bitter struggle for supremacy. War raged across southern Mars. Alliances were formed, and treacherous attacks were made. Soon the Southern Freedom Lands, once the most green and prosperous part of all Mars, seethed with endless battle. Cities became rubble. Chemical strikes turned farmland to desert. The railroads were destroyed. The canals were blocked. The desert returned, and southern Mars became an arid scrub land fought over by the warring factions.

Then came Cardinal Nathaniel and the treaty of Heimburg which ended all hostilities for a while. Southern Mars was declared a free zone, open to all who would rebuild it. Capitol did not like this, but after the long wars, any chance of peace was to be seized. Southern Mars is now populated by people of all corporations and is still one of the most fought over areas in the system.

The region is, as always, a tinderbox, for all the corporations desire more territory, not least Capitol, which wants to regain its lost lands. It is a flashpoint for potential conflicts because here the corporations skirmish and probe, testing each other for any sign of weakness. The situation has been complicated by the arrival of the Dark Legion, which has built a host of lesser Citadels across the region and which exploits any new conflicts between the forces of humanity. You would think that all enmities would fade in the face of the common foe, but this is not the case. There is no end to the folly and weakness of humanity. If a Dark Legion raid weakens one corporation's defenses, the others swoop like vultures to capitalize on the opening. The Cartel has tried and failed to mediate in these disputes, and day by day the situation grows more critical.

The Southern Lands are not a good place to travel. The Trans-Martian runs only to Capitol cities now. To reach the settlements of other corporations, you must travel by airship or take a four-wheel-drive vehicle across perilous lands. This is a place where hardy adventurers can make a fortune or die in a week. It is not a place for tourists.



Nowadays, southern Mars is a desolate place, remote and inaccessible. It houses thousands of tiny settlements where brave people eke out a precarious living, and it holds a few great cities, centers of power of the great corporations. All of them except Imperial are following a pattern of expanding outward from their great fortified cities. As usual, Imperial disperses its settlements wherever it can claw a foothold or see an advantage.

BURROUGHS

Burroughs is the home of the AFC's Anti-Legion



THE MCCRAIG LINE AND BEYOND

The McCraig Line is named after General Alexander McCraig, the AFC general responsible for throwing back the first Dark Legion incursion. It is a huge network of trenches, fortresses and minefields designed to hold back any major assault. The front-line fortresses are mainly staffed by the volunteers of the Freedom Brigades, and their casualties are appalling.

On a clear day, the towering black outline of Saladin's Citadel can be seen through the red murk that covers the area. In the trenches of the McCraig Line, Capitolian soldiers look out over a bomb-cratered landscape hoping that today another assault will not come.

Occasionally, patrols mount exploratory missions within the line, but few return. The area beyond the line is patrolled by Dog Soldiers and Freedom Brigadeers who try to prevent small groups of Dark Legionnaires from sneaking through. Sometimes, though, the warning sirens blare, a sign that a major Dark Legion break out is being attempted. The McCraig Line is closed to visitors, but you will find plenty of people in Burroughs who will be only to pleased to tell you about it. They seem desperate to recount their struggles against the walking dead who serve Saladin.

The area within the McCraig Line is known as the Doughpits. This is possibly a reference to the way the earth has been molded and churned by constant saturation bombing.

Command and the site of Mars' second Cathedral. It is the main railhead for the McCraig Line. Once an obscure town in a remote and unpopulated area, Burroughs has swiftly grown to become the second city of Mars. Enormous amounts of money have been thrown into the creation of armament and aircraft factories, and Burroughs is now the site of Capitol's largest military base. Camp Burroughs on the city's outskirts now trains almost a quarter of all AFC personnel. At times, Burroughs is like a city of soldiers—there seem to be more uniformed people in the streets than civilians. The nights are filled with the drone of aircraft taking off from Burroughs Field to bomb the Dark Legionnaires beyond the McCraig Line.

Burroughs is also said to be a hotbed of intrigue where agents of the megacorporations vie to steal Capitol's military secrets, and heretics constantly seek to infiltrate the AFC's ranks.

It goes without saying that there are also large numbers of Brotherhood people here. There is an enclave of them around the Cathedral. Inquisitors and Missionaries prowl the streets. The Cathedral dominates the city's skyline. A constant stream of scholars and pilgrims arrive to study the Fifth Chronicle—*Algeroth and Demnogonis*—on its walls.

EDISON

By the shores of the Dry Sea sits the city of Edison. This was once known as the City of the Future. It was here, before the South Martian Wars, that Capitolian scientists worked to create new inventions and products for the corporation. Edison suffered most when the Darkness came. Faith in progress and science was shattered, and many of those who had worked on secret projects went mad. The whole city was shattered by a gigantic explosion. Now the ruins of the city stand as a monument to the broken dreams of the Pioneers. From the rubble, the steel skeletons of starscrapers still rise, but desert sand-drifts clog the streets. Here and there are lakes of fused glass. Monsters stalk the shadows, and mutants dwell in the underground tunnel networks.

Edison is not yet totally dead. Outside the ruins stands a small community where scavengers have gathered. From the fortified town, groups of prospectors still set forth, hoping to reclaim some lost secret of the ancients. In truth, most are madmen driven by hope or folly. The city was long ago scoured by Capitol's own agencies, and such ancient secrets as could be found, were. Yet every few years, someone still stumbles across an ancient hidden cache and sells the secrets for a fortune. It is rumors of this sort that bring the drifters, the lost and the desperate to Edison still.

The Dry Sea was once the greatest of the southern lands' reservoirs. Now it is completely dead, a parched, baked expanse of flatland out of which arise the partially buried remains of great ships.

LAWRENCE AND THE IMPERIAL MANDATE

Imperial managed to seize and hold a fair chunk of land between the McCraig Line and the Great Rust Desert. After the treaty of Heimburg ended hostilities, this area was ceded to Imperial by Capitol. At the time, it was thought to be fairly worthless, but since then, valuable ore deposits and an ice mine have been discovered, and the Mandate is one of the most prosperous parts of the Imperial domain. The arrival of the Dark Legion forestalled a Capitolian attempt to retake the Mandate back from the Imperials.

Although the area is now fairly arid, Imperial has built one large fortified city here: Lawrence, an Imperial trade center. Its population is swelled by the presence of many nomadic prospectors who pan the desert for gold and gems and ancient artifacts. The presence of Saladin's Citadel nearby means that, recently, Lawrence has acquired a strong presence of ISC agents. In the true Imperial tradition, Lawrence is a very well-defended place. Scattered around Lawrence are dozens of smaller Imperial settlements and enterprises.

STRATHGORDON

Halfway round the world from the Mandate, high amid the towering peaks of the Mariner Mountains, squats the grim Imperial fortress of Strathgordon. Half castle, half enormous bunker, Strathgordon sits atop one of the deepest and most profitable gem mines on Mars. The foothills of the mountain are covered by bunkers and minefields, and the whole surface of the peak bristles with defensive weapons. Strathgordon is a base for the legendary Highlander Clan Warriors of Imperial.

In its long history, this giant fort has been subject to more assaults than any other place on Mars. It has never fallen. According to one ancient prophesy, when it does, doom will befall the Imperial Corporation.

KARKOV RETREAT

In the Mariner Mountains, close to Strathgordon is the great Brotherhood fortress-monastery known as the Karkov Retreat. This sits high atop the 1,000-foot-high Karkov Cliffs, overlooking the great Silverspray Waterfall. Within this huge complex, over a thousand Brothers study the Art and prepare themselves with meditation and fasting to return to the lands of humanity and fight the Darkness. The darkened cells beneath the monastery are also home to the Penitents, a group of Brothers who have in some way failed in their duties and who have now taken a vow of silence and humility until the Preceptor of the monastery feels they are ready to return to active duty. The penitents perform the humblest and most menial tasks around the Karkov Retreat, learning anew the meaning of their vow of obedience to the Cardinal.

THE CITADEL OF ABSALOM

Less than a hundred miles away from Strathgordon lies the Citadel of Absalom. Although less huge than the Citadel of Saladin, it is no less formidable, being built right into the core of the mountain. The evil Nepharite Absalom knows well the ancient prophesy concerning Strathgordon,

and it is his unending task to work toward the doom of that city. At least once a month, his forces surge toward the embattled Imperial city and attempt to take it. At least once a month, Imperial launches a counter-strike. So far, the forces have been well-matched, and neither has gained the upper hand.

HOSOKAWA

This beautiful city is the capital of the Lord Heiress Mariko and the center of Mishiman power on Mars. At its heart lies the Palace of the Skies, which is faithfully replicated in San Dorado. In Hosokawa, though, the palace is surrounded by another, mightier ring of defenses, hundreds of emplacements, bunkers and barracks all sculpted into the landscape of the surrounding park land so cunningly as to be almost unnoticeable. This serves the double purpose of beautifying the park and camouflaging the weapons. The rest of the city is built in classic Mishiman style and is full of open space, temples and fine buildings. It, too, is surrounded by an open killing ground full of defenses.

Hosokawa is at the hub of a ring of settlements that stretches outward for almost 1,000 miles to the south polar icecap. Mishima has made a serious effort to reclaim this part of the Mars, rebuilding the canals, replanting the land and reopening all sorts of settlements. Tension is constantly high with Capitol, which desires to take back the lost lands. But after investing so much in this area, Mishima simply cannot afford to let this happen. Vast tracts of the Mishiman lands are constantly contested by the AFC and the warriors of the Lord Heiress.

MUNDBURG

Mundburg is the one large Bauhaus settlement on Mars. It is located near the southern pole, on the edge of the wastes of endless ice. The city of Mundburg itself is a lonely place, for all its enormous size. It is famous for two things: for being the home of the Order of the Ice Bear—one of Bauhaus' most successful military orders—and for being built on seven islands, each of which can be swiftly turned into a fortress in event of attack.

Mundburg was to be the center of Bauhaus's attempts to claim chunks of southern Mars, but the arrival of the Dark Legion on Venus caused most of the Homebuilders' resources to be diverted back to their homeworld. Today, Mundburg stands at the center of a small area of Bauhaus settlements upon which the other corporations look covetously. This has caused its folk to become famous warriors, for little help is forthcoming from Venus when the attacks begin. So far, Imperial has made over a half-dozen failed attacks on Mundburg. Perhaps the next one will succeed.

PHOBOS AND DEIMOS

The names of Mars' moons mean fear and terror in an ancient and long forgotten language, and for all of Mars' history, they have lived up to those names. Once the hurtling moons of Mars were homes to two of the most infamous penal colonies—Phobos housed men and Deimos held women. Convicts were sentenced to work in the mines within the moons' surface, marooned in an endless warren of tunnels with no supervision. The only guards were in the fortresses guarding the spaceports. Inside was a desperate place. Cannibalism, murder and torture were commonplace. There were several calls for the penal colonies to be closed down. This never happened. Even when President Ernestine Borg crashed on Phobos and witnessed the atrocities with her own eyes before she was rescued by Jake Lizard, nothing happened.

When the Dark Legion came, everything changed. The minions of the Darkness seized both moons and fortified them against any conceivable attack. Using the strange power of the Dark Symmetry, the moons were carved with the symbols of Muawijhe and Semai. These luminous emblems of evil are visible from the Martian surface every night as they hurtle across the sky. The sight brings terror and despair to even the most fearless.

There have been many attempts to seize the moons back from the Dark Legion, but all such efforts seem doomed to failure. The most recent assault by Imperial was known to have resulted in such terrible casualties that questions were asked in the Parliament. A discrete veil was drawn over the whole proceedings. Capitol would like to destroy these signs of evil that pollute its skies, but so far the cost has been just too high. A few bold freelancers have landed on the moons' surfaces and attempted to penetrate their secrets. These individuals have never been seen again.

BEYOND MARS

Although Capitol is strongest on Mars, it is by no means limited to the Red Planet. There is a very strong Capitol presence on Luna and, to a lesser extent, on Venus and Mercury.

LUNA

Luna was the original home of the Capitol corporation, and the Pioneers played a crucial role in the creation of that vast city. Although Luna is a free city, Capitol remains the largest single corporate presence.

THE PINNACLE. This 170-floor starscraper is the hub of Capitol's Luna administration, its black steel and glass facade constantly illuminated by searchlights. At the Pinnacle's peak is the suite reserved for the President when he is visiting Luna. At the base of the tower are three floors



NEW KID IN TOWN

Brody swayed with the rhythm of the train. He gazed out the window, astonished by the sheer size of the starscrapers. They blazed with light almost turning night into day. Below him, the ground was nearly a thousand feet away. The cars were a river of light flowing below him. This was his first day in town, and he'd spent all day riding the Skyway, the great network of trains that covered the city. It certainly made a change from his parents' farm back in the Freedom Lands. He was glad that he'd run away. He'd find fame and fortune here. Maybe he'd become a business tycoon or a film star. Well, that was for tomorrow. Tonight, his first chore was finding a place to sleep.

A huge man danced to silent music at the far end of the empty car. Under other circumstances, Brody might have been scared, but the big guy looked so happy. He was singing to himself and smiling. Brody couldn't quite make out what he was saying. It sounded like a number and another word.

Look, there was the Statue of Freedom. He vowed that tomorrow he would climb it and look out through the barrel of the gun. His friends had told him that if you spat into the square below it was lucky.

The big stranger was closer now. Brody could make out his words. He was singing, «Twenty-one today! Twenty-one today!»

Brody smiled. He himself had just turned eighteen. He walked over to the stranger. The dancing man pointed to



his own chest and kept singing, «Twenty-one today!»

Brody thrust out his hand and said, «Put it there, big guy! Happy birthday!»

Suddenly, with maniacal strength, the stranger grabbed him and thrust him straight at the window. The glass shattered, and Brody tumbled out into the night. The last thing he heard, as he began the long drop to the ground, was the stranger singing.

«Twenty-two today! Twenty-two today!»

given over completely to the CSS. In between are the offices of thousands of Capitol's subsidiaries. There are also several floors given over to maintaining relations with the Cartel and with the other megacorporations.

LESSER MARS. Stretching out from the base of the Pinnacle is the Capitolian District of Luna. This is where most of the corporation's citizens in the megacity dwell in an enclave policed by the CSS. This area is also known as Lesser Mars because of the large number of Capitolian shops, cars and products in evidence. The moviedromes here show first run Capitolian films as soon as they are released, and the district is one of the entertainment hubs of Luna.

Because Luna is an open city, it is famous as a center for industrial espionage. This means that the Capitol intelligence agencies maintain a strong presence there. Their main purpose is to prevent the subversion of citizens by agents of enemy powers, but they engage in quite a bit of espionage themselves. They also maintain a constant lookout for signs of Dark Legion activity.

On Luna, Capitol's main activities are importing and selling goods from Mars. Universal Motors also has several factory complexes here. The CSS has many lucrative contracts policing non-Capitolian areas of Luna, too.

CAPITOL ON VENUS

Dominated by Bauhaus, Venus is a world where Capitol's influence takes second place. In Heimburg, there is a large Capitolian district given over to trade and diplomacy. This is centered around a replica of the Statue of Freedom near the Cathedral, but the real center of Capitol's power is the Graveton Archipelago.

THE GRAVETON ARCHIPELAGO. This is a huge chain of large islands in the Southern Ocean of Venus. These islands are a mixture of coral atolls and volcanic outcroppings. The islands are unbelievable fertile and produce a wide range of exotic fruits and plant products for export. In particular, they are the source of the medicinal herb chana, from which is derived several powerful painkillers and many less-legal, recreational drugs. Chana is the basis of the General Medicines subsidiary's best-selling painkiller Morphanol. The seas around the Graveton archipelago are also rich in fish, shrimp, krill and edible seaweeds. The great factory ships of Universal Foods plow the waves in search of them all. And last, but certainly not least, tourism contributes with around 25% of the yearly turnover in the Capitol Graveton areas.

PORT MAC ARTHUR. The capital of the archipelago is Port Mac Arthur. It is here that the mighty South Sea Fleet of the Venusian Navy is based. From here, the giant aircraft carriers of the fleet transport squadrons of the CAF to wherever they are required. Port Mac Arthur is also famous for being the headquarters of the Sea Lions, the Capitolian Navy's famous special forces unit.

The port is built round the huge harbor of Mac Arthur Bay, and its sides are lined by mighty drydocks. Within the extinct volcano called Mount Mac Arthur lies Mac Arthur Skyport, where the spaceships come to land. The skyport is connected to the city by a huge funicular railway.

TORKERTOWN. Port Mac Arthur has a second harbor at Torkertown. This is the commercial harbor where traders bring goods to be stored at the warehouses for transshipment to other parts of Venus and off-world.

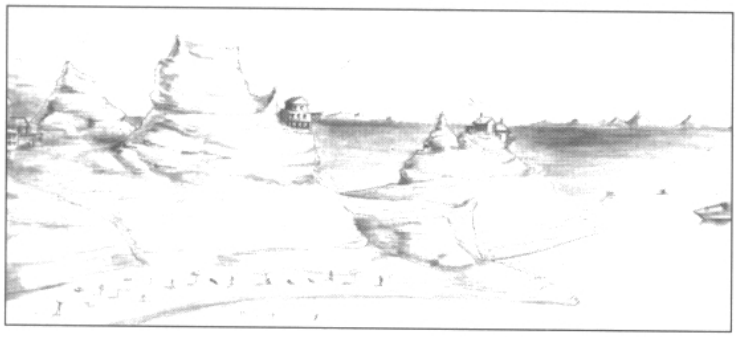
The whole city has the heady atmosphere of a great port. Off-duty sailors brawl and carouse in the Devil's Armpit red-light area. Missionaries stalk the streets, warning of the consequences of sin, and great merchant houses get rich on the profits of trade. In the chana dens of the Devil's Armpit, the casualties of that trade can be found, wasted and strung out. It is here that the agents of the Dark Legion can be found.

Needless to say, the riches of the Graveton Archipelago attract the attention of competitors. In the past, both Mishima and Imperial have tried to wrest control of the region from Capitol and «the Thousand Islands» are littered with pill-boxes, minefields and memoritaphs that testify to that struggle. The only corporation with the resources to dislodge Capitol is Bauhaus, but most of the Homebuilders' military strength is tied up fighting the Dark Legion in the everlasting jungle wars.

Indeed, the most recent threat to the Graveton is the Dark Legion. They have seized the ancient fortress of Koragador at the islands' southern tip and built a huge Citadel there. It is said to be the influence of that Citadel that has stirred up the sea-monsters of the Koragador Deep and closed the southern sea-lanes.

CAPITOL ON MERCURY

The endless caverns of the Mercurian underworld are dominated by the Mishima megacorporation. Capitol has a very small presence here. It leases industrial sectors in the twin cities of Longshore and Fukido for its warehouses and factories, but it controls no great swathes of territory. As new underworld caverns are opened for settlement, Capitolian entrepreneurs are always to the fore, but they prefer to work in partnership with the Mishimans—closely monitored by the DEPICOR, of course.



LIVING IN THE CAPITOLIAN WORLD

The lifestyle of the average Capitolian citizen is the envy of every other person in the system, or so Capitol's media would have you believe. Certainly there is a lot to be envious of. Capitolians generally earn more than their counterparts in other corporations. They have far more freedom and a much larger say in their own government. More Capitolians own cars and consumer goods (and guns) than those belonging to other corporations.

Conversely, Capitolians must live with higher levels of crime, drug addiction, heresy and corruption than any other society. The easy availability of guns, drugs and alcohol makes for a lethal cocktail. Also, there are more poor people living in the slums of Capitol's cities than anywhere else. To be fair, these slums contain many drawn to the Capitol areas in search of a better way of life, but still most Capitolians will admit that far too many people slip through the cracks in their society and fall right into the underclass of the poor and the starving. And it is arguably worse to be poor in a Capitolian area because you are surrounded by so much wealth. Envy and greed do as much to fuel the murderous violence of Capitolian society as the easy availability of weapons.

The Capitol business philosophy of mass producing what its customers want is a reflection of its democratic nature. Capitol can—and does—produce goods of the highest quality, but it is far more interested in giving its consumers the best goods that can be had at an affordable price. This philosophy permeates everything the corporation does, from its media to its motoring division.

THE MEDIA

Capitol is the greatest producer of films in the system. Its studios churn out blockbuster after blockbuster. Its stars are among the best-known personalities in human history. Its music industry sells more recordings than anyone else. Its TV programs are broadcast everywhere.

Critics accuse Capitol of aiming for the lowest common denominator. Wiser critics say that this is Capitol's greatest strength. In these dark times, people want to be entertained, not educated or lectured to, and Capitol provides that entertainment.

Studios like Mogul, Independent and Universal Motion Pictures are responsible for producing Capitol's films. Each studio has its own specialty. Mogul produces epics, Independent produces comedies, and Universal produces detective stories and all other sorts of modern drama. Each of these studios has its own stars and directors under contract. They employ vast teams of scriptwriters and technicians, and all of them control their own moviedrome chains as well, where their pictures are shown to audiences.

There is a star system in which actors are carefully nurtured, starting out in second string features and, if they prove popular, moving to the blockbusters for which Capitol is famous. Studio talent departments see that a constant stream of new faces flow in.

Everything is done to make the stars seem glamorous and exciting people. The studios provide sumptuous apartments, chauffeured limousines and huge salaries for their actors. Studio security agencies make sure that a star's reputation is never tarnished, and studio-owned film magazines feed the devoted public a steady stream of tidbits about their favorite actors. One of the most conspicuous things in all Capitol-owned territories is the huge number of billboards advertising up-and-coming films starring the likes of Jack Slade, Eva Kane, Liza Bergman, Carlos Manolito and Rudi Steiner.

All of Capitol's studios promote the Capitolian way. Right always triumphs. Tolerance and cooperation are always better then hatred and bigotry. Endings are invariably happy. Villains are consistently punished. People like these things, and they flock into Capitol's vast picture palaces in ever-increasing numbers.

PRINTED MATTER. The corporation's media dominance is not limited to film. Capitol subsidiaries, such as Martian Magazines and Universal News, flood the market with low-cost books, newspapers and magazines covering a wide variety of subjects. Many of the books and magazines are about self-improvement and how to get on in the world—subjects of general interest to all Capitol's citizens. The *San Dorado Herald* is Capitol's most successful paper, and one of the few that rivals *The Chronicle* in popularity. The paper's coverage is invariably upbeat and pro-Capitolian, but it is not



TAXI

«Two hundred and sixty Dollars! That's outrageous.» Blanchard almost screamed at the taxi driver. The cabbie looked back impassively.

«Them's the rates, pal. Check the meter.»

Blanchard just knew that wasn't correct, but he was tired and angry and frustrated. His business trip had not gone well, and he was down to his last five hundred. He shuddered with rage. If he didn't get that contract, he'd be bankrupt. He and Nancy would have to live in a shack in the Sprawl. Now this scumsucker was trying to rip him off for his last few Dollars.

«You sure you're not charging me out-of-towner's rates? I'm not a tourist you know.» The big driver looked at him with contempt. Blanchard knew that all he saw was a small, pudgy man, a failure, a fool. The driver had slipped some brass knuckles over his fingers.

«You gonna pay, pal, or am I going to take out of your hide?»

Hastily Blanchard fumbled inside his jacket. The cabbie leered in triumph. «Wait a minute! I've got it right here, sir. Please don't hit me!»

The driver laughed contemptuously. Blanchard pulled out his Enforcer. The driver went pale when he saw the gun. «Here you are,» Blanchard said, and unloaded the magazine into the driver's face.

He stepped out of the cab, laughing hysterically. «Keep the change,» he said. He walked away. Nobody even glanced at him. Maybe they were just trying to avoid his eyes.

censored, and the standards of its reporting are often very high and surprisingly objective. Most of the Capitolian cities have their own newspapers, such as *The Hope Journal* and *The Burroughs Enquirer,* but their circulations are more limited. The AFC also produces its own newspaper, *The Guardian.* This is required reading for those who want to keep up with Capitol's external and military policies.

ADVERTISING. In advertising, Capitol is very successful, too. A trip down the streets of any Capitolian city will prove this to you. Huge billboards and towering neon signs are everywhere. The airwaves are saturated with catchy and clever advertising. The logos and insignias of many Capitol subsidiaries are almost as well known as the Cardinal's face. Who doesn't recognize the Hamburgerman or the diamond-shaped logo of Universal Motors?

TRANSPORT

Capitol produces a lot of cars. Universal Motors builds more vehicles than any rival corporation. These cars are large, fast and cheap. They look good and they last, and when they don't, spare parts are cheap and easily accessible. Most Capitol citizens have a car, and most choose Capitol-produced vehicles. And why not? They know they're getting a good deal.

Capitol has five major vehicle-producing divisions. Universal Motors produces vehicles aimed at the common people. Prices are low, and standards are high. Ranger produces vehicles aimed at executives. General Trucks produces pickups and semis. Militek produces military vehicles. The huge General Aerospace division produces all sorts of aircraft, from the Mastodon long-range passenger zeppelin to the Puma ground attack aircraft.

Each of the vehicles divisions has its own marketing departments and dealerships where people can walk in off the streets and buy their products.

FOOD

Fast food is also an area in which Capitol excels. Most Capitol fast-food chains follow the same principle: clean, well-lit, accessible premises combined with a limited but cheap and filling menu. Standards are usually high, and if the food is bland, it is universally popular. Burgerland (home of the Hamburgerman) produces hamburgers. Guiseppe's produces pizza. Gravitor produces fast-food versions of the spicy Graveton Archipelago food.

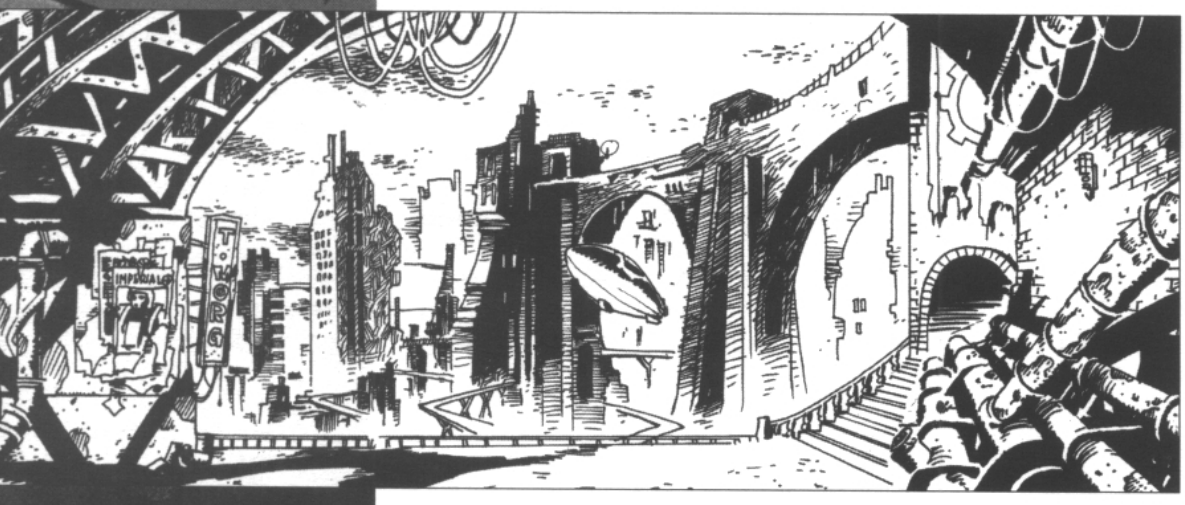
The Capitol food industry is the largest in the solar system. Its brand name products like Wombat Soups, Buffalo Meat Products and Hardman Tobaccos are universally recognizable. Capitol exports more foodstuffs than any other megacorporation.

STORES

Yet again, Capitol's subsidiaries follow tried and tested formulas aiming at the mass market. Capitol distributes products in two different ways.

The first of these is via specialized shops. You can buy clothes at Dress Up!, electrical goods at Electroworld, books at Bookworld and jewelry at Eternity. These chains are to be found everywhere in Capitol-controlled territories. They have branches all over the place.

The second type of stores Capitol controls are department stores, of which there are two huge chains. Everyman is aimed at the average consumer. These massive stores sell just about everything you can imagine, from pins to produce, from stationery to sports gear. Their prices are low, and they sell almost everything that Capitol produces that is aimed at the average consumer, as well as lots of cheap Mishiman electronics. Rothchildes is far more exclusive. These stores sell luxury items from Capitol's more upmarket subsidiaries and imported luxury goods from all the other major corporations. The wealthier Capitol citizen is always welcome here, and everything is done to create an atmosphere of privilege and exclusivity. This does go against the Capitol ethos somewhat, but it also allows Capitol to compete head on with Bauhaus's and Imperial's luxury stores.



THE CAPITOLIAN CORPORATION



CORPORATE STRUCTURE

Capitol is the oldest of the megacorporations and is the only one which is a true corporation in the sense that the ancients understood that word.

The goals, objectives, responsibilities and legal structure of the corporation are all laid down in the ancient document known as the Charter. This ancient parchment pre-dates even the Chronicles themselves and lays down the laws by which Capitol governs itself. It is one of the most revered artifacts of the entire Solar System. The original Charter is carved into three stone tablets which rest in the Capitol Corporate Museum in San Dorado.

All Capitol's employees are referred to as citizens, and each of them enjoy certain inalienable rights as laid down in the Charter. They are all entitled to a fair trial, decent working conditions, to bear arms and to vote in certain corporate elections. The corporation recognizes that it has a duty to see that its citizens are free, happy and secure. In return, the citizens are expected to show loyalty and commitment to the ideals and goals of the corporation. Of course, this is the theory. In practice, those who run Capitol take as many liberties with their workers as they can get away with. Still, even though Capitol's political class is notoriously corrupt and venal, there are some checks and balances that keep them from riding roughshod over the citizens.

CAPITOL'S GOVERNMENT

Every citizen is a shareholder. That is to say, every citizen holds at least one share of Capitol's stock. At birth, a citizen must receive at least one share from either parent. If the parents have only one share each, then the child is awarded one share from Capitol's reserves. Citizens can be awarded many more shares over the course of their lives in bonuses and dividends. They are free to sell their shares to any other citizen or back to the corporation, as they please. They may not sell shares outside the corporation without special permission. This is never given.

Among other things, every share entitles that citizen to one vote in Capitol's many elections and referendums. Since it is obviously impractical for every citizen to vote on every issue, the citizens elect representatives to speak for them on the Board of Directors. This is done every four years.

ELECTIONS

Capitol's territories are divided up into 690 electoral districts. Each district covers a certain geographical area. These areas can range in size from one city, like San Dorado or Luna, to the vast expanses of the Freedom Lands. Regardless of its size or number of votes, each district sends one representative to the Board of Directors. On Democracy Day every fourth fall, all the citizens make their way to the great Stockhouses, where they present their shareholder's certificates. These are tallied with records, and the citizens are given a voucher for as many votes as they have shares. They can then use these votes to elect the candidate of their choice. There are a huge number of Stockhouses scattered throughout each electoral district. The candidate who receives the highest number of votes in each electoral district is voted onto the Board of Directors. Over the next few days, the votes are tallied by teams of auditors from DEFEI. At the end of this period, the results are announced and the new Directors are sworn onto the Board.



Once on the Board of Directors, the representative has a vote in any legislative decision equal to that of total of the votes in the electoral district that elected him or her. Directors are also known as Stockholders. Of course, those who represent the rich and heavily populated regions such as San Dorado command many more votes than those from the thinly populated outback regions. That is not to say that these Directors have no power. In any tightly fought contest on the Board, every vote can count, and when tough decisions are in the balance, these small Stockholders can win many concessions during the bargaining.

In theory, any citizen can stand for election, and thus, in theory, any Capitolian can become President. This is a major part of Capitol's mythology, and it's just one reason why it is seen as the corporation of opportunity.



ONE FOR THE ADMIRAL

Patiently, Stevens waited in the undergrowth, listening to the heavy footfalls of the approaching Mishiman patrol. He cursed his bad luck. Two days crossing the swamp without trouble. Two days within the Mishiman perimeter and never a sniff of trouble. Now, a few hours before zero, the Mishimans were all over the place. He wondered if the mission was compromised. It was just like the Admiral always said: things always went wrong just when you least expected it.

The Mishimans were coming closer now. He hoped none of the others would take a shot. The sound would carry through the jungle and alert every Samurai within miles. He prayed that no one would be so foolish. He trusted Nichol not to. Nichol had been trained by the Admiral. He was reliable. Stevens didn't know about the new troops though. He believed they would be. He had trained them himself. Still, it wasn't the same as working with soldiers who had been trained by the Admiral. You knew you could trust them with your life. He held his breath, praying that he wouldn't hear a shot ring out.

The patrol was close now. Stevens could hear their breathing, smell their sweat. Five soldiers, he guessed, from the sound of the feet. One of them was limping. A branch tickled his face, displaced by the body of the man moving round the bend.

THE PRESIDENT

Once the elections for the Board of Directors are over, the Presidential elections begin. This is a time of great maneuvering among the Directors as various candidates threaten and cajole, promise and compromise as they seek the reward of the ultimate office.

The President is elected from the Board of Directors, by the Board of Directors, and has many executive powers relating to corporate finance and security. The most important power is being able to appoint the Directors to their Departments. One of the most common ways of becoming President is by promising high office to those who support you.

Once again, Presidential elections are a good time for the smaller Stockholders to use their leverage. If a contest is tightly fought, and most are, then smaller Stockholders may negotiate tough deals. More than one Director from an outback district has clawed up to the head of one of the General Departments by this method.

DEMOCRATS AND PLUTOCRATS

The flaw in Capitol's democracy is that there are far more shares than there are voters, and that individual citizens are free to sell all but one of their shares. (They are actually free to sell that last share too, but if they do, they cease to be Capitolian citizens, and only citizens are employed by Capitol.) These shares can be bought up by other individuals. This means that there are electoral districts where up to 90% of the vote is controlled by a single individual or group of individuals.

There are plenty of examples of wealthy individuals electing themselves to the Board of Directors. Conversely, there are still areas where the mass of citizens still control their own shares and which elect representatives to speak for them. This has resulted in a Board of Directors that is split into two factions or parties.

The Democrats are the elected representatives of the citizens. Their votes on the Board actually represent huge groups of workers. They tend to support policies and plans that will improve the lot of the workers and the majority of people.

The Plutocrats are drawn from the ranks of those who have usually inherited their vast wealth. They tend to be conservative and favor cost-cutting measures and plans that will increase their own wealth.

Capitol being Capitol, these lines are not strictly drawn. There are many Directors who have inherited huge shareholdings yet who still support measures to increase the happiness of the many. There are many Democrats elected who support the cutting of health, welfare and security programs in order to increase the dividends paid to shareholders.

In general, all Directors support the consensus that Capitol's way of life must be preserved and their own pockets must be lined. In moments of crisis, all Directors can be expected to unite in the face of a common enemy.

CONTROL OF THE CORPORATION

There are 690 Directors elected from 690 electoral districts. Each of these individuals is assigned an area of responsibility by the President. Each Director will either be placed in charge of one of Capitol's 679 Departments or, if he's lucky or influential, in charge of one of the eleven General Departments.

Capitol's government is divided up into 679 Departments, and each Department is responsible for overseeing one area of the running of the corporation. The Department of Urban Planning is responsible for setting and maintaining the standards of building in Capitol's area of influence. The Department of Defense Procurement is responsible for the purchase of military equipment, and so on.

Each of the 679 Departments comes under the supervision of one of the General Departments, which are the most powerful organizations within the Capitolian government. Of these eleven General Departments, the most important are:

DEDE. The General Department of Defense and Expansion.

DELEJ. The General Department of Education, Law Enforcement and Justice.

DEFEI. The General Department of Finance, Economy and Industry.

DEPICOR. The General Department of Public and Inter-Corporational Relations.

Between them, these four departments control 90% of all Capitol business. They produce the guidelines under which Capitol's millions of subsidiary corporations are supposed to operate. They make up the regulations which the subsidiaries must obey, and they enforce the laws under which the citizens must live.

THE TRUST

Capitol has literally millions of subsidiary corporations. All of them are controlled by the DEFEI subbureau known as the Trust. The Trust is basically a register of all Capitol-controlled companies. It ensures that all the guidelines created by the General Departments are passed on to the appropriate companies, and in theory, it sees that they are obeyed. This is only a theory, since there are far too many companies to be directly supervised. Often violations of the corporate guidelines only come to light when another subsidiary complains about unfair competition or when a citizen complains to the local Director about malpractice.

In effect, the Trust is simply a registry that proves these companies are Capitol owned.

DEDE

The General Department of Defense and Expansion is better known to most citizens as the Defense Department. It is responsible for the purchase of all military equipment and overseeing the

Supreme Commanders of the AFC to make sure they are responsible to the Board of Directors. It is also directly responsible for formulating Capitol's long-term military goals and communicating them to the Supreme Commanders.

DELEJ

Otherwise known as the Justice Department, DELEJ is responsible for law enforcement in Capitol's territory. It may seem unusual that it is also responsible for education, but Capitol is a megacorporation that believes its citizens should be instructed in their responsibility to society. The corporation believes this is the best way to preserve its culture. Schools are seen as important seedbeds of civic virtue. All students have the Capitolian way drummed into them from their earliest days. The Justice Department's most famous agencies are the CBI—the Central Bureau of Investigation, otherwise known as the Bureau—which monitors criminal activity in Capitolian territory, and the CSS, which polices Capitol territory.

DEPICOR

This General Department oversees Capitol's external relations with the other megacorporations, the Brotherhood and the Cartel. DEPICOR maintains Capitol's embassies, negotiates trade deals and sends diplomatic warnings. Its most famous department is probably the External Intelligence Agency. This department is commonly known as simply the Agency.



Stevens would take the leader. He'd have to trust the others to take care of the ones behind. If one of them blew it, Stevens knew he'd take a bullet or a blade in the back. Now it was time to act. Stevens crouched low and sprang. He ripped through the jungle canopy and put his hand over the Mishiman's mouth. His free hand pushed his knife up through the man's vertebrae. The Mishiman flopped like a fish out of water. Stevens cut his throat, quickly and quietly just like the Admiral had taught him. Another Mishiman bites the dust, he thought, and rubbed the sweat off his anchor tattoo. Another one for the Admiral.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

Capitol likes to portray itself as the most idealistic of the megacorporations. It loudly trumpets the fact that it provides a higher standard of living for the majority of its employees than any other megacorporation and that it gives its citizens a far larger say in their government. But when it comes to business, Capitol is just as ruthlessly competitive as any other megacorporation. It has to be. If it was not, it would be destroyed by its rivals.

Capitol is the largest of all the megacorporations. Its total output is some 20% greater than Mishima, its nearest rival. Like all megacorporations, Capitol actively tries to control as much of the market as possible. It tries to control all the links in the production chain, from raw materials processing to design, from manufacture to distribution.

The prevailing philosophy within Capitol is to provide the perfect product for the customers, whoever they are and whatever they want. A lot of energy is spent on market surveys. Capitol is not averse to creating demand either, and its advertising and marketing divisions are among the most efficient and successful in our system. Since most of Capitol's customers want products that are reliable and cheap, this is Capitol's specialty. This also helps Capitol to flood markets with its goods and drive out its competitors.

Aside from manufacturing, Capitol's strengths are in mass-market consumables and the media industries. Capitol is the system's major food exporter, and its film and media industries provide cheap and accessible mass-market entertainment.

FREELANCERS

Capitol doesn't usually do deals with freelancers; it buys them out. If a company has an innovative and successful idea or product, the Directors see no point in duplicating the effort that went into its creation. They will normally try to buy the company's owners out for a fair price. Only if the owners refuse to sell will Capitol move into direct competition and try to drive them out of business. If Capitol buys out a company, all that company's employees automatically become Capitol citizens with all the privileges and responsibilities that entails. If they don't want to do so, they don't have to, but they will be looking for a new job.

This willingness to adapt and integrate new business goes a long way towards explaining why Capitol is the largest of the megacorporations. Many of Capitol's most successful divisions have been started up as independent operations and been taken over by Capitol. Once plugged into the megacorporation's mighty marketing and distribution organization, they have usually gone from strength to strength. Indeed, it is the dream of many freelancers to be bought out by Capitol.

PRIVATELY OWNED BUSINESS

It is perfectly legal for Capitolian citizens to start their own business. However, that business must comply with all Capitol's laws and all instructions from the General Departments. Legally, to all intents and purposes, that business is part of Capitol. Rival corporations say that Capitol's claim to being the largest megacorporation is only true because it includes all of these privately owned businesses in its output figures.

There is one important factor to bear in mind here, though—Capitol does not own these businesses. They remain under the control of their founders and their descendants unless the corporation buys them out—which it usually will if the business grows large enough. Even then, many of these subsidiaries are still managed by their founding families. They have, after all, grown up as part of the business.





Dale emerged from the bush. There was blood on his long combat knife. «None of them got away, Sarge. We made sure of it.»

«Good,» said Stevens. «We don't want the whole mission compromised because of one lousy patrol. Tell the others to pack up the gear and get moving. We've a bridge to blow before dawn tomorrow.»

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Capitol claims to deal fairly and even-handedly with the other megacorporations. In terms of external policy, Capitol believes that peace is good for business, so it tries to maintain the peace. Unfortunately, this is not always possible. Rival megacorporations all too often mistake Capitol's seeming pacifism for weakness, and every so often, they have to be taught a lesson. However, once a war is over, Capitol's leaders tend not to hold grudges, whether they have won or lost. To do so would be bad for business.

MISHIMA

Mishima is Capitol's largest trading partner, and relations between the two are usually as good as is possible between two rival corporations. That is to say, they are tense and fraught with peril. In the past, the two megacorporations have gone to war. The major confrontations have been over the Graveton Archipelago on Venus, which the Mishimans covet, and the Southern Lands of Mars.

BAUHAUS

Bauhaus buys a lot of its raw materials from Capitol. This alone inclines Capitol to favor the Homebuilders. The only real bone of contention between the two megacorporations is the Graveton Archipelago on Venus, which the Homebuilders regard as part of their natural sphere of influence. Capitol is not about to give up its most valuable non-Martian asset. In the past, the two megacorporations have warred over the archipelago, but that threat has receded with the arrival of the Dark Legion on the scene. The relationship between Bauhaus and Capitol can best be described as being one of respectful neutrality.

IMPERIAL

The Capitolians do not trust Imperial. A large part of the MIC's operations are given over to monitoring the smaller megacorporation and finding out what is going on within the Mandate. Capitol is still smarting over what it sees as Imperial's treachery during the first Dark Legion attack. The AFC Supreme Commanders still remember Imperial's interference in the early stages of the Dark Legion's arrival on Mars, and if it was not for the restraining hand of the Directors, they would gladly act to crush the Mandate and, indeed, Imperial. Even now, there are still powerful voices on the Board that call for a stronger anti-Imperial line (most noticeably the Irving-Jorgensen steel family, which controls Valley Forge).

CYBERTRONIC

Capitol does not hold with the common prejudice against Cybertronic. It does not exactly approve of the newest megacorporation, but it's waiting to see what happens with it. Capitol is particularly interested in Cybertronic's radical new technological developments, but it will not try to acquire the Cybertronic divisions that produce them until it's sure that it can trust former Cybertronic employees as citizens. Actually, there is a faction within Capitol that would like to simply buy Cybertronic if only it was sure of its trustworthiness. Capitol has the financial resources to do this, or at least so DEFEI estimates. Question is: can a «stiff» be bought?

THE BROTHERHOOD

Capitol has excellent relations with the Brotherhood. Almost 90% of all Capitolians are devout Cathedral-goers, and 100% of the Board of Directors make sure they are seen there at least once a week. The only real source of tension is with the Second Directorate. While understanding the necessity of the Inquisition's work, the Capitolians feel that the Inquisition's methods conflict with Capitol's commitment to personal liberty and fair trials. The megacorporation has tried to get around this by deputizing all Inquisitors into the CBI and giving them an agent's powers of arrest and interrogation. CBI agents have extraordinary powers to act to preserve corporate security, but even these are not enough for the more zealous Inquisitors.

To be fair, the Brotherhood has shown some sensitivity in appointing Inquisitors who understand the Capitolians' reservations. Still, when push comes to shove, Inquisitors are Inquisitors, and it is their duty to stand against the Dark. There is considerable potential for conflict here.

THE CARTEL

Capitol was the original founder of the Cartel, and the corporation is still its primary beneficiary and supporter. There are some in other corporations who see the Cartel as primarily a Capitolian tool, although this is not quite the case.

The Cartel does reflect Capitol's philosophy of cooperation between the partners. Since Capitol abides by its rules, it expects the others to do so to. After all, it is to their mutual benefit. Capitol expects the Cartel to spearhead and coordinate the attack against the Dark Legion. The Directors know all too well that no single corporation has managed to throw back the Dark, and that it may well take the combined efforts of all humanity to do so.

Because of this, Capitol always gives its full support to Cartel operations and tries to enforce Cartel rules, even within other megacorporations' territories. While not being so foolish as to go to war with other corporations in the name of corporate cooperation, Capitol does use its considerable economic and political muscle to try to bring other corporations into line.

LAW ENFORCEMENT



Law enforcement within Capitol-controlled areas is a complex business. There are several agencies, all with varying areas of responsibility and with considerable powers of enforcement and restraint.

It is probably easiest to say that basic police work is performed by the Capitol Security Service. The men and women of the CSS are responsible for the maintenance of public order and the apprehension of criminals. It is the CSS that patrols the streets, chases robbers and performs the day-to-day-business of keeping the public safe.

The CSS is organized on a regional basis. Each electoral district has its own division. Each district is divided up into a number of precincts, and each precinct has its own station house. Depending on the size of the precinct, there may also be a number of substations. Since each electoral district has roughly the same number of voters, the major factor to be taken into account here is the size of the district. For example, San Dorado has the same number of precincts as the Western Freedom lands, although the Freedom lands cover an area several thousand times as great as San Dorado. This affects the style of policing. In San Dorado, there are many foot and car patrols. In the Freedom Lands, the CSS officers tend to operate out of smaller stations and use helicopters and jet-fighters to get around.

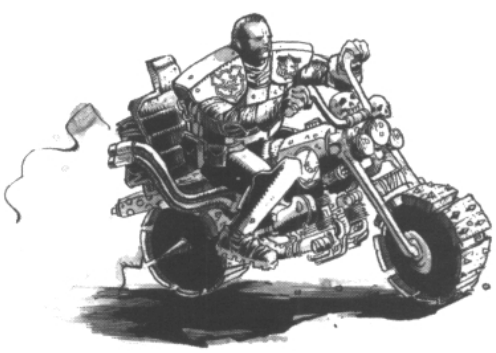
One basic principle is that no officers have any jurisdiction outside their district. There they are just ordinary citizens unless some sort of reciprocal arrangement has been made between the two forces. Within their district, officers have extensive powers. They may stop and search suspicious characters, and they may intervene if they think a crime is being committed or is about to be committed. They are authorized to use lethal force if necessary in defense of their lives or the lives of other citizens, although Capitol law requires them to use the minimum force necessary in the pursuit of their duties. In practice, the minimum usually needed to restrain Capitol's well-armed citizenry is lethal force.

Aside from the district divisions, there are several other divisions of the CSS. There's the Railroad Police, responsible for the maintenance of order along the millions of miles of the Trans-Martian Railroad, and there are several special divisions responsible for watching the borders and immigration. There is also the Prisons Division, which is responsible for overseeing prisons and correctional facilities. Most of this is police work at its most basic.



APES

While the CSS has a good reputation with the citizens, there is one section of it that is universally feared and loathed. Its members comprise the dreaded Armed Interdiction Police Squads commonly known as Apes. Apes make up the special, highly mobile task forces needed to keep the peace when riots break out. They also provide SWAT teams. Each precinct has at least a company of Apes. In times of war, they are immediately mobilized to fight in defense of the corporation if needed. Apes are more like soldiers than cops, but they are usually people who could not make it as soldiers. They're too brutal, unthinking and mindlessly savage. The sight of them screaming through the streets on their RAT bikes is enough to make all but the boldest rioter turn and run. They are hated by almost everybody, but in these troubled times, they are needed to keep the peace.





CSS'S JURISDICTION

Under no circumstances are CSS officers allowed to investigate corporate affairs. This is the responsibility of other agencies. Any case that involves military security is supposed to be referred to the MIC. Any case that involves other corporations is supposed to be referred to the EIA. Any case that crosses district lines must be referred to the CBI.

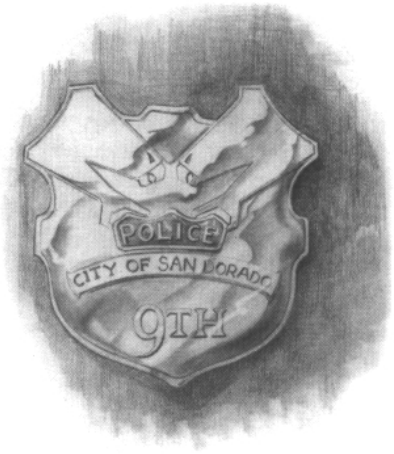
CSS officers are well respected and well trained. They tend to perform their duties with a light touch, and they enjoy a high degree of public support from the citizenry. Of course, as an officer progresses higher in the system, more and more opportunities for corruption become available. Most take advantage of them. It is notoriously easy to buy your way out of a murder charge in many Capitolian precincts.

EQUIPMENT

Each district maintains its own academies where officers are trained and equipped. The standard uniform of a CSS officer is a blue tunic and pants and a peaked cap. They are usually equipped with light body armor, a light handgun and a truncheon. When violence is expected, they're issued heavier weapons.

Detectives and high ranking officers generally dress in suits. Undercover officers wear whatever is appropriate. Many higher ranking officers dress extremely well, in a fashion that reflects an income much higher than their salaries should be able to provide.

INSIGNIA. All police officers are supposed to carry badges. These usually show a shield on which is mounted the officer's electoral district number.



THE AGENCIES

The agencies are arms of the various General Departments. Often their jurisdictions overlap, and they are regularly involved in clandestine rivalries with each other.

By far the largest of all the agencies is the CBI, also called «the Bureau». The main Bureau offices are located in the Eleven Towers in San Dorado. The main academy where Bureau agents are trained is at Hope in the northern Freedom Lands. Here, the Bureau has what is, to all intents and purposes, a custom-built town in the suburbs.

The head of the CBI is known simply as the Chief. The highest ranking officer of the Central Division, he reports directly to the General Director of DELEJ.

The Bureau is part of DELEJ, responsible for investigating and apprehending criminals within Capitol territory. Specifically, it deals with crimes that cut across district boundaries. It has several major divisions which are listed below.

Generally speaking, Bureau agents have a reputation as hard and ruthless people who will do whatever is necessary to get a job done. They are not scared to cut corners or beat up a few witnesses if that will help crack the case. Most people would rather meet an Ape than a Bureau officer, but one thing has to be said for them: they do have a reputation for being incorruptible.

INSIGNIA. The symbol of the Bureau is the Capitolian eagle clutching the scales of justice in its claws.

BUREAU DIVISIONS

ORGANIZED CRIME. Agents of the Organized Crime Division investigate criminal conspiracies within Capitol territory. This mostly deals with crime syndicates and racketeering, although occasionally agents stumble across the handiwork of foreign powers. These investigations often run at cross-purposes to those of the EIA and bring the two agencies into conflict.

TAX COLLECTORS. Well, when you're born, nothing is certain except death and taxes. The well-dressed people of the Capitol Tax Collection Brigade surely take care of the former—if not, also, of the latter. The philosophy is simple: if you don't pay your taxes, you're going to regret it. Deeply. For debts below 10,000 Crowns, you'll get away with a tour in the Freedom Brigades, but for higher sums, death is only the beginning… This concept is devastatingly effective. And the Tax Collectors are devastatingly keen to keep their reputation.

NARCOTICS. Once this was part of the Organized Crime Division, but so great has the threat of drugs become that it now warrants its own division. Narcotics agents often work undercover, infiltrating and investigating the great smuggling rings.

INTERNAL SECURITY. This division deals with corruption within Capitol itself. It has great powers to pursue and investigate malfeasance at all levels of society. Since Internal Security agents have to deal with some very powerful people, they have a reputation for caution and diligent research.

SERIAL KILLING. In territories as vast as those controlled by Capitol, there are an unfortu-

nate number of mass murderers. This large division is responsible for bringing them to justice. It collates extensive files on all unsolved homicides and looks for the patterns that reveal a serial killer is at work. Some of this overlaps with the work of the Special Crimes Division.

SPECIAL CRIMES. This highly secretive division is responsible for investigating those crimes that may involve the Dark Legion. Its agents are hard-bitten individuals who see more than their fair share of horror. Agents of the Special Crimes Division often have a good relationship with the Inquisition.

CENTRAL. The Central Division is responsible for coordinating the actions and operations of the various divisions. It is a clearing house for information and keeps in touch with the other Capitolian agencies.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS. This division watches the watchers. It is responsible for investigating corruption, malpractice and incompetence within the Bureau itself. It is rumored to have sleeper agents within all the other divisions.

CAR THEFTS. Well, it's only natural that the corporation with the most cars per capita also has the most car thefts. Capitolians generally regard this as a terrible sort of violation, and therefore the Bureau kindly has invested an entire division to exclusively deal with this.



MILITARY INTELLIGENCE CORPS



This agency is a branch of the AFC. In theory, it is responsible for gathering information on the military strengths and weaknesses of rival corporations and of the Dark Legion. In this role, it often comes into conflict with the EIA, since MIC agents are notorious for their aggressive pursuit of their goals. They have been known to organize arms smuggling into enemy territory and to fund terrorist operations.

The MIC is also responsible for maintaining the security of Capitol's own military secrets, and in this role its agents may be called in to investigate breaches of security of military bases, in munitions factories, etc. Because they so often work under cover and in enemy territory, MIC agents tend to be more than a little psycho. After all, everyone around them is the enemy, and it's a soldier's duty to kill the enemy. Because they work so effectively to the detriment of rival corporations, the Supreme Commanders and the Board of Directors often turn a blind eye to the covert terrorist activities of MIC agents.

The central office of the MIC is in the Pyramid. Most of the officers are trained at the Special Intelligence School at Camp Burroughs. It has been known for MIC agents to be seen in the uniform of the service they were drawn from. On such occasions, it's true that they tend to wear aviator sunglasses.

INSIGNIA. The symbol of MIC is the AFC crest flanked by two torches, symbolizing the light of knowledge.

EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This agency is responsible for general information gathering outside Capitol's sphere of influence. It is part of DEPICOR and has a great rivalry with MIC. Its agents generally only become involved in law enforcement when they come across information that is directly concerned with crime.

For instance, if an EIA agent was to acquire files belonging to Imperial that revealed a number of high-ranking Capitol officials were in the pay of the Imperials, then they would, in theory, be obliged to hand this information over to the Bureau. In practice, the EIA has been known to approach such officials and coerce them into becoming double agents.

Unusually, the head offices of the EIA are on Luna, within the Pinnacle. Its main training academy is located in Stoneford, a small town in the Kirkwood Mountains, just beyond San Dorado.

Like the MIC, the Agency is often involved in working against other corporations. It is particularly notorious for using highly trained assassins to remove hostile and influential figures in other corporations. It is also notorious because entire networks of its agents have been known to go rogue and sent up their own drug dealing, arms smuggling and assassination businesses. The Agency does its best to secretly terminate these embarrassments with extreme prejudice, but occasionally word gets out, and the Directors must investigate.

INSIGNIA. The symbol of the EIA is the Capitolian eagle over two hands in the clasp of friendship. Some people find this ironic.

UNIFORM

None of the agencies have a fixed uniform as such, although many people claim you can spot MIC people by their aviator shades and Bureau agents by their button-down shirts and dark ties.

BADGES. All agents carry badges. These show the Capitolian eagle and the crest of the agency for which they work.



JUSTICE

The law enforcement agencies are at the sharp end of the fight against crime, but once criminals are caught, in theory, they come under the jurisdiction of the law. The courts are the responsibility of DELEJ. It appoints the judges and sees to the actual physical upkeep of the court buildings. It is also responsible for the appointment and payment of public defenders and prosecutors.

Each electoral district has its own courts and judges. These judges are appointed every four years by the incoming Director. Astute observers long ago spotted the possibility of corruption by mass shareholders, which is why there is also a Supreme Court of Appeal in San Dorado. This Supreme Court consists of 11 judges. Appointments are for life. They are made by the President and approved by a majority of the Board. Once a Supreme Court judge is in place, he or she can only be removed by impeachment or loss of citizenship.

There are really two types of law in the Capitol domains—civil and criminal law. Civil law concerns itself with legal complaints between two separate parties who want to resolve a dispute. Criminal law, which we are chiefly concerned with here, involves the prosecution of those who break the laws of the corporation.

The Charter guarantees every citizen the right to a fair trial. If you cannot afford a lawyer, one is assigned to you at the public's expense. Once a case comes to trial, it is supervised by a judge. The district prosecutor presents the case for the corporation. The defense makes the case for the accused. The verdict is decided by a majority of a jury of eleven citizens chosen by lottery.

Trials are often contests of wit and eloquence between the lawyers on both sides. It is the responsibility of the prosecutor to prove the guilt of the accused. Everyone is innocent until proven guilty. Both sides may call such witnesses as they deem necessary. Every effort is made to discredit the other side's witnesses. It is the duty of the judge to see that things are conducted fairly and that neither side gets out of hand. In practice, many judges can be bribed to see that this doesn't happen. It's also not unknown for prosecutors to be bought off.

The media covers most big trials, paying particular attention to sensational cases. Playing the media is another part of a trial lawyer's job. Well known prosecutors and defense lawyers are often as famous as minor film stars.



PUNISHMENT

Capitol recognizes three different types of crime:

MISDEMEANORS. These range from jaywalking to drunk and disorderly and basically cover the whole range of public nuisance charges. The penalty for such minor crimes is usually a fine of between 100 to a 1,000 Dollars or, alternatively, 1 to 20 days in jail. If your employer is extremely strict, you might lose your job, but this kind of crime shouldn't mean any major problems unless committed repeatedly.

FELONIES. These run from fraud to armed robbery, covering most crimes that do not involve treason or the death of another citizen. The penalty for the guilty always includes revocation of all citizen's rights and often forfeiture of any shares. No one found guilty of a felony can hold public office, any sort of weapons permit or vote in any election. Convictions carry a jail sentence of between 1 and 20 years, depending on the severity of the crime. The guilty party always has the alternative of joining the Freedom Brigades rather than serving this sentence.

CAPITAL OFFENSES. These are crimes involving treason against the corporation and the unlawful killing of fellow human beings. They range from murder to spying to being a heretic. The minimum penalty is 10 years imprisonment. The maximum penalty is death. As with felonies, all the privileges of citizenship are forfeit. Unless the penalty is death, anyone found guilty may choose to join the Freedom Brigades. In times of war (which is almost all the time), even those sentenced to death may be given the option of doing so.

SAMPLE CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS

MISDEMEANORS

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY: 1 to 10 days in jail or 10 to 100 Dollar fine.

JAYWALKING: 50 Dollar fine.

BREACH OF THE PEACE (i.e., Brawling): 1 to 10 days in jail or 100 Dollar fine.

SPEEDING: 100 Dollar fine. Revocation of license if a persistent offender.

FELONIES

ILLEGALLY POSSESSING A WEAPON: 1 year in prison.

BURGLARY: 1 to 6 years imprisonment.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: 1 to 6 years in prison.

TAX EVASION (<10,000 Crowns): 1 to 6 years in prison.

TAX EVASION (10,000–1 million Crowns): 3 to 18 years in prison.

MUGGING: 1 year in prison.

FORGERY: 3 to 12 years in prison.

CAPITAL OFFENSES

EXPOSING CORPORATE OFFICIAL TO LETHAL HAZARD: 6 to 25 years.

TAX EVASION (>1 million Crowns): 25 years or death.

MURDER: 25 years or death.

ARSON: 16 to 25 years.

TREASON: Death.

INVOLVEMENT WITH DARK LEGION: Handed over to the Brotherhood.

HOW THE LEGAL SYSTEM WORKS

If you are accused, you have a right to be legally represented. If you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed for you. Generally speaking, a public defender will have a Law skill SV of 1d6+9. A district prosecutor will have a skill of 1d10+9. If you have done something particularly nasty, you will get one of the top prosecutors, who will have a skill of 1d6+13.

If you want to hire a trial lawyer, you are looking at about 100 Dollars a day for someone with the same skills as a public defender. If you want to hire someone better, it will cost you 250 Dollars a day for a lawyer with skills of 1d6+13 or 500 Dollars a day for someone with skills of 1d3+16. Of course, if you or your fellow player characters have legal skills, it's up to you to come to some arrangement among yourselves.

THE TRIAL

Your trial will run for 1d100 days. At the end of this period, both lawyers roll 1d10 adding their skill values. If your lawyer has the highest total, you are found innocent and are free to go. If your lawyer rolls the lower total, you are found guilty and are destined for sentencing. In case of a tie, the judge declares a mistrial, and the case must be tried all over again.

There are several modifiers to all this:

- If you are innocent, add 1 to your lawyer's total.
- If there are a lot of witnesses who will say you are innocent, add 1 to 5 to your lawyer's total. The GM should decide this based on the believability of the witnesses.
- If there is a lot evidence to suggest you are innocent, then add 1 to 5 to your lawyer's total. Once again, the GM should decide the modifier based on the nature, quantity and quality of this evidence.
- Add 1 if the media is on your side.
- If you are guilty, subtract 2 from your lawyer's total.
- If there are a lot of witnesses to suggest you are guilty, then subtract 1 to 5 from your lawyer's total. Once again, it's up to the GM to decide exactly how great the penalty is.
- If there is a lot of evidence to suggest you are guilty, then subtract 1 to 5 from your lawyer's total.
- If the media is against you, subtract 2 from your lawyer's total.

Before your trial starts, roll 1d20 and multiply it by 1,000. This is the bribe level in Dollars of the judge and courtroom officers. For each multiple of this sum you pay, add 1 to your lawyer's die roll. In other words, if the bribe level is 4,000 and you pay 8,000, add 2 to your lawyer's roll. If you pay 12,000, add 3, and so on.

If the prosecutor beats your lawyer's total by 10 or more, then you will receive the maximum possible sentence. Other than that, it's up to the GM to decide on the penalty.

It's perfectly possible for there to be lots of witnesses and evidence on both sides. Indeed, the GM should use a trial as an opportunity for a good detective scenario instead of a simple exercise in die rolling. Your comrades should be given plenty of opportunities to seek out witnesses and evidence to discredit the prosecutor's case. Even if you lose, don't worry—it's not all over. You can always join the Freedom Brigades (hopefully).

APPEALS

Or you can always appeal. This will mean a wait of up to two years for your trial to come to the Supreme Court. Maybe by this time, your friends will have found some new evidence. If the trial comes to the Supreme Court, then the procedure is the same as before. You will always be facing the better sort of prosecutor in the Supreme Court.

Of course, you can always avoid going to trial at all by having friends in the right places. A good politician or a connection in the establishment should be able to get you off on almost any charges. Of course, there is always a price to pay for such favors. Someday they will be called in.

THE PENALTIES FOR CRIME

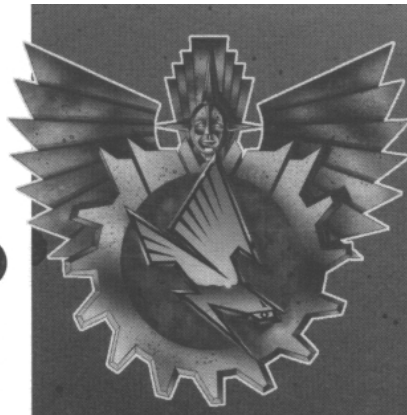
Generally speaking, there are several types of prison sentences. Most prisoners found guilty of felonies will be assigned to a high security prison. These are found in isolated areas and are always well guarded. Most involve some form of backbreaking and demeaning physical labor. Conditions are harsh, and food is bad. Prisoners may be let out under extremely watchful and heavily armed guards to repair the railroads or mine for metals.

Maximum security prisons are for those found guilty of a capital offense. They are normally located in incredibly isolated locations such as near the polar icecaps or on prison planetoids in the asteroid belt. The guards here are selected for their brutality. Your fellow prisoners will be as mean and psycho as they come. Conditions will be appallingly bad, and the food will be practically inedible. In addition, you may find yourself volunteered for «medical experiments» by the prison's sadistic and quite possibly insane doctors.

Conditions in the Freedom Brigades are discussed in the «Armed Forces of Capitol» section.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE

Capitol is only legally obliged to provide a fair and free trial for its own citizens. If you are not a citizen and you commit a crime in Capitol territory, you could be in big trouble. What happens to you is entirely dependent on the whim of the local law enforcement officers. If the precinct captain is in a bad mood that day, watch out!



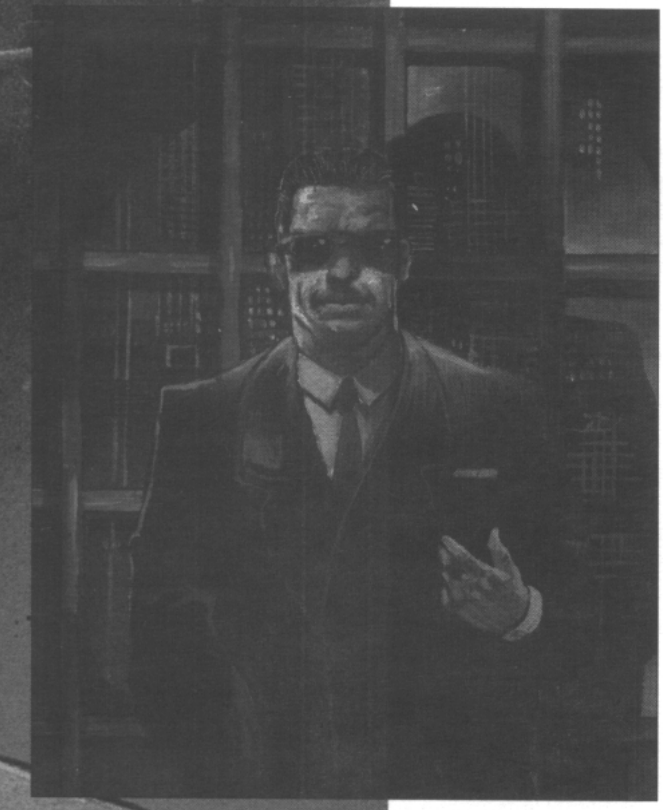


Naturally, your treatment will be affected by who you are. If you are a high-ranking Bauhaus or Mishiman noble or a member of one of Imperial's better-known clans, then chances are you will be treated more than fairly. Nobody likes a diplomatic incident. High PER and Social Standing are the keys to liberty in these cases.

On the other hand, if you are a poor nobody, then you may find yourself pistol whipped, deported or arbitrarily imprisoned. Under virtually any circumstances, you will be expected to cover your own legal costs. If you cannot, you can look forward to up to 2 years in prison for non-payment of debt.

ORGANIZED CRIME

Crime is a gigantic problem within Capitol's territories. Muggers, thieves, rapists and murderers are everywhere. In certain areas, law and order has broken down all together and the streets are ruled by gangs. In the Sprawl, urban warlords rule entire neighborhoods with iron fists, and only rarely do the police move against them. Often the gangs are organized in a ghastly parody of Capitol's military, right down to having their own uniforms and badges. Most are certainly equipped with military weaponry. How they get it, no one knows. Even outside the Sprawl, there is the problem of organized crime, huge criminal conspiracies that spread across entire electoral districts.



Within Capitol, organized crime takes many forms. There are many local crime bosses who control particular regions, taking a cut from any illicit activities that go on within them. Often these bosses fight bitter territorial wars with rivals, and many innocents get caught up in the conflict. In some areas, the crime lords have realized that these gangland wars are bad for their business and have formed alliances. These are often unstable, but when they hold they can be potent enemies for the forces of law.

Even more worrying are the drug syndicates. These are smuggling networks that shift their illegal merchandise around the system. They know no allegiance to any corporation, and they will work in Capitol territory as easily as Imperial. The main products of drug syndicates are thionite, a chana derivative that induces states of intense pleasure, and anaihiline, a drug which induces extreme states of hallucination. The Brotherhood claims that both these drugs make people more susceptible to the influence of the Dark Apostles, which is why they are banned in all human worlds. This, of course, has the effect of driving the price up.

Because of the huge profits to be made, these syndicates have large amounts of money floating around, sufficient to bribe officials and politicians. Capitol's form of government makes it particularly vulnerable to these criminals, since often they simply find a citizen to act as a convenient front. Their wealth allows that person to buy up a huge number of shares. At election time, this can have a particularly nasty effect.

Indeed, this illustrates one of the great weaknesses of Capitol's system. It is particularly vulnerable to corruption. Because a corrupt Director can appoint judges, police chiefs and high officials, entire electoral districts can become hotbeds of vice and racketeering.

Of course, the corporation is not without teeth when it comes to dealing with these things. Corrupt officials can be impeached, and entire districts can be placed under martial law and ruled directly by the corporation. This is a drastic step and is used only in the most extreme cases. It needs an overall majority of the Board of Directors to establish, and even then, it needs the approval of the Supreme Court.

HERETICS

Even more worrying for Capitol is the rise of the Dark Legion. When most people think of the Dark, they think of the great Citadels and the swarming Undead Legions, but these are not the only tools of the Dark Apostles. A society like Capitol's is particularly vulnerable to those Apostles who work by subterfuge and by influencing the mind. In a society like Capitol's, the followers of Semai and Muawijhe can wield terrible power. By affecting people's minds, they can influence the outcome of elections. There are rumors that several powerful heretics have been elected to the Board of Directors.

Indeed, one of the most common conspiracy theories concerning the assassination of President John Sherman is that he was removed by his own security service (the PSS) when they found out he was a heretic. Others say that these rumors simply show how much damage the fear of the Dark has already done to the fabric of society.

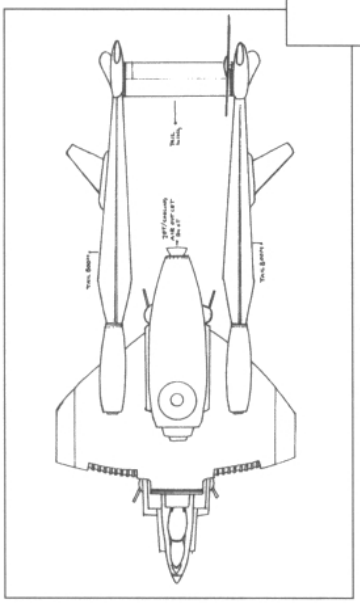
Most worrying of all is the growing evidence that is emerging of the existence of many conspiracies of heretics within the body of Capitol. The Bureau has on record thousands of documented cases of worship of the Dark Apostles, and the numbers seem to be rising. Also, a connection between the drug syndicates and the heretics seems to be emerging. It may well prove to be the case that the Brotherhood's claims that thionite and anaihiline make people susceptible to the Darkness are true.

THE ARMED FORCES OF CAPITOL

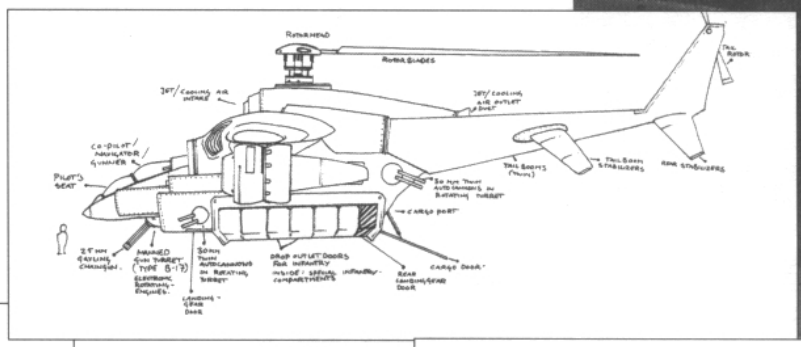
The Armed Forces of Capitol comprise the largest and most powerful military machine in human history. Capitol believes in protecting itself and its people from any and all external threats. That is the duty of the Supreme Commanders and the Board as laid down in the corporation's Charter. Since Capitol is the largest of the megacorporations, the size and strength of its forces reflect this. The AFC needs to protect a lot of ground and people. The corporation sees that it has the people and equipment to do this.

Despite the fact that most Capitolians would rather pursue a career in business than in the military, the AFC is a volunteer army. It has very high standards of morale. Its soldiers know that they are fighting to defend their way of life, and they are proud to do so. For many of them, the AFC represented a way out of poverty, for a lot of the soldiers are drawn from the poorer levels of society. The AFC provides them with pride, self-discipline and training, and they respond to this.

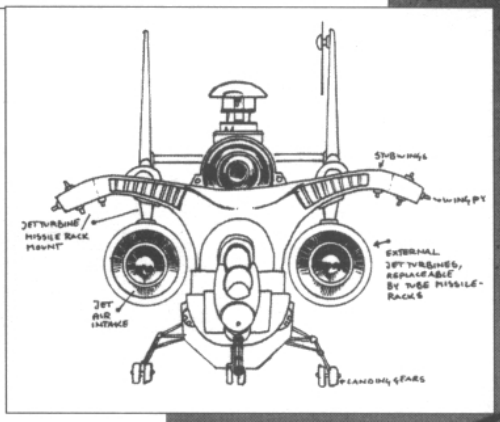
In addition, as in all Capitol's subsidiaries, the people know that excellence will be rewarded, and that promotion comes to those who deserve it. They know they can better themselves, and they know their leaders are worthy of respect.



In many levels of society, you are more or less required to serve a couple of years in the AFC to mature. And if you're successful, lieutenant's bars and a Freedom Star are more worth than a university degree. Many sons of Directors, businessmen and other high-level officials enlist in the AFC purely as a career move. Some drop out, some stay, but most return to the white-collar existence mentally and physically hardened, but also more cynical.



Finally, in times of corporate emergency, the Board can introduce conscription. This means that all able-bodied citizens may be drafted into the AFC, and this can swell the size of Capitol's armies immensely in a relatively short period of time. The Capitol media is particularly good at whipping the citizens into a patriotic frenzy, and as usual, this means that standards of morale are high.



THE PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THE AFC

Capitol's overall long-term strategies are built around the principles of *deterrence* and *retaliation*.

The first principle means that the Supreme Commanders must ensure that Capitol is seen to be strong enough to fight off any foe. The AFC must be perceived to be mighty enough to ensure that it is not worth any rival corporation's time to attack Capitol holdings or territory. This also fits in well with Capitol's relative openness about its military strengths and equipment.

The second principle means that, if someone does attack Capitol, then the corporation will hit back—*hard*. Capitol is committed to maintaining the integrity of its holdings and will do everything in its power to reclaim them. There are very few examples of anyone ever taking anything from Capitol by force and then holding it. The Imperial Mandate is one. The Dark Legion incursion at the McCraig Line is another.

So far though, these two principles have ensured the preservation of the Capitolian way of life.



THE AFC ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Capitol's battlefield doctrines were forged on the endless, empty deserts of Mars. In those deserts, targets can be spotted from the air from a long way off, and there is very little cover against an airstrike. This means that Capitol places a lot of reliance on air power.

Also, the sheer area of the vast territories Capitol controls have influenced the Supreme Commanders' thinking. The railways can move huge armies relatively quickly but are vulnerable to air strikes. This means that air superiority is vital. It also means that Capitol maintains a huge number of airborne troops that can quickly be rushed to any trouble spots.

It comes as no surprise then to learn that the Supreme Commanders are great believers in the use of air power and mobile warfare. The AFC uses few tanks compared to other megacorporations, preferring instead to rely on its aircraft's tank-busting capabilities and the ability of infantry to disperse and take out armor with powerful rocket launchers.

A typical Capitol military attack begins with the CAF establishing air superiority in the region, then is followed with a deluge of airstrikes against key enemy installations. After the airstrikes, a swarm of helicopter-mounted infantry race in and seize key positions. After this, slower moving ground troops and tanks move up to hold the ground taken and relieve the advance troops. All of this calls for very close cooperation between the various arms of the AFC. Great military exercises are often held on Mars and Venus to help establish this coordination.



MILITARY GALLANTRY

UNIFORMS

FIELD UNIFORM. Most often, the field uniform is simply the appropriate suit of armor. Even though the AFC HQ tries to keep them unaltered, you can hardly see two identical suits—most soldiers modify them to fit their own personal desires, adding extra protection plates, extra pockets and compartments, individual cammo, badges and mottos, etc.



Apart from armor and weapon, the standard field gear includes a combat gear harness holding gas mask, tools, medical utilities, grenades, ammo and additional clips, face cammo stick, mosquito repellent, sunblock, knife, water bottle, toothbrush, matches, etc. Only rookies wear these in battle—vets leave them in the trench and carry the most necessary in the compartments on the armor, or taped onto it.

The rest of the personal equipment is carried in the backpack: bedroll, rain clothes, emergency provisions, flares, extra clothes, towel, bathroom stuff, mess kit, shovel, pick, etc.

DAILY DUTY UNIFORM. All the branches of the AFC have individual daily duty uniforms, used when not on the field in combat duty. They are worn by soldiers on leave, during indoor education, by staff officers, by hospital and administrative personnel not in the front line, etc.

The CGF's daily duty uniform is grey-green. It can either be worn with a hip-length jacket, a white short-sleeved shirt and a tie, or without the jacket. In that case, you use either the white shirt and tie, or a beige shirt without tie. The jacket and the beige shirt has shoulder straps with rank insignia. It is usually worn with a baseball cap.

The CAF's daily duty uniform consists of marine-blue pants, white shirt and black tie. The dark blue leather jackets are waist-long and often carry badges all over the back. Rank insignia are worn on shoulder straps.

The Navy's daily duty uniform also comes in dark marine-blue, with a knitted sweater or a jacket. The sweater and the white shirts has shoulder-straps; the jacket has the rank insignia around the fore arm.

PARADE UNIFORMS. Often called «mating dresses» among younger officers, these are strict, slick, sober uniforms designed to express pride and glory. They are worn on informal off-duty occassions such as cocktail parties, balls, Holy days and weddings. Despite the name, they are never used in parades. All medals and awards that the soldier has ever recieved are displayed, making it a pretty colorful outfit.

The CGF's parade uniform is steel gray and includes a white shirt used with cuff links, black butterfly and waist-length jacket. Rank insignia are worn on shoulder-straps. Pants normally have two red stripes along the outer seam—generals have one two-inch-wide stripe.

The CAF's uniform is all dark blue with a shirt similar to the CGF's. Rank insignia are worn around the fore arms. The pants have one one-inch-wide golden stripe.

The naval parade uniform is dark blue with a white hip-length jacket. Rank insignia are worn around the fore arms. The pants have one one-inch-wide red stripe—admirals have golden stripes.

MEDALS

All decorations are marks of great esteem in the Capitol Corporation. They are usually awarded for some conspicuous feat of valor, and if awarded posthumously, the award and any attendant benefits are passed on to the next of kin.

All Capitolian medals, except the Sword of Honor and the Red Heart, are awarded in three classes: without bar, with bar and with two bars. The bar is a little metal tag that hangs from a chain attached to the bottom of the medal. «Without bar» is the lowest category of award given for the minimum performance needed to win the medal.

«With bar» means that the recipient performed above and beyond even this level of gallantry. «With two bars» means that the receiver did something extraordinary, an act of singular courage never before performed in the records of the CGF. Naturally, medals with two bars are extremely rare.

CAPITOL SWORD OF HONOR. Awarded only to serving members of the AFC for conspicuous gallantry in the service to the corporation, the Sword of Honor is the highest award for bravery Capitol can bestow upon its warriors. Possession of this medal means that the owner is enrolled in the Chairman's Legion of Honor and entitled a pension of 10,000 Dollars a year. The sword is granted to the recipient personally by the President of the corporation in a televised ceremony at the Presidential Palace. Very few Swords of Honor are ever granted, and then only for bravery of the highest and most conspicuous kind.

THE FREEDOM EAGLE. This is the CAF's highest award for bravery, given only to those who have fought against the greatest of odds or risked their own lives to save others. On one side, this silver medallion bears the Capitol crest. On the other, it shows the insignia of the Air Force and the inscription «Glory Is Its Own Reward».

THE SHOOTING STAR. This medal is also known as the Golden Parachute. It is given to members of air crews who have been forced to bail out over enemy territory during combat and who have successfully made their way home. Possession of one of these is regarded as something of a humiliation by most pilots.

On one side, this bronze medal shows the crest of the CAF. On the other, it shows a falling star.

THE MILITARY GALLANTRY MEDAL. This is awarded to soldiers who have shown conspicuous bravery under fire, to those who have risked their lives to save their wounded comrades and to those who have died gallantly in the performance of their duty. It is the highest award for bravery that CGF can award without petitioning the President for the Sword of Honor. On one face, it shows the crest of the CGF. On the other, it shows the face of the current President.

THE FREEDOM STAR. This is also known as the Red Heart. This medal is granted by all of Capitol's forces including CGF, CAF and the Navy. It is awarded to those who have been wounded in the line of duty. It is a fairly common medal, one that most members of CGF can expect to be awarded at some time. On one face, it shows the Capitol crest. On the other, it shows a heart.

THE SILVER ANCHOR. The Silver Anchor is, of course, the Navy's highest award for valor and service above and beyond the call of duty. It is granted only rarely and then only to the bravest of the brave. There have only been slightly more Silver Anchors awarded than Swords of Honor. On one side, this medal shows the Navy Crest. The other side is plain.

THE SILVER MERMAID. This medal is regarded as something of a booby prize. It is granted posthumously to those captains who have gone down with their ships, an ancient and honorable tradition that the Capitolian Navy maintains to this day. There is no actual medal. A note is simply made in the Navy rolls.





FREEDOM STAR



SILVER ANCHOR



FREEDOM EAGLE



SHOOTING STAR

THE CAPITOL AIR FORCE

Not surprisingly, the Air Force is seen as the elite of the AFC. Its pilots are selected from the best of the best and then put through a long and comprehensive program of training to ensure that they know what they're doing. It costs a lot of money to train a pilot, and the planes cost even more, so the CAF wants to ensure that both come back. Pilots are also given basic military combat and survival training, too, in case they have to bail out over enemy territory and find their own way home.

Capitolian pilots have a reputation for being cool and cocky young soldiers, but this is only to be expected of them. They know how good they are.

In descending order of prestige, there are three sections of the Capitol Air Force:

FIGHTER COMMAND

This is the command responsible for maintaining air superiority. Fighter Command gets the best combat pilots. They need to be good to fly their supersonic jets against all foes. These pilots are expected to be at the peak of physical condition, with reflexes like an adrenalized cat and the killer instinct of a striking hawk. Fighter Command pilots are trained to fly in teams of two: leader and wing. It is the duty of the leader to kill the enemy. It is the job of the wing to watch the leader's back.

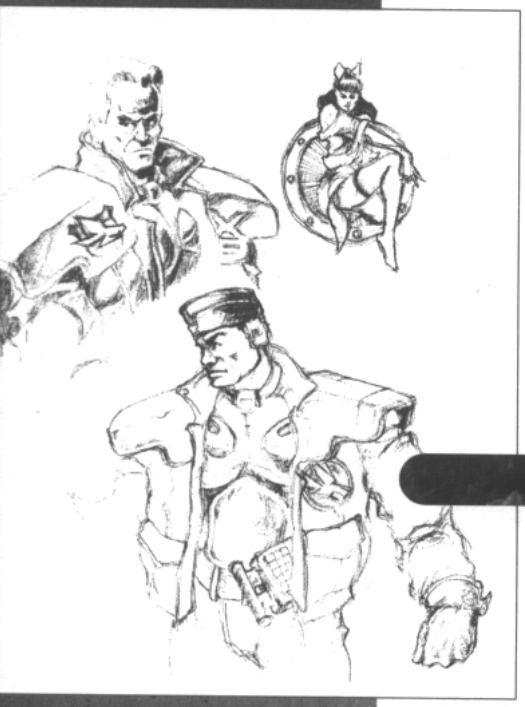
INSIGNIA. The insignia of Fighter Command is the AFC Eagle surrounded by a blood-red circle.



STRIKE COMMAND

Strike Command is responsible for ground attack missions. It is the arm of the CAF that works most closely with the Ground Forces. Its pilots must learn to fly everything from the giant Condor bombers to the Puma ground attack aircraft. While they lack the glamour of Fighter Command, Strike Command pilots are often even better pilots in their own way. It takes nerves of steel to bring a Puma in at low level, dodging enemy anti-aircraft fire and unleashing your missiles with pin-point accuracy.

INSIGNIA. The insignia of Strike Command is the Capitol eagle, surrounded by a gold circle and clutching two crossed thunderbolts in its claws.



TRANSPORT COMMAND

Transport Command provides the pilots and planes that shift Capitol's airborne armies around. Its pilots are looked down on as the donkeys of the CAF, but their job is one of the most necessary of all the CAF's roles. Transport Command also provides the pilots and helicopters for Capitol's Ground Forces. This can be exciting work, dropping the troops off at the sharp end of the battle and then flying around to provide supporting fire.

INSIGNIA. The insignia of Transport Command is the Capitol Eagle surrounded by a green circle. Beneath this is a gold box.

CALLSIGNS

All Capitol pilots have their own unique tag. This has two purposes—it sounds cool and helps to build up the mystique of being a pilot, which is good for morale, and it also acts as a callsign for radio communication. They're always short and easily pronounceable. Typical tags are Iceman, Hunter, Rebel, Steelpick, Hangman, Lowlife, Lizard and Maniac.

UNIFORMS

The uniform of the CAF is the leather flying suit. This is covered in appropriate award patches for bravery, for kills, for successful sorties, etc. On the breast is badge of the appropriate division. On the right shoulder are the badges for rank.

CAPITOL GROUND FORCES

Capitol has a huge number of ground troops. These are the people who must get down and dirty with the enemy and risk their lives amid the blood and dirt of actual combat.

Capitol's Supreme Commanders never forget that their soldiers are citizens, and that they have a duty, when possible, to preserve the lives of those citizens. This comes to the fore in several ways.

Capitol troops are always given the best possible training they can get under the circumstances. They are taught a lot about self-preservation on a battlefield. You won't see any human wave attacks from a Capitolian army. In keeping with this idea, Capitol's troops are usually issued heavy body armor and protective helmets. The cost of such equipment is negligible compared to the cost of training another soldier.

Because Capitol troops are relatively well trained and well organized, and because Capitol's philosophy places a lot of stress on the values of teamwork, self-reliance and initiative, Capitol troops are expected to show these qualities. NCOs and individual soldiers are given a lot of discretion on the battlefield.

The ideal Capitol infantry unit is a team. Its members know and trust each other. Its leaders are trusted to be given their orders and then to carry them out by whatever method seems most appropriate at the time.

Capitolian commanders know that the people at the sharp end often have a better idea of what is going on than those further back, and they rely on the discretion of the front-line officers and NCOs to see that objectives are achieved.

UNIFORMS

The typical battlefield uniform of most Capitolian units is Tortoise armor. On the right shoulder pad is the insignia of the unit to which the soldier belongs. On the left shoulder pad are stripes that tell a soldier's rank. If the soldier has won any medals, they are painted beneath the stripes.

To enhance the feeling of belonging to a team, each individual company is allowed to customize its uniform with its own badge. Companies often take their own names as well, like Ryder's Raiders, Stillwell's Butchers, Yossarian's Yahoos and so on. These insignia appear on the right shoulder pad, replacing that of the army group to which the unit belongs. In the field, individual Capitol soldiers have been known to customize their equipment even further, adding new paint schemes to their helmets and attaching new patches to their armor. As long as it isn't contra-survival or bad for morale, Capitol's leaders allow this.

ORGANIZATION

At the simplest, Capitol's Ground Forces are organized into squads of 4-10 soldier. Each squad is part of a platoon, and each platoon is part of a company. Platoons are made up of 3-6 squads. Companies are made up of 3-6 platoons and a number of squads. The actually size of these units depends on circumstances. They can all be affected by casualties, operational circumstances or simple availability of troops.

In addition, CGF divides its troops into two types: line and veteran. Line troops are the basic troops of the CGF. They have the standard equipment and the standard training. They may or may not have had combat experience at the beginning of a campaign.

GAINING RANKS

These rules cover how characters advance in military rank. They are written for army ranks, but equivalent ranks from other services can easily be substituted.

ENLISTED SOLDIERS AND NCOS. *For each successful two-year term, you gain one rank, starting from private (or the equivalent) and moving up to sergeant major. By performing extremely well (getting a perfect success on your re-employment roll), you can directly become an officer, but otherwise, you have to switch to the Officer background and start all over as a junior cadet.*

OFFICERS. *If you choose the Officer background, you enlist as a junior cadet (or the equiva-*

Veteran units are the elite of the CGF. These are experienced troops that have proven themselves under fire. When the chance comes, they will be given upgraded equipment, and after the campaign ends, they will be given extensive training. These proven troops are awarded pay increases and extensive perks. Their morale is superb, and their discipline is usually excellent. In times of war, they are used to spearhead important attacks or kept in reserve for vital defensive maneuvers.

BATTLEFIELD TACTICS

Most of Capitol's front-line troops are Air Cavalry. They are ferried to the front by helicopter and dig into their position on arrival. These helicopters are usually equipped for battlefield support, mounting heavy auto-cannons, bombs, rockets and air-to-ground missiles. In attacks, they can strafe the ground, softening up the enemy before troops go in. In defense, they can provide covering fire while the troops disengage.

In each soldier's helmet is a micro-pulse link receiver and a chin mike. These are scrambled so that the enemy cannot understand any comm chatter. NCOs and officers have access to progressively higher priorities of link, so that they can communicate with each other, their support helicopter and HQ. These links are used to coordinate attacks, locate casualties and exchange information.

Like most corporations, Capitol has its own battle-language. This comprises simple lists of code-phrases that contain certain orders. For example, «Four-Seven-Two, Hut» could mean «fall back and regroup at the last checkpoint». Many companies customize their own battle-language so that, even if the enemy is familiar with Capitol's standard codes, they still will not understand the company's.

Each soldier also wears a dog tag. These contain medical sensors which monitor the trooper's physical condition and contain recorded details about him or her. Officers and NCOs have heads-up displays within the visors of their helmets. These can project information about each soldier's condition, as well as tactical displays and messages from headquarters. This information transparently overlays what the officer is seeing, without interfering with his or her vision. If a soldier goes down, the dog tag automatically sends a message to that trooper's superior, so that, according to the battlefield situation, the soldier in charge can decide on pick-up, rescue or abandonment. The last is usually only done to the dead, and then only if the situation is really desperate.

ARMORED DIVISIONS

Because of its reliance of mobile airborne warfare, Capitol does not have that many armored divisions. Those tanks that it does possess are primarily adapted for urban warfare and close support work beyond the McCraig Line. They are designed for block clearing, providing cover and support for advancing infantry, rather than for taking on enemy tanks.

There is however a Tank Army consisting of several divisions of Desert Fox battle tanks stationed at Burroughs. This has been used to try to advance into the Doughpits and to counter Dark Legion armored breakouts through the McCraig Line.

THE FREEDOM BRIGADES

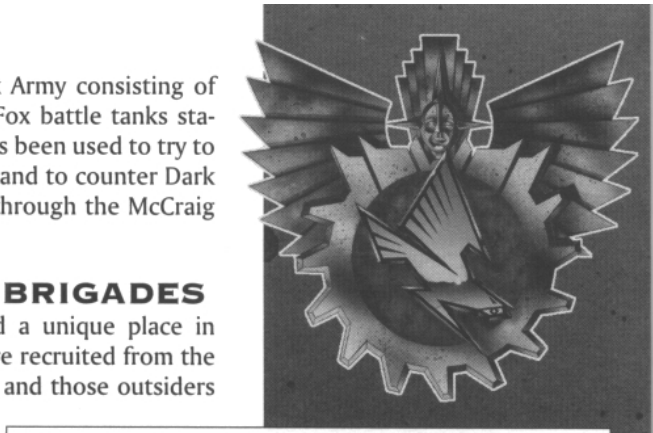
The Freedom Brigades hold a unique place in Capitol's mythology. They are recruited from the outcasts of Capitol's society and those outsiders who desire to join this most prosperous of corporations.

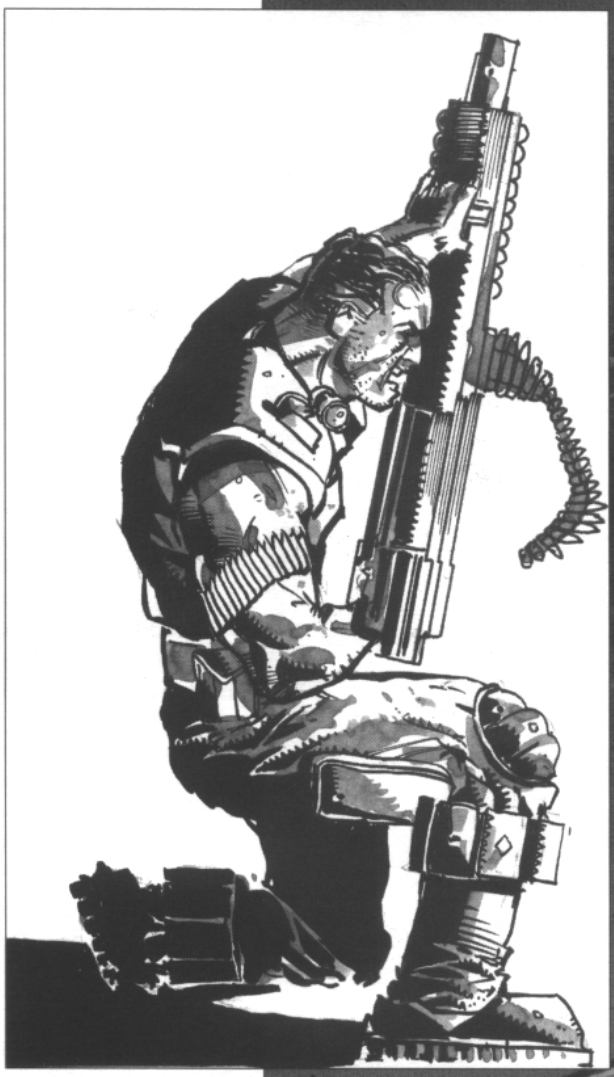
There are countless Freedom Brigades, which is just as well because casualties are often appalling. Since they are not citizens, Freedom Brigadeers are considered expendable by the Supreme Commanders, and thus they are given all the worst and most dangerous jobs.

Freedom Brigades hold the front-line forts of the McCraig Line, the fortified outposts in the Southern Warzones and the railroad forts in the most isolated and inhospitable regions of Mars. Discipline is strict, and the officers are often cruel. The troops are kept in line by the use of slow-acting toxins created from a secret formula to which there is only one known antidote, the formula of which is held by only a privileged few.

All of these factors make the Freedom Brigade installations very grim places. And yet morale is often surprisingly high. The troopers of the Freedom Brigades have been given a chance to redeem themselves or to join Capitol and escape grinding poverty. They know that if they survive they will join one of the greatest of megacorporations as a privileged citizen. This is not to say there are not malingerers, complainers or evil-doers, but it does explain why Freedom Brigadeers often stand their ground when other troops have routed, and often hold out when all hope has seemingly vanished.

Freedom Brigadeers wear light gray versions of the Survivor body armor done out in an appropriate camouflage scheme. These are more streamlined than normal Survivor armor because most of the waste reclamation functions have been stripped out of them. These suits are often patched and shabby. They have a cowl which clips over the Brigadeer's head to

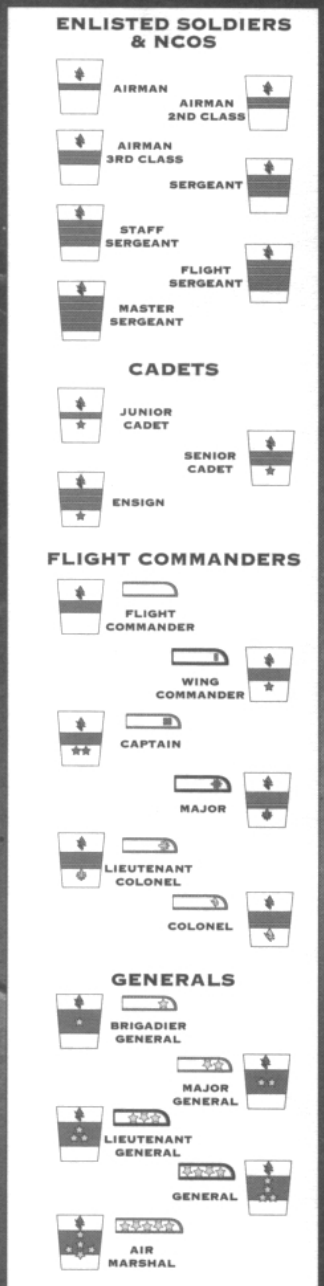




lent). If you make your first re-employment roll, you become an ensign. You skip the senior cadet rank. Thereafter, you gain one rank for each two-year term ended with a successful re-employment roll until you reach colonel. To reach the rank of brigadier general, you must get an unmodified 20 on a re-employment roll. (After that, promotion is handled as usual; a normal successful re-employment roll promotes you to major general.)



AIRFORCE RANKS



provide full body protection. Rather than having a unit insignia on their right shoulder, Freedom Brigadeers have a yellow arrow pointing up. Beneath their armor, Freedom Brigadeers are tough-looking people, bearing studs in their foreheads, broken noses, missing teeth, cauliflower ears, scars and other souvenirs of their brutal lives.

CAPITOL SPECIAL FORCES

Capitol has a huge range of special forces, from the Free Marines to Alpha Force. They are all given extensive training for the types of missions that they have been assigned.

THE FREE MARINES

These are the most famous of all Capitol's special forces. To join the Free Marines, you must have two years of active duty, fought in three battles, been recommended for promotion and decorated for valor. In addition, you must have faced a court-martial for disciplinary problems. The Free Marines fight to regain their honor, and they have little else to live for. They are chosen for the most dangerous and suicidal of missions behind enemy lines. Survival, as they say, is optional.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS. You must have been court-martialed. This is achieved by rolling a 20 when you come to re-enlist or by rolling «Sacked» on the Capitol Special Events Table. Alternatively, you can simply decide that your character has suffered disciplinary problems. If you fail the interview for the Free Marines, you are out of the military with a criminal record.

In addition, you must have been decorated for conspicuous gallantry. This means that you must have acquired a Fame rating of at least 1 during your military career.

If you meet all the requirements, then you take the interview. You must roll under your PER to convince the Free Marines you're the sort of person they want. INT doesn't enter the proceedings. If you fail, you have been dishonorably discharged. Start your adventuring career at once.

BENEFITS. Free Marines undergo extensive mental and physical training, and during the course of their duties, they suffer many hardships. Every term served adds +1 to PHY and MST. Because of their training in infiltration and covert operations, for every term they serve they automatically gain one pick in Stealth and one in Survival. Choose which terrain type this applies to.

SPECIAL RULES. You can't be an officer in the Free Marines. Even if you were one when you joined, you're now a grunt. Choose your skill picks accordingly.

Finally, being a Free Marine is like serving a prison stretch. You can't leave voluntarily until you redeem yourself by being decorated for gallantry (i.e., increase your Fame rating) or till you've served 5 terms.

THE SUNSET STRIKERS

The Sunset Strikers are deployed on Mercury. In theory, they are the bodyguard of the Capitolian representatives on Mercury. They have been trained to contain any Mishiman encroachment on Capitol property and to fight in the peculiar conditions of the innermost planet. They are also trained in dealing with the Mishimans and understanding their methods of warfare and diplomacy. Given the high regard Mishimans have for excellence in martial arts, the Sunset Strikers are highly trained in close combat and with melee weapons. Because they must have the respect of their Mishiman opponents, the Sunset Strikers are trained to meet Mishiman standards of honor and conduct. Their reputation for honorable behavior is famed throughout the Solar System.

Sunset Strikers look more than a little Mishiman. Their uniforms are characterized by a profusion of close combat weapons and Mishiman-style headbands that denote rank and status. They carry ceremonial samurai swords, and on the right shoulder pad is the symbol of their unit. This looks like half a red sun radiating lines outward. Unless in field camouflage, a Sunset Striker's armor is white and red. The shoulder pads are white.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 9.

BENEFITS. All Sunset Strikers gain one pick in Martial Arts, one pick in Knowledge of the Mishima Corporation, and one pick in Mishiman Etiquette (see *The Freelancer's Guide*) for every term they serve. These are in addition to any picks gained from their career.



MARTIAN BANSHEES

The Martian Banshees is one of Capitol's most unusual special forces units. It consists entirely of those who have lost families to the operations of Mishima or the Dark Legion in conflicts on Mars. Banshees are desperate and deadly men and women who have sworn to sell their lives dearly in search of vengeance. They are an elite airborne unit which is dropped on special Banshee rocket packs into the very heart of any conflict. The howling whine of their engines and the terrible decoration of their face masks gives the unit its name.

The Banshees are often used to spearhead any major AFC strike. They are dropped in advance of the main thrust and told to hold specified objectives or die trying. The latter is often the case. This has won them the respect of their Mishiman foes, although it has to be said that these brooding fatalistic individuals are shunned and feared by their comrades in the AFC.

The Banshees have sleek, streamlined jet packs and hideous, custom-designed, leering face masks like Mishiman devils. Their unit insignia is a leering, evil female face. Their colors are always red and black.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 12.

BENEFITS. Banshees automatically gain one pick with the Rocket Pack skill for every term they serve.

DOG SOLDIERS

Dog Soldiers is an irregular unit which specializes in long distance warfare against the Dark Legion in the Rust Deserts of Mars. The unit is unique in that it's raised from the Nomads of the Great Rust Desert abutting the McCraig Line.

Dog Soldiers are all people who have been displaced or whose ancestors were displaced from their home territories by the Dark Legion. As such, they have a special grudge against the forces of the Dark, and they spend their lives in constant war with them.

Dog Soldiers spend much time in the warped and twisted Doughpits, and all that time spent there has done something to their minds. They are often very superstitious, with their own rituals to protect them against the Dark. Their war gear is often covered in the holy signs of the Brotherhood and little totems such as the finger bones of slain foes.

Many have taken battlehounds as partners—gigantic, cybernetically enhanced war dogs which they use to track down Dark Legion infiltrators. It is said that these specially bred dogs can sniff out heretics, too.

Dog Soldiers are extraordinarily proficient at desert survival and stealthy infiltration of their foes. Their gear is a shabby but well-maintained version of Survivor armor. The color is light brown with a standard desert camouflage overlay. Their unit insignia is a howling wolf, black on a light brown background. They carry large knives and Punisher handguns.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, PHY 9. Desert Survival and Stealth SVs of 9 or greater.

BENEFITS. All Dog Soldiers automatically gain one pick each in Desert Survival and Stealth per term served. These are in addition to any picks gained from their career. All Dog Soldiers add 5 to their MST when resisting the effects of the Dark Symmetry. Dog Soldier characters may, if they choose, become the proud owners of a battlehound.

AIRBORNE RANGERS

This is a rapid deployment force, usually dispatched by helicopter, airship or airplane to any spot where it's needed, as the Rangers are specialists in airdrops. The Airborne Rangers unit is massive, and if there is such a thing as a standard Capitol special unit, this is it. They are well disciplined and well trained.

Rangers wear polished Tortoise Mk 2 armor and have a clean cut look about themselves. Their armor is usually light blue, but this is occasionally altered to fit the situation. They bear a winged dagger insignia on their right shoulder pads.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, PHY 9. Two Firearms SVs at 10 or greater.

BENEFITS. Airborne Rangers automatically gain one pick with Rifles or Automatic Weapons per term served. These are in addition to any picks gained through their careers.

ALPHA FORCE

Alpha Force is the crack anti-terrorist unit of the AFC. These troops are trained specifically to deal with hostage situations and situations of unusual sensitivity, such as when terrorists are threatening to blow up power stations. Alpha Force soldiers are the elite of the Capitol elite. Their loyalty must be proven beyond doubt. Their lives and their training are shrouded in secrecy. No one knows who they are. This force is trained to operate in small independent teams ready to spring into action at a moment's notice whenever a crisis springs up.

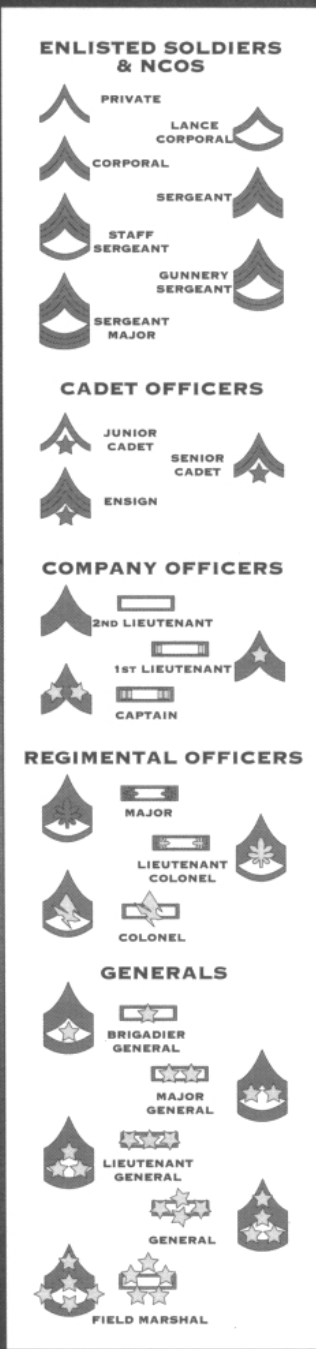
Alpha Force troopers wear a customized, black Tortoise armor, which is lighter and more streamlined than the regular kind. They wear big black gauntlets, utility belts with mini-grapnels and grenades and full face masks, complete with rebreathers and goggles, giving them a sinister, insectoid look. On the right shoulder pad is the Greek letter alpha, black on a white background. They usually carry light, short-ranged weapons such as Punishers.

REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 12, PHY 12. Two Firearms SVs at 12 or greater.

BENEFITS. All Alpha Force members automatically gain one pick in Stealth and one pick in Weapons Systems per term of enlistment. These are in addition to any picks gained through their careers.

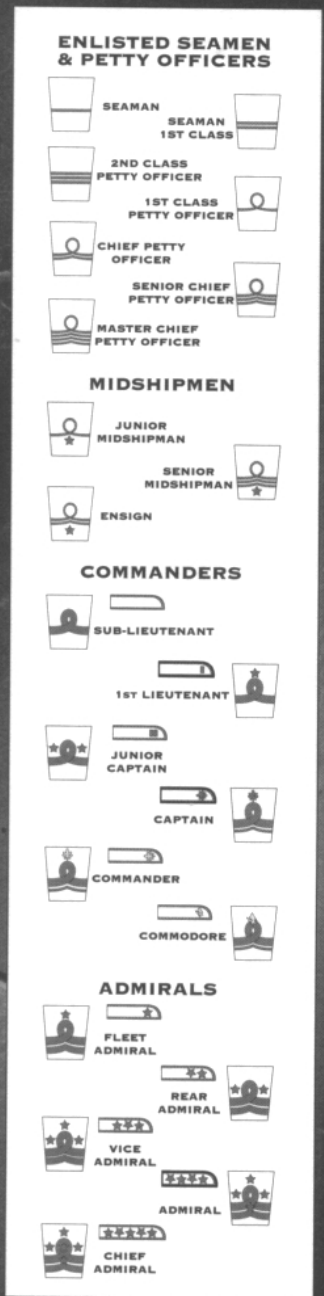


ARMY RANKS





NAVY RANKS



DELTA WING

Delta Wing is the most famous pilot squadron in the AFC. It is made up of the best of the best of Capitol's pilots. These are individuals schooled to match the Archangels of the Brotherhood in flying skill. Delta Wing is made up of fighter pilots, the Top Guns of the AFC.

Delta Wing pilots are most often seen in their bright blue flight suits. In flight, they wear helmets with heads-up displays on the inside. On their right shoulder is the Greek letter delta in white. When not in their planes, they often carry Punishers.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 12. Military academy. Flying Vehicles SV of 10 or greater.

BENEFITS. All Delta Wing pilots automatically gain one pick in Flying Vehicles per term served. This is in addition to any picks gained from their career.

STRIKE FORCE

Strike Force pilots fly the ground attack aircraft of the AFC and, like Delta Wing pilots, are picked for their individual skill at flying and pinpoint accuracy with bombs and missiles. Strike Force pilots are expected to be equally at home in the mighty Aerofortress Bomber and the small ground attack Puma fighter-bomber.

Strike Force pilots are outfitted just like Delta Force pilots, with one exception. The Strike Force's insignia is two crossed thunderbolts on a red background.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 12. Military academy. Flying Vehicles SVs of 10 or greater.

BENEFITS. All Strike Force pilots automatically gain one pick in Flying Vehicles per term served. This is in addition to any picks gained from their career.

THE NAVY

Capitol's Naval Command has a wide bailiwick. The admirals are responsible for the Space Fleet and the huge naval task force that guards the Graveton Archipelago on Venus. In addition, the Capitol Navy maintains its own small armies of Marines which are used in amphibious assaults.

The Navy crest shows the Capitolian eagle over an anchor and a floating mine.

INTER-PLANETARY FORCES

The IPF controls the huge armored space vessels that defend Mars and Venus from orbit. Many of these are mobile gun and missile platforms which can bombard strategic targets from orbit.

The IPF has three fleets. The first is the huge Martian Defense Fleet, which is perpetually stationed in orbit around Capitol's homeworld, protecting it from invasion.

The smaller Venusian Fleet is limited in size by the treaty of Heimburg. Bauhaus does not want a massive enemy fleet hovering over its territory. The Venusian Fleet holds geostationary orbit over the Graveton Archipelago.

The Third Fleet is smaller in size than the Martian Defense Fleet but larger than the Venusian Fleet. Its job is to move around the system to wherever it's needed. In times of war, it convoys troops between the main Capitol territories and the battlefronts.

The IPF insignia is the Capitolian eagle hovering over a red planet containing an anchor.

INTER-PLANETARY SURFACE BASED DEFENSE

IPSUBAD is responsible for the protection of Capitol areas from space-borne attack. It maintains the great chains of space fortresses that ring Mars and hover over the Graveton Archipelago. It also controls the massive missile silos on Mars and Venus which can hurl huge missiles and mega-powerful laser beams at incoming ships and missiles.

The IPSUBAD insignia is the Capitolian eagle hovering over a crossed anchor and missile.

VENUSIAN NAVY

VENAV controls the Venusian Navy (including the South Sea Fleet) and is based at Port Mac Arthur. Its gigantic battleships and aircraft carriers prowl the seas of the Graveton Archipelago and deliver troops and aircraft to wherever they may be needed in this strategically vital region.

The Undersea Fleet is also commanded by VENAV. The submarines patrol the waters of the archipelago, engage in combat with sea monsters and, when necessary, deploy troops against the Dome Cities where Bauhaus deep-sea colonists dwell.

VENAV's insignia is the Capitolian eagle clutching an anchor in its claws.

NAVAL MARINE CORPS

In addition, VENAV commands the Naval Marine Corps, one of the toughest of all Capitol's armies and certainly one that sees more than its fair share of fighting. Marine Corps garrisons hold many of the fortresses and bunkers that litter the archipelago and even now are engaged in a constant battle against Dark Legion incursions.

Forged in the hellish crucibles of the Venusian jungle's warzones, the troops of the Naval Marine Corps are famous for their toughness. They have their own culture of obligation and honor. Many wear tattoos on their foreheads and arms that carry the insignia of their unit and their service. These also help identify them if their bodies are recovered from the sea.

Marines typically wear Panther body armor in jungle camouflage pattern. Their unit insignia is

tattooed on their forehead or forearm, as well as inscribed on their shoulder pads. Marines always have crew cut hair. Always.

The Naval Marine Corps also has a special Subaquatic Division. These soldiers are recruited from the branch of the Naval Marine Corps that is attached to the Undersea Fleet. These troops are highly trained divers who have been taken from their usual maintenance duties and trained to fight in the murky depths beneath the Venusian oceans. They are usually delivered to their point of attack by large, silenced transport submarines.

These troops have seen sterling service trying to seize and hold the Bauhaus aquatic towns and bases that exist around the Graveton Archipelago. It takes a particular, cold courage to fight in the depths where even a slight mistake can lead to a horrible death by drowning, and so the soldiers of the Subaquatic Division are renowned even among Marines.

The Subaquatic Division's uniform is a dark-blue underwater armor. They are armed with large knives, harpoon guns tipped with explosive heads and specially waterproofed and low-impact machine pistols for when they breach their targets' perimeters.

The Naval Marine Corps has also produced its own very famous special forces units.

THE SEA LIONS

The Sea Lions is one of the special forces used by the Capitolian Navy in the Graveton Archipelago on Venus. They are specialists in lightning raids from the sea. They have been trained in both jungle warfare and seaborne aquatic attack.

Sea Lions wear Panther jungle armor and smear their faces with camouflage patterns. The unit's insignia is a shark with the forebody of a lion. They wear this on their right shoulder pads, and many Sea Lions have the symbol tattooed on their arms.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 9. Survival SV of 9 or greater.

BENEFITS. During each period of enlistment, Sea Lions automatically gain one pick each in Sailing and Jungle Survival in addition to any picks gained from their career.

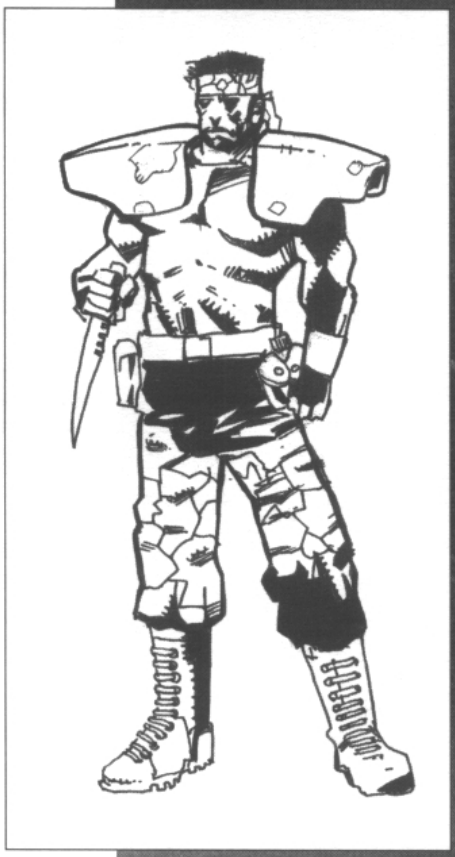
ADMIRAL COLBY'S GUARD

Admiral Colby's Guard was created by the famous admiral for the express purpose of long-range sabotage and recon missions behind enemy lines. These troopers are famous for their ability to sneak through the jungle. The admiral himself used to lead these missions until he went missing in action. The unit now consists of one company of soldiers recruited from the NMC and specially trained on Colby's Island. This place was once a Bauhaus Prison colony and is surrounded by incredibly deadly swamps filled with venomous treespiders and huge manta bats capable of carrying off a full-grown person.

During the final days of their training, the Guards are dropped off in the jungle, armed with only a knife, and are expected to make their way back to the training compound across fifty kilometers of the most dangerous terrain known to humanity. How many fail in this is not known.

The Guards operate in small four-person teams. All are trained in Demolitions and Silent Killing, as well as how to operate the small inflatable dinghies they use to negotiate Venus's treacherous rivers and swamps.

Their uniform is standard jungle garb, and each soldier's forehead bears an anchor tattoo. Guards are muscular people, and they go about in battle stripped to the waist except for an armored, sleeveless jerkin and shoulder pads bearing their unit's anchor insignia. Often a Guard wears a bandanna wrapped around his or her head, as well.



MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, COR 9. Survival SV of 11 or greater.

BENEFITS. For each term you serve, you receive one free pick each in Demolitions and Silent Killing. These are in addition to any other picks you may receive from your career

THE POLARIS TRIDENTS

The Polaris Tridents are recruited from the NMC's Subaquatic Division. In recent years, they have been deployed against the Dark Legion Citadels around Venus' icy poles. The howling polar blizzards make airborne approach difficult, if not impossible. Often the only way these remote cesspools of evil can be reached is by sending a submarine under the Arctic icecap until it can find a weak point in the ice where the troops can emerge. This has the advantage of allowing a stealthy approach.

The Polaris Tridents are trained in Scuba Diving and Arctic Survival. Their uniform is a specially insulated, white diving armor bearing a black trident on its right shoulder pad. They carry the traditional knife of the Subaquatic Division, as well as a bulky, water-proofed version of the standard M50 assault rifle. They also wear a reinforced diver's mask that covers and insulates their whole head and which has a small but powerful searchlight mounted on the forehead. Over each trooper's heart is the trident insignia of the unit.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: STR 9, PHY 9. Scuba SV 11 or greater.

BENEFITS. You get one free pick in Scuba and Arctic Survival per term, in addition to any picks you may receive from your career.



ADVENTURES IN THE CAPITOL WORLD

The basic tone of Capitolian adventures is glamorous. The media is omnipresent, ready to turn adventurers into heroes or menaces at a moment's notice. Film stars, millionaires and charismatic politicians are all accessible to the right people, and all of them at some time may find it necessary to recruit adventurers for their own purposes. This is a wealthy, dynamic society, and there are lots of opportunities for those with the skill, the drive and the connections. Whether your players are freelancers, citizens or enemies of the corporation they will be caught up in the dizzying pace of Capitolian life.

Capitol provides many opportunities for adventurers. From prospecting in the Rust Deserts to investigating political corruption amid the gleaming starscrapers of San Dorado, bold adventurers can find plenty of chances to get themselves into trouble.

Wealth, fame and power are the key elements in running adventures in the Capitolian world. Within the structure of Capitol, the three are almost synonymous. Those people who don't have them want them. Those who possess them will do almost anything to protect them. There are a lot of very ruthless people out there, all with their own plans and schemes, and in the main, these are the people the players will end up working for—or against.

Capitol's territories are relatively open and free compared to those of the other megacorporations, but players should not deceive themselves. Capitol's security agencies are extensive and efficient and provide formidable opponents if the players should come to their attention.

ADVENTURERS

The type of adventures players will have varies significantly depending on whether they are citizens of Capitol or not. Most Capitolians are loyal to their corporation and have a vested interest in preserving its security. Others may not feel the same way.

CAPITOLIAN GOODY-GOODIES

If your players are predominantly Capitolian, they will *probably* do their best to serve the corporation's interests. They can be employed by Capitol's security agencies or the military and work against Capitol's foes. Their enemies will be heretics, corrupt politicians, gangsters and agents of the other corporations.

You should give them opportunities to acquire fortune and glory and to influence the course of the corporation's destiny. The players will see themselves as heroes, upholding the Capitolian way of life and doing their best to preserve the most decent, humane and open society left to humanity.

FREELANCERS

Freelancers see Capitolian civilization in a different light. They are outsiders, tolerated but not privileged. Many of them will be trying to work their way into the good books of the Capitolian authorities. They will generally find themselves involved in the dirty jobs that Capitol would not give its citizens. They may find themselves performing actions that Capitol's security agencies may wish to disclaim all knowledge of in the future, or maybe working for the shadier and more disreputable elements of society, being given tasks that could be very dangerous to them in the long run.

As non-citizens, they can easily disappear in the legal system, for they have no protection. If an influential citizen wants rid of them, he or she can do it in a thousand ways. If the players uncover corruption, they are going to have to be very careful.

ENEMY AGENTS

Perhaps the most challenging role for player characters is as servants of those that Capitol deems enemy powers: agents of the other megacorporations or even the Dark Legion.

If the players work for Capitol's foes, they are in for a very dangerous time of it. Their primary work will be espionage and destabilizing the Capitolian system. They will have to tread softly, for Capitol's security agencies are very efficient and have no scruples whatsoever about dealing harshly with proven enemies.

If you're a known employee of a different corporation, you're going to be watched. Even if

you're an innocent businessman trying to get by, you'll appear in the Bureau's extensive files. The same is true if you've ever been employed by another megacorporation. If you're still employed in some capacity by the military or intelligence agencies of another corporation, then you may well be under active surveillance. The only way around this is to have a very good cover story indeed. False documents are a necessity.

If you're is a heretic (shame on you), you're going to need all the luck you can get. Both Capitol and the Brotherhood cast very wide nets.

TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS

There are many different types of adventures available. If you are running a campaign set within Capitol's territory, you should decide what sort you want to run in advance because this will influence the style and tone of your campaign.

MILITARY CAMPAIGNS

These are the simplest types of campaigns to set up and run, and they're particularly suitable for those players who like a hack-and-slash, all-guns-blazing style of play. The player characters will all be serving members of Capitol's military.

This has one huge advantage for the GM. You never have to worry about involving the players in a mission by subtle means. The characters will simply be given their orders through the command chain. If they don't carry them out, they will face a court-martial and maybe even a firing squad. Military campaigns also have the advantage that your players don't have to worry about choosing their equipment. Just give them standard-issue military gear.

There are several ways to set up a military campaign. If you want to start one from the very beginning, simply assume that all the characters are part of the same unit.

Decide how many terms you want them to have served, and let them make the skill picks and Special Event rolls that are appropriate.

The players don't have to roll to re-enlist, and they can re-roll any Special Event that would take them out of the unit. You can then start the campaign with the unit in the field, assuming that all characters know each other and have served together.



SPECIAL TEAM CAMPAIGNS

The second style of military campaign is the special team campaign. Using this method, all the characters are once again drawn from the military, but they don't need to belong to the same unit. They are part of a team assembled by the high command for one particularly dangerous mission. They will be placed under the command of a tough, hard-bitten officer and expected to carry this mission out. The mission could be anything from blowing up a well-defended bridge behind enemy lines to rescuing a high-ranking officer or scientist who has fallen into enemy hands. Once the mission has been completed, the team members can go their separate ways.

This type of adventure can be a particularly good way of kicking off any sort of campaign. Once it's over, the players can be debriefed and returned to civilian life, and they all have a reason for knowing each other and acting together later. Indeed, you could draw them together again in civilian life by having someone try to kill all the surviving team members for some nefarious reason.

FREEDOM BRIGADES

The third type of military campaign involves the Freedom Brigades. Using a Freedom Brigade company as the setting for your adventures gives you enormous scope during character creation. Virtually anybody can end up in a Freedom Brigade. You can have idealistic volunteers seeking to join Capitol. You can have innocent people from all walks of life who have been unjustly accused of some crime. You can have hardened criminals for whom this was the alternative to the death penalty. You can have career soldiers who have committed some crime and who are trying to redeem themselves.

Characters can be created using any means and any sourcebook.

Simply assume that, at the end of the creation process, they either volunteered or somehow ran afoul of the authorities, and you're ready to go. Freedom Brigade adventures can be particularly desperate because the troops are considered



expendable. This is a good way of worrying your players.

The Freedom Brigades also present a good method of sucking your players from an existing campaign into a military campaign. Just have them sentenced for crimes real or imaginary, and then send them to the Brigades. Once there, remember that their missions don't necessarily need to be of the military type—expendables are perfectly suited for several other types of missions as well, like «Infiltrate a Heretic Cell», «Rescue a Prisoner from a Citadel», «Explore a Horror Asteroid», «Assist a Medical Experiment», etc.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

When setting up your military campaign, consider carefully the nature of your NPCs. Since the unit will often be moved, continuity comes not from the setting but from the surrounding characters.



The first and most important character is the unit's commanding officer. Ask yourself whether he or she is tough and decisive or weak and incompetent. Then detail the players' immediate superiors. These will be the characters with whom the players will most often interact and whom they will come to either love or hate.

Good stereotypes to follow here are the hard-but-fair sergeant and the sadistic bully who everybody wants to frag but who somehow survives to be a thorn in the players' sides. You should also create a few soldiers who are at the same level as the players. These can range from the green youth who's scared to fight, to the psychopath who always looks for trouble, to the womanizer who always boasts of his conquests, to the decent man troubled by his conscience, to the can-do kind of guy who can always get anything done and from whom you can always buy anything, and so on. These are the people who will go along on most of the players' missions. You can bump them off to raise tension or have them rescue the players if worse comes to worst. Don't feel too guilty about slaughtering them. After all, there are always new recruits.

SETTING

Next, you should decide on your specific setting. There are several obvious locations in this sourcebook. If you want to run sweaty, jungle adventures, then you should deploy your characters on the Graveton Archipelago or the warzones of Venus. If you want something more horrific, have the players stationed along the McCraig Line under constant threat by the minions of the Dark Legion. Alternatively, if you feel like inventing a new war, go right ahead. You can postulate another Imperial invasion of Mars or another attempt by Mishima to seize the Freedom Lands. It's up to you.

MISSIONS

Once you've set up your unit and deployed it, you're ready to go. The players can be sent on their first mission. Most missions in military style campaigns have one dominant element: combat, and lots of it. This does not mean that all your scenarios must be an endless collection of firefights. It's best if they have some sort of story. This can be as simple as an encounter with ancient ruins containing mysterious artifacts and monsters or as complex as going through a village and trying to sort out the enemy sympathizers from the innocents. The basic missions are:

PATROL. The unit is dispatched into disputed territory to explore and report back what they find there. If they encounter the enemy, they may fight or run depending on the strength of the foe.

This mission is really a step into the unknown. It's a good way of getting the players to an area that you want them to find. They can encounter an ancient tomb complex or a downed plane containing a deadly Imperial agent. They can find the wounded survivors of a previous patrol and be forced to carry them back for medical attention while under fire. They can encounter a couple of Pretorian Stalkers or other creatures so far unknown to Capitol. Anything is possible.

DESTROY THE OBJECTIVE. This is a much more focused mission. The players must seek out and destroy the objective of your choice. This can be a bridge or a factory or huge cannon that is shelling a friendly position.

This can be a very tense mission because it normally takes place behind enemy lines, and if the players are discovered and the alarm raised, then an overwhelming enemy force will be brought to bear on them. You can make this mission as simple as a stealthy approach to the target by night or as complex as having to penetrate an enemy base in stolen uniforms using forged papers. Either way, you should keep the threat of discovery high in order to raise tension.

HOLD YOUR GROUND. The players are based in a fortified position and must hold it against a seemingly overwhelming number of enemies.

This is really a test of the players' courage and character. Put them in a good defensive position and give them a limited supply of ammo. Then tell them they can't retreat. Next, send in wave after wave of Legionnaires or Mishiman Samurai. The actual combats here are not the important parts of the scenario. They're the lulls between

the action when the players have time to discuss what is happening and worry about what's going on.

This is a good time for the cowardly NPC or player to start whining and getting on the nerves of the others. As always, the trick is to start small. The first attack can be repelled easily enough. The second may be a little harder. Ammunition starts to run low. Night falls. Every sound may be a foe stealthily approaching. You can try all sorts of little tricks to get on your players' nerves, like asking them to make PER rolls when nothing is there. Next, you can try wounding and killing a few favored NPCs. If you do this right, tension should run high, and players can get very scared. If you're kind, the players can be given orders to fall back at the last moment, or they can be relieved by the Airborne Rangers. Either that, or it's up to them to decide when they split.

FALL BACK. The players must fall back from an overwhelming enemy attack. This is basically a chase scenario with the players doing the running. If the players stay too long in one place, they will be cut off and overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of the enemy. You can make this a fast-paced and exciting scenario by throwing unit after unit of enemy troops at the fleeing soldiers. Be careful not to throw too many in, though, or the players will die without chance of escape. You should also have a definite position of safety for the players to reach: a clearing where they can be evacuated by helicopter or a defensive line held by a strong force of Capitol troops.

R AND R. The missions given above, and variations on them, will give you many fine nights of play. However, military campaigns are not limited to the battlefield. Sooner or later, the characters will get leave away from the front. When this happens, they will return to normal society for rest and recreation. On R and R, they can get involved in other sorts of adventures before having to return to the front. There is also plenty of scope for brawling, picking up members of the opposite sex and general roleplaying.

NOTE: Even though this is a *military* campaign, remember that combat is only a small part of military life, and it can make for quite a single-handed way of roleplaying. Try to add more elements than combat into the scenarios, like personal intrigues, deceit and invisible Dark Legion influence.

INVESTIGATIVE CAMPAIGNS

Military campaigns take place primarily on the battlefield. Investigative campaigns take place at the very heart of Capitolian society. Almost any character can be drawn into an investigative campaign by the use of the right bait.

At the core of the investigative campaign is a mystery. The basic premise is that the players want to uncover a secret that somebody else wants left alone. Usually this secret is such a dark one that the person it pertains to is prepared to kill to keep it hidden. Indeed, that person may already have done so, and this can be the hook of the action.

When running an investigative campaign, the important thing to remember is just how unstable wealth, fame and power are in Capitolian society. The rich and the powerful can be stripped of both riches and respect by a single crime. Their shares can be confiscated, their citizenship revoked, and the media can turn them into villains overnight. This is not the case in most other megacorporations.

Unless Mishiman, Imperial or Bauhaus nobles commit treason or become heretics, they will always maintain their position. No matter how personally wicked they are, they will always be nobles. They may be shunned by their peers and reviled by the public, but they can continue to pride themselves on their lineages and hold their estates.

The same is not true for the successful Capitolian. At one stroke, you can see a lifetime's work disappear. Everything that gives you pride and self-respect can be stripped away. To be an outcast in Capitolian society is to be less than nothing. It's not surprising then that the rich and the powerful will do almost anything to stop this from happening, and this being Capitol, they will have the means to do so. That's life.

PLAYER CHARACTERS

The player characters in an investigative campaign can be almost anybody who has a reason to be curious about strange goings-on. They can be reporters, cops, government agents, relatives, friends, freelance investigators or just innocent bystanders who witness a crime and who the criminal now wants to remove.

Although almost anyone can become involved in an investigative campaign, some players obviously have more reason to be involved than others. If player characters are journalists or homicide detectives, then it is their job to unravel the mystery. They are also more likely to have the skills and contacts needed to do so.

THE ADVENTURE

The first trick when creating an investigative campaign is to know in advance what the plot is. You should know who has a guilty secret and what they have done or will do to protect it. You should know what other factors may become involved in the case. If Director Irving-Jorgensen once committed murder and a cult of heretics knows about it, then they may be blackmailing him to further their own ends. The Bureau may also be investigating the Director on account of his recent strange behavior. Ideally, the players will become entangled in an intricate web of plotting and counter-plotting where the various factions struggle for supremacy.

The second trick is to start small and work up. Things should rarely be what they seem. One mystery should lead to another larger and more threatening mystery. Keep the players constantly under pressure.



EXAMPLE: *A character witnesses a murder. He himself may be suspected by the police, given the third degree and told not to leave town. The next day, he reads the paper and, in an unrelated story, sees the picture of Director Irving-Jorgensen and recognizes him as the killer. Could he be mistaken? Should he tell the police, especially as he is not absolutely certain? Will they believe him? The Director is a rich and influential man. And who are those mysterious men in white trenchcoats who have started to follow him?*

As the Game Master, you should know that, yes, it was Irving-Jorgensen. The victim was an investigative journalist who was blackmailing him. The mysterious men are Bureau agents that the journalist contacted before he died and who now suspect that the witness might disappear.

Never just tell the players what is going on. Make them work for the information they get. Keep events moving forward. If the players are getting nowhere, have the villains send some thugs after them to warn them off. Keep the atmosphere paranoid and full of suspicion. Contrast the glossy openness of Capitol's surface with the sinister machinations taking place beneath.

ADVENTURES

Here are several basic plotlines for investigative campaigns. These are just skeletons that you should flesh out as you wish.

CONSPIRACY. Somehow the players stumble across evidence of a vast conspiracy extending right to the very heart of Capitolian democracy. A cult of heretics has risen high in the political system. These people are powerful, influential and dangerous. They can call upon vast resources, and they will do so ruthlessly if threatened. The player characters must find sufficient evidence to incriminate the conspirators and then present it to some trustworthy authority. In the paranoid atmosphere of an investigative campaign, these are not always easy things to do.

BLACKMAIL. The players are approached by the representative of a rising politician or a famous movie star. This VIP is being blackmailed by persons unknown. The player characters must find and remove this blackmailer by any means necessary. If they do so, they will be well rewarded. If they can't keep their mouths shut, then they may find themselves quietly removed, too.

As a twist upon this, the players themselves may be blackmailed if they have any guilty secrets.

ESPIONAGE. The players are acting for a foreign power themselves and seek to acquire Capitolian secrets. It is up to them to decide how they will acquire the knowledge they require. It may be as simple as getting a job in a Capitolian subsidiary, or it may require seducing or blackmailing some person in a position of trust. The adversaries here will be Capitol's own security agencies.

INNOCENTS ABROAD. The players may be innocents caught up in this deadly intrigue. Quite by accident, one of them finds that he or she has picked up the wrong briefcase on the train. It looks identical to theirs, but in fact contains a load of encoded secret documents. They then find themselves suspected of being a spy by Capitol and hunted by agents of the powers that stole the secrets in the first place. They need all the help they can get to survive this.

Good variations on this plot involve unlikely coincidences, such as one of the players being the exact double of an enemy spy. The spy is dead, quietly removed by Capitol's Military Intelligence Corps, but the spy's associates don't know this and mistake the player for their contact. The MIC allows this to continue in the hope of rolling up the whole spy ring. The bewildered player is constantly approached by enemy agents who ask questions he or she knows nothing about, accuse the player of betraying them, and order him or her to report to control.

THE VILLAINS

Investigative campaigns live or die by the nature of the opposition. The players' opponents should not be a faceless horde of cannon fodder. They should be sinister and threatening, but they should also have personality. NPCs should have distinctive character traits that make them stand out in the players' minds.

These can be such simple things as the assassin who chain smokes, the incredibly obese master villain who is unbelievably jovial and always calls the players «sir» or «madame», or the criminal who constantly flicks a coin. Little touches like this make all the difference.

The main people to think about are the mastermind, the enforcer and their courtiers. Every major faction in your plot will probably have some or all of these.

THE MASTERMIND. The mastermind is the chief villain. A clever manipulator, he or she can be a worshipper of the Dark, the local representative of an enemy power or a megalomaniac billionaire. The mastermind may be urbane and polished or a decadent cultist, but his or her distinguishing features are charisma and cleverness. Try to make the mastermind as much of a wholly realized individual as possible.

The mastermind never fights, considering such things too low to become involved in, and does not need good combat skills. That sort of work is handled by the enforcer.

THE ENFORCER. The enforcer is the mastermind's strong right arm and the villain the players will most often come into contact with. Enforcers should be well armed and sufficiently deadly as to make the players think twice about tangling with them. They are usually backed by as many thugs as necessary. Enforcers are reflections of their masters. They share common goals. Enforcers may be loyal or treacherous and may worship their masters or despise them. In any case, the mastermind always possesses the means to keep the enforcer under control.

THE COURTIERS. The courtiers are those who surround the mastermind and whom the players may come into contact with. They can include such worthies as the master's favorite servant, a long-suffering mistress and fawning lackeys who repeat the mastermind's every word. They, too, will all reflect their master's personality. If the mastermind is imperious and demands instant respect and obedience, the courtiers will be servile. If the mastermind urbane and witty, they will be polished and civilized. Courtiers are often used for those little jobs, like approaching the players with a proposition from their master.

HORROR

A variation of the investigative campaign is the horror campaign. In this, the players confront the minions of the Dark Apostles directly. They will have to fight for their lives and their sanity every step of the way, and they may very well end up losing both.

The worlds of *Mutant Chronicles* are very corrupt, and the followers of the Dark are everywhere. They have terrifying powers, and they may be able to call on the assistance of some truly dreadful things.

A horror campaign can be of two kinds. It can be swamped in blood and gore, the horrific effects coming from being constantly being confronted with mutilated bodies and hideous monsters. Or it can be more subtle.

Again, in the universe of the *Mutant Chronicles*, almost anyone can be caught up in a horror campaign. Police officers may be called in to investigate the work of a particularly nasty serial killer. Prospectors may stumble across ancient ruins that hold a sinister secret. Soldiers may find that their unit's new officer is not all that he or she seems.

In a horror campaign, you should put your players in a position of weakness where they feel they can trust nobody and where even the most innocent-seeming events can have sinister implications. Everything the characters do—no matter how insignificant—has fatal effects on surrounding innocents. If the player characters survive at all, they can think themselves lucky. Horror campaigns are not for the weak of nerve or the easily depressed.

EXAMPLE: *The players start to notice odd things. Their friends start to behave differently. Their neighbor takes to closing her curtains during the day and only coming out at night. The sinks in the apartment are blocked, and a strange smell starts to emerge from the drains, a scent like decomposing flesh. When the players reports this to the building supervisor, the man tells them not to worry with a bland smile.*

They give a friend's little daughter a Charter Day present, and she puts it in her mouth, suffocates and dies. They tip a waiter with a twenty-Crown bill and read the next morning that the waiter was killed in a stick-up over twenty Crowns.

Slowly the players begin to feel isolated. No one believes them. When they report matters to the police, the officers tell them not to worry, wearing the same strange smile as the building supervisor.

A character's secretary kills herself, mad from unanswered love (the character, of course, had no idea that the secretary ever was in love with him). A Missionary is accidentally killed by a characters' weapon. When he reached for his wallet, he happened to touch the trigger of his shoulder-holstered gun, although he could have sworn it wasn't loaded.

Eventually, the characters find themselves stalked by the cult of heretics that has taken up residence in their building. They must fight for their lives or be sacrificed.

EMPIRE BUILDING

In empire building campaigns, the players seek to join the movers and the shakers of the Capitolian world. They try to accumulate riches and power and eventually to shape the destiny of billions. During their careers, they will become involved in politics and high finance, and these conflicts can be every bit as deadly and nerve wracking as a firefight in the jungle.

Empire building campaigns require a lot of work from the GM and a lot of roleplaying on the parts of the players, but the effort put in will be well-rewarded. They are particularly suitable for those players who like their characters to have an effect on the world. They are not really good for those players who *must* kill something every five minutes.

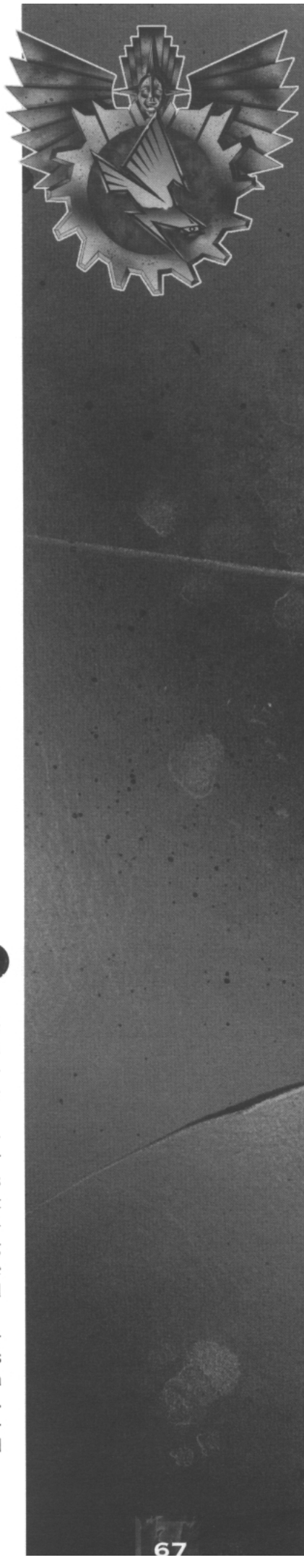
Capitol is a great setting for empire building campaigns because society is open and the corporation positively encourages its citizens to try to improve their lot. Capitol, after all, is the corporation of opportunity, and every citizen has a chance to achieve greatness.

RAGS TO RICHES

This is the classic empire building campaign. The players start off poor and, by dint of their own efforts, seek to rise in society. The tale of the campaign will be the tale of the players' efforts to raise themselves in the world.

Rags to riches stories need a hook: the business or business idea which will be the power base on which the players will build. The players may discover a huge gold mine in the Rust Desert, or they may buy a small, struggling transport company or even muscle in on some gang lord's territory. Any of these things will provide them with the building blocks of their empire and get things started.

In the early stages of the campaign, the players will struggle simply to keep their heads above water. They may have to fight off claim jumpers, raise capital and avoid financial ruin. These early stages will be most like a conventional adventure, with a lot of violent action and desperate activity.



As the campaign progresses, the players will become more successful. Money will start to roll in, and they will come to the attention of jealous rivals and competitors who will try to drive them out of business by all means fair and foul. The rivals may try to buy them out, blackmail them or have them assassinated or jailed. If the players survive this and still prosper, they will enter the last stage of the campaign.

They will now be so rich and successful that they can take part in Capitol's politics. They have to bribe politicians, survive investigations by the Trust and take on new and ever more powerful rivals on this, the largest of stages. They can consider launching bids to reach the Board of Directors or becoming the power behind the throne of one of the political factions. Anything is possible.

TIME SPAN

By their very nature, empire building campaigns cover longer spans of time than normal. You can handle this by making the time lapse between adventures longer than normal adventures. In the early stages of the campaign, the players can have a new adventure every week, but as they move into the later stages, months and even years may elapse between adventures.

This means that you will have to keep track of things like aging quite carefully. It also means that, if you are going to let really long periods elapse, you may allow the players to re-enter the character creation process and acquire new skill picks from the career they are currently following. Of course, since they are self-employed, they can't be fired, although if you want, you can have the players make a re-enlistment roll. Failure here implies some sort of takeover attempt.

Over these long periods, the GM should assess how well the business is being run. If it's being handled well, let the players increase their Social Status by 1 automatically. If things are going poorly or you want to simulate economic turbulence, make the players roll 1d20. If the result is greater than their current Social Standing, all is well. Otherwise, the business is doing badly, and their Social Standing should be reduced by 1.

Once players have built their empire, they may wish to progress into the full blown dynastic epic, or they may wish to sell their holdings to Capitol and retire or enter politics on the proceeds.

THE DYNASTIC EPIC

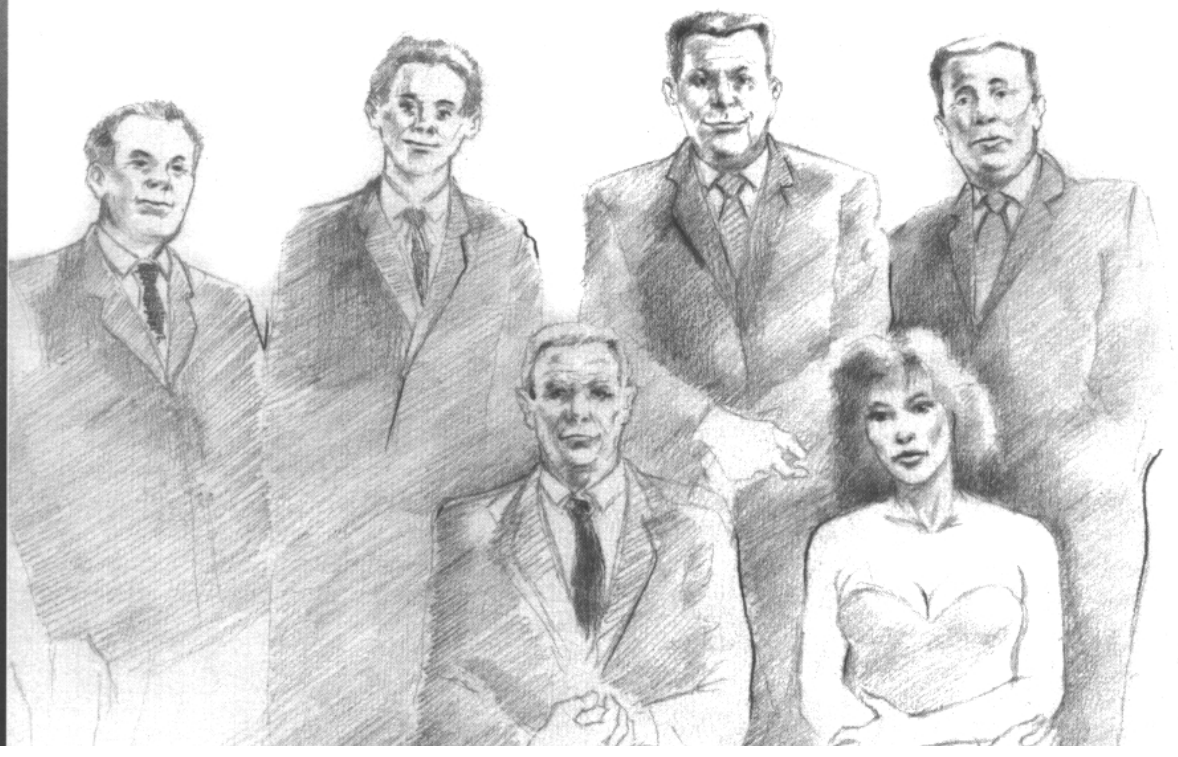
The dynastic epic resembles those soap operas so beloved by Capitol's citizenry. Most of the player characters are rich and spoiled. The rest are usually trying to become that way.

THE SETTING

The dynastic epic focuses on a wealthy family that owns its own business. The family and the business are the center of the campaign. The fight for control and power is the theme. The business can be anything, but it should be glamorous: oil, media, aerospace, diamonds, sports cars, high fashion, speedboats, etc. It should allow plenty of scope for intrigue and sudden reverses. The players should be Capitolian citizens, and the business should be privately owned by the family—perfectly legal under Capitolian law—as this will reflect David's struggle versus Goliath.

THE PLAYERS

The players can take many roles in the dynastic epic. Most of them will be part of the family. They should be generated in the normal manner, but their Social Standing should usually be between 8



and 10. Don't bother keeping track of Social Standing during character generation, simply assign it as you see fit at the end of the process. Players can follow any career. They don't have to be in the family business. There is no reason why one character cannot have joined the army to escape family pressures, and another may have become a cop to prove herself or annoy her corrupt uncle. One character may even play the head of the family, and another, the wicked uncle. It is up to you. And if it doesn't make sense that all the player characters are part of the same family—don't worry. Fiction is always better than reality.

THE ROLES

In dynastic epics, the roles people take on are often more important the storylines. Each character has a place in the scheme of things, and this defines what they do and how they do it. The GM can offer these roles to any player who wants them and then fill in the rest with NPCs. Introducing more of these NPCs as you go along isn't a problem—it's amazing how your grand-parents, parents, uncles and aunts fooled around in their youth.

With the exception of the head of the family, there is no reason not to have more than one of each character. Letting the players pick roles they enjoy is always the best bet.

THE PATRIARCH/MATRIARCH. This is the head of the extended clan who controls the company and is usually still the most important person in it. He or she is still competent, attractive and authoritative but may have retired from the active running of the business. He or she may still be appealed to when big decisions are made or family conflicts need to be resolved.

THE GOOD CHILD. This person is the virtuous one, the person who always tries to do the decent and honest thing, who respects elders and plays fair. This often brings him or her into conflict with the less scrupulous members of the family.

THE BAD SEED. Children of this sort are the wicked schemers who want their own way and see themselves as the rightful leaders of the company. They are unscrupulously ruthless and will stop at nothing to gain their own ends in the long run—sometimes in the very long run. They may or may not feel some loyalty to the family. If they do, then it's their only redeeming feature.

THE BITCH GODDESS. This is the beautiful, scheming woman who uses her beauty and her intelligence to achieve her own ends. She can be just as cruel, wicked and manipulative as the Bad Seed, but she's usually in opposition to the family and has a good reason to hate it. The Patriarch may be her former husband or may have ruined her father, but for whatever reason, she will stop at nothing to achieve her own ends.

THE NEWCOMER. This is the person who has just married into the family, or the long lost child who has just shown up to claim his or her inheritance. These people may be innocents caught up in the family schemes, or they may be cruel fortune hunters. The choice is the player's. This category can also include the war hero just back from the front and similar characters that may upset the balance of power.

THE FAITHFUL RETAINER. This is the person who has been with the family for a long time, often since the previous generation. He or she is completely loyal and may be entrusted with sensitive tasks by the family members. He or she could be a butler, a lawyer, an accountant, a private chauffeur or an executive manager.

THE RIVALS. These are people with a grudge against the family. They have sworn to destroy it. They may be the owners of rival companies, they may be people that the family members have ruined, or they may be Bureau agents with a mission to bring the company down. Either way, they will stop at nothing to destroy the family and will instigate many schemes to do so. Marrying a vital person in the core family is maybe the most usual way.

THE STYLE OF THE CAMPAIGN

Dynastic epics are soap operas. They have a constant run of subplots that intertwine and entangle with each other. All the characters pursue their own ends while doing their best to obstruct the others. Typical subplots range from romance to corporate intrigue to the downright melodramatic, such as assassination attempts and takeovers.

The players will often encounter conspiracies by rival companies or wicked family members to ruin the company. The GM must keep all these events moving with pace and flair. In addition, the players can be involved in all the events from the last stages of an empire building campaign.

Players in dynastic epics can also find themselves caught up in all the other sorts of campaigns. After all, they are really nothing but very rich versions of ordinary player characters. There is no reason why they cannot be called upon to investigate things or even be drafted into the military, especially since this is often expected from them.

There is also an element of wish fulfillment about all this, so you should let the players have all the fast cars, big guns and beautiful partners they want. The important thing is to have fun.



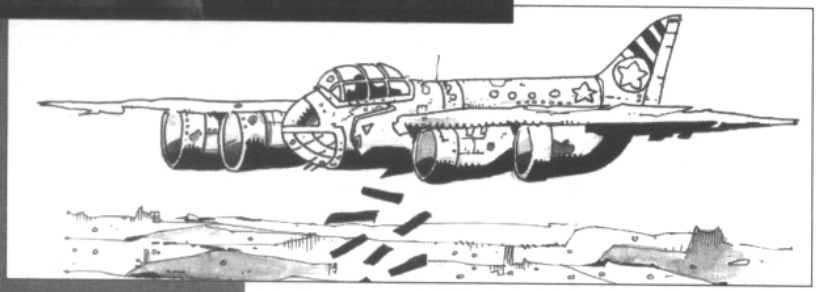
VEHICLES

AIRCRAFT

B-57 AEROFORTRESS

B-57 AEROFORTRESS
DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 50 m/10 m/40 m.
CREW: 9: pilot, navigator, bombardier, 6 gunners.
ENGINES: 4 Universal Dynamics JT 5000 Jet Turbines.
MAX SPEED: 540 mph/870 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 5,000 miles/8,050 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 2,000 miles/3,220 km.
PAYLOAD: 50 tons of munitions. Usually high explosive.
ARMAMENT: 6 turrets, each containing 2 linked heavy autocannons. Located on the top, left side, right side, belly, nose and tail.
ARMOR: Chobham B (AV 9).

Produced by General Aerospace, the Aerofortress is Capitol's standard, long-range, high-level Bomber. It is used primarily for saturation bombing over the McCraig Line. This huge brute of an aircraft can only take off from long, specially prepared runways. Aerofortress crews are famous for naming their planes and for the designs they paint on the side of their «rigs». These usually illustrate the craft's name. If they call their plane *The Flying Pig*, it will have a big picture of a winged sow on the side. Beneath this is usually a number of little bomb decals indicating the number of missions the plane has flown.

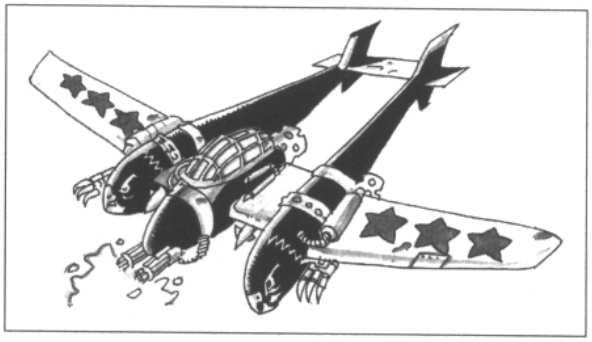


F-51 PUMA
DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 20 m/5 m/15 m.
CREW: 2: pilot and navigator/bombardier.
ENGINES: 2 Universal Dynamics JT 3000 Jet Turbines.
MAX SPEED: 700 mph/1125 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 3,000 miles/4,830 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 1,200 miles/1,930 km.
PAYLOAD: 2 tons of ordnance. Usually high explosive rockets.
ARMAMENT: 2 wing-mounted ordnance racks. 2 linked heavy autocannons.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).

F-51 PUMA

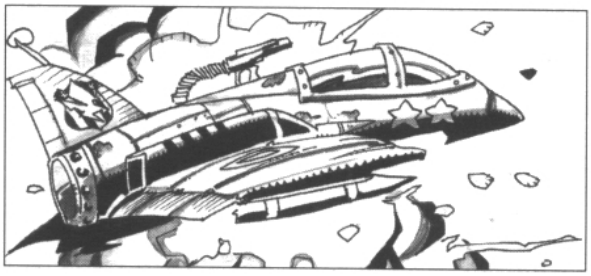
Produced by GA, this is a multi-role aircraft designed primarily as a fighter-bomber. It is used by Strike Command to perform surgical airstrikes against ground targets, but has some capability as an air superiority fighter. The Puma bristles with self-repair systems and is legendary for its rugged durability. Many are rumored to have survived strikes with air-to-air missiles. (GM's note: A Puma has a 25% chance of surviving any crippling hit. If the pilot can make the roll, simply ignore the damage. All the plane shows is a nasty hole in its side.)

The Puma has twin tail-rudders stretching out from behind each engine and a single aileron running between them. It is squat, thick and rugged-looking, with tremendous jet engines.



F-69 COBRA

This is GA's primary air-superiority fighter. It is a long, sleek, swing-wing aircraft designed to clear the skies of all intruders. It has proven its worth in every major Capitolian campaign of the past 50 years. During the second battle of the McCraig Line, Major Gerhardt Hanson of Fighter Command recorded the highest number of kills on a single day in the history of Capitol. While flying his F-69, he shot down 37 Dark Legion Vampire, Hellbat and Manta aircraft and destroyed a 38th by crashing into it while his guns were jammed. Hanson was posthumously awarded the CAF Eagle with two bars and the Chairman's Sword of Honor. He was 22 when he died.



F-69 COBRA

DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 18 m/3 m/15 m.
CREW: 1 pilot.
ENGINES: 2 Universal Dynamics JT 3500 Jet Turbine.
MAX SPEED: 1,400 mph/2.250 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 3,000 miles/4,830 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 1,200 miles/1,930 km.
PAYLOAD: —.
ARMAMENT: 2 racks of 5 DART heat-seeking missiles. 4 linked heavy autocannons.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).

H-12 CONDOR

An attack helicopter used primarily by CGF to deploy troops on the battlefield, the Condor is capable of carrying up to 20 soldiers and their gear. After deploying them, it hovers around the battlefield to provide covering fire, using all available terrain as cover and rising to fire its weapons.

H-12 CONDOR

DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/ Width): 18 m/4 m/5 m.
CREW: 2: pilot and gunner.
ENGINES: 1 Universal Dynamics HZ 4000.
MAX SPEED: 120 mph/193 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 500 miles/805 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 200 miles/320 km.
CARGO/PAYLOAD: Up to 20 soldiers and their gear/—.
ARMAMENT: 2 racks of 2 Eagle Claw air-to-ground missiles. 2 linked light autocannons in nose turret.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).

H-5 THUNDERBOLT

The Thunderbolt is Capitol's primary ground attack helicopter. It is a sleek, light vehicle designed to be flown by a crew of two. It is also a short-ranged vehicle designed to deliver the maximum punch in the fastest time. This accounts for its unique design. Not only does it have two wing-mounted weapon racks, but it also carries a box-like missile launcher between the landing skids under its belly. Plus it mounts another micro-launcher in the fuselage above the cockpit.

H-5 THUNDERBOLT

DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 7 m/3 m/3 m.
CREW: 2: pilot and gunner.
ENGINES: 1 Universal Dynamics HZ 3000.
MAX SPEED: 140 mph/225 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 500 miles/805 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 220/355 km.
ARMAMENT: 4 light autocannons; 2 Eagle Claw air-to-ground missiles in overhead rack; 6 Eagle Claw missiles in belly box.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).

H-7 SHRIKE

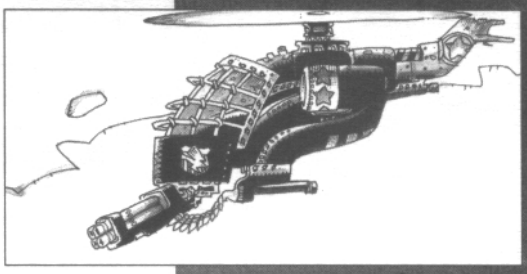


The Shrike is a tank-killer, pure and simple. This is the role it was designed for, and at this task, it excels. It is essentially an aerial platform for its huge Tankbuster superheavy autocannon, a weapon that dispenses depleted uranium slugs at the rate of over 1,000 per second and that is capable of shredding even the heaviest armor as if it were made of paper. The Shrike is slow, short-ranged and handles like a brick, but all this is irrelevant. When it is deployed against its chosen targets, it is just about the most effective killing machine in history.

During the battle of Valley Forge, Shrikes destroyed over 1,000 Imperial AFVs in a single day. The Shrike, more than any other vehicle, has been responsible for blunting the Dark Legion's attempts at armored breakout through the McCraig Line. Indeed, there are over 300 of them on constant alert at Camp Burroughs, ready to scramble at any time if a Legion assault looks likely.

H-7 SHRIKE

DIMENSIONS: (Length/Height/Width): 10 m/3 m/4 m.
CREW: 1: Pilot/Gunner.
ENGINES: 1 Universal Dynamics HZ 3000.
MAX SPEED: 95 mph/155 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 300 miles/485 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 160 miles/260 km.
ARMAMENT: Tankbuster superheavy autocannon.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).



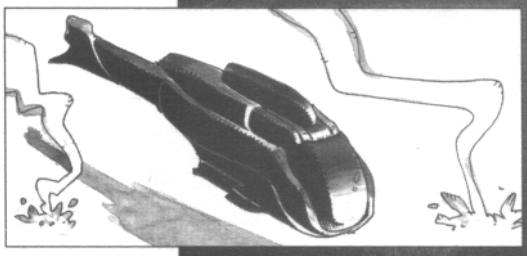
AHZ-24 BLACKHAWK

Aerodyne Systems' Blackhawk is the state-of-the-art in helicopter gunships. It uses a variety of Cybertronic-sourced ECM systems to prevent detection by electronic and infrared systems. Its streamlined fuselage is designed to be radar-invisible. Its modified UD 5400 turbines are almost inaudible, and its non-reflective black paint makes it nearly invisible at night, except at very close range. It is primarily used by Alpha Force, the Free Marines and other long-range, deep-penetration units to carry them behind enemy lines. If forced into a firefight, it is far from helpless, since it's very difficult for any missile system to get a lock on it. (75% chance of any missile failing to work.) Only the sheer expense of producing these vehicles keeps them from being Capitol's front-line gunships.

This stealth chopper is all black, with lots of rounded corners and no sharp edges. Its weapons are concealed in tear-drop-shaped pods which only open when the weapon is to be deployed.

AHZ-24 BLACKHAWK

DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 17 m/4 m/5 m.
CREW: 2: pilot and gunner.
ENGINES: 1 Universal Dynamics HZ 5400.
MAX SPEED: 200 mph/320 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 600 miles/965 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 300 miles/485 km.
CARGO/PAYLOAD: Up to 20 soldiers and their gear/—.
ARMAMENT: 2 racks of 4 Eagle Claw air-to-ground missiles. 2 linked light autocannons in nose turret.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).



H-17 MASTODON

GA's H-17 is the largest transport helicopter ever built. It is capable of ferrying 6 Montana Battle Tanks or 10 units complete with their Condor gunships to any trouble spot. It takes the full power of 6 UD 17500 turbines to keep it airborne. Inside, it has two decks and a power-assisted ramp system for loading and unloading. This craft most resembles a large car ferry with no wings and three huge helicopter rotor systems, one at each end and one in the middle.

H-17 MASTODON

DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 100 m/20 m/20 m.
CREW: 12: pilot, navigator, 5 gunners, 5 loaders.
ENGINES: 6 Universal Dynamics HZ 17500.
MAX SPEED: 150 mph/240 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 2,000 miles/3,220 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 1,200 miles/1,930 km.
CARGO/PAYLOAD: See text.
ARMAMENT: 5 turrets on belly, nose, rear, and each side. Each turret contains 2 linked heavy autocannons.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).

SS 157 PURPLE SHARK

Built by Sky Shark Systems, the Purple Shark is one of Capitol's most unique aircraft, and it serves as a graphic demonstration of Capitol's superiority in aerospace technologies. It is basically a small, streamlined, two-seater vehicle resembling a cross between a bobsled and a missile. It is kept aloft at heights of up to 150 feet by its powerful engine. It takes the full efforts of a trained pilot to guide this vehicle. A second soldier scans the area, drops grenades or uses the vehicle's machine gun.

The Purple Shark is used primarily for reconnaissance missions and lightning raids into enemy territory. Its crews suffer an extremely high casualty rate, but this has been put down to teething troubles with this new, radical design.

SS 157 PURPLE SHARK

DIMENSIONS (Length/Height/Width): 3 m/1 m/1 m.
CREW: 2: pilot and bomber.
ENGINES: 1 Universal Dynamics 86 Jet Thruster.
MAX SPEED: 70 mph/110 km/h.
ACTION RADIUS: 100 miles/160 km.
COMBAT RADIUS: 100 miles/160 km.
CARGO/PAYLOAD: See text.
ARMAMENT: Whatever the crew is carrying.
ARMOR: Chobham A (AV 6).

ARMORED VEHICLES

APC 105 HOUND DOG

The APC 105 troop carrier is a fairly uncommon sight. Most Capitolian infantry are deployed by helicopter. Most Hound Dogs are used in urban areas during counter-terrorism operations. They provide mobile HQs for officers, field hospitals for the wounded and a fast and reliable method of moving troops through areas infested by snipers. Their six huge wheels have independent suspensions, and they are capable of moving over the roughest terrain. Each tire is solid and virtually bulletproof. An APC 105 is capable of moving even after two wheels have been lost.

This is a *big*, truck-like, armored personnel carrier with six wheels and a bug-like driver's cabin at the front. On top of the cabin is a machine gun turret staffed by a brave Capitolian gunner.

APC 105 HOUND DOG

DIMENSIONS (L/H/W): 10 m/4 m/4 m.
CREW: 2: driver and gunner.
ARMAMENT: 2 LMGs in nose turret.
ROAD SPEED: 60 mph/95 km/h.
AMMO CAPACITY: 1,000.
MODE: A.
RANGE: 1,000/1,500.
DAMAGE: 1d6+6.
ARMOR: FRONT: 8, Rear: 8, Top: 2, Sides: 7.

AFV 110 DESERT FOX

DIMENSIONS (L/H/W): 8 m/3 m/4 m.
CREW: 7: commander, driver, engineer, 4 gunners.
ARMAMENT: 1 x long barreled smoothbore 180 mm gun. 2 LMG turrets, one on each side.
ROAD SPEED: 45 mph/70 km/h.
AMMO CAPACITY: Gun: 20, LMG: 1,000 each.
MODE: GUN: M, LMG: A.
RANGE: GUN: 5,000 m, LMG: 1,000/1,500.
DAMAGE: GUN: 1d10+6, LMG: 1d6+6.
ARMOR: Front: 15, Rear: 10, Top: 6, Sides: 12.

AFV 110 DESERT FOX

The Desert Fox is the most common Capitolian battletank. It is mass-produced by Vulkan Military Technologies. It is fast, reliable and comfortable for its crew. It is designed to operate over long ranges in the Martian Rust Deserts and is characterized by its enormously wide track and low, stream-lined shape, designed to reduce its profile on the ridges and dunes. Most Desert Foxes carry sand-dozer scoops along their front to enable them to plow through drifts too deep or treacherous to be climbed over. These are also invaluable for clearing minefields and sometimes even act as another layer of armor when the Desert Fox is shot at from directly in front.



AFV 114 MONTANA

The Montana is Capitol's most formidable battle-tank. Its primary role is infantry support. It moves forward alongside Capitol's infantry, providing cover and a terrifying amount of supporting fire. It is often referred to as a fortress on tracks because of its enormous size, thick armor and incredible armament. Its enormous bulk makes it very slow and unwieldy, but it more than makes up for this in terms of sheer firepower. Its main armament is the Sherman MK 10 ultracannon, which is capable of taking out most vehicles with one shot. It also mounts 2 anti-aircraft missile launchers on each side of the turret. The front, rear and sides of the Montana are covered with machine gun and flame-thrower turrets

AFV 114 MONTANA

DIMENSIONS (L/H/W): 24 m/9 m/15 m.
CREW: 15: commander, driver, engineer, 12 gunners.
ARMAMENT: 1 superheavy long barreled smooth-bore 250 mm gun. 2 LMG turrets, one on each side. Flame-throwers mounted on each LMG turret controlled by gunners.
ROAD SPEED: 20 mph/32 km/h.
AMMO CAPACITY: Gun: 20, LMG: 1,000 each, Flame-throwers: 10 shots each.
MODE: Gun: M, LMG: A, Flame-thrower: M.
RANGE: Gun: 7200 m, LMG: 1,000/1,500, Flame-thrower: 18/27.
DAMAGE: Gun: 2d10+6, LMG: 1d6+6, Flame-thrower: 1d6+6 over a 25m cone.
ARMOR: Front: 20, Rear: 15, Top: 8, Sides: 18.

AFB 97 RAT

This is the riot bike used by the infamous Armed Interdiction Police. It is a small, two-seat vehicle which resembles a cross between a motorcycle and an open-topped tank. It is designed to go anywhere and, in keeping with the AIP's style, to run over anything. It is fast, versatile, rugged and reliable. In times of war, insurrection or sometimes just at the whim of the local AIP commander, it can be equipped with bullet-proof screens and heavy machine guns. Indeed, several Rats fitted in just such a way were an integral part of the infamous Sector 57 Massacre, which led to the impeachment of AIP Commander James Hollander on charges of use of unnecessary force, gross dereliction of duty and massacre of Capitol citizens. During the riots, 359 people were killed or seriously injured, and many bore Rat tracks on their backs.

AFB 97 RAT

DIMENSIONS (L/H/W): 3 m/1 m/1.5 m.
CREW: 2 riders.
ARMAMENT: 2 LMGs on side-pylons fitted only in wartime.
ROAD SPEED: 50 mph/80 km/h.
AMMO CAPACITY: LMG: 1,000 each.
MODE: LMG: A.
RANGE: MG: 1,000/1,500.
DAMAGE: LMG: 1d6+6.
ARMOR: FRONT: 6 if riot shield fitted, Rear: —, Top: —, Sides: —.

CARS

UNIVERSAL MOTORS ROADKING

Produced by the Universal Motors Division of Capitol, this is one of most common automobiles on the road. It is favored by taxi drivers because it is roomy and reliable and spare parts are cheap. It is capable of holding 6 passengers in comfort. There are three models, each with a progressively more powerful engine and a correspondingly higher price tag.

UM ROADKING MODEL A: Top speed 95 mph. Cost: 65,000 Crowns.
UM ROADKING MODEL B: Top speed 110 mph. Cost: 74,000 Crowns.
UM ROADKING MODEL C: Top speed 135 mph. Cost: 95,000 Crowns.

RANGER LIMOUSINE

This is the top-of-the-range executive auto, a long, sleek vehicle with padded leather seats, a hard-wood dash and every convenience fitted. It can carry up to 6 passengers in roomy comfort.

RANGER LIMOUSINE: TOP SPEED: 120 mph. Cost: 250,000 Crowns.

RANGER PHANTOM

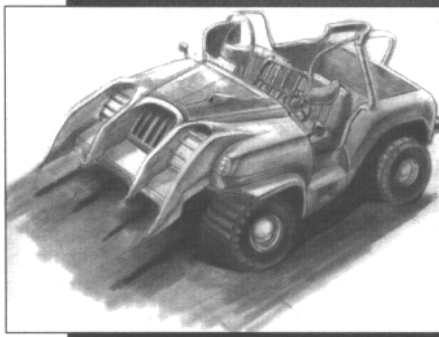
Phantoms are beautiful stretch limos, long and luxurious, with running boards, huge fenders, lots of glass and chrome and a spare wheel stuck on the back. They are Ranger's top-of-the line limousine and are designed to let 8 people travel in comfort. Most versions have their own built-in cocktail bar in the back compartment, as well as TV and radio receivers. They are favored by up-market executive limo services. There are several versions available with a choice of options, including bullet and bomb proofing (AR 6, windows: AR 4).

TOP SPEED: 100 mph. Cost: 300,000 Crowns or 500,000 if armored.

BUG 400

Bug is Capitol's best-known maker of four-wheel-drive vehicles. It's cars are designed for tough work in Capitol's outback. They have huge balloon tires, astounding suspension and very few creature comforts for the occupants. There is a military version which can mount a heavy machine gun on its roll bars.

TOP SPEED: 75 mph. Cost 100,000 Crowns.





FEAR AND LOATHING IN SAN DORADO

Important note: This adventure is for the GM's eyes only. If you intend to play in it, then read no further, lest the Dark Apostles take your character's soul.

INTRODUCTION

This is an introductory level investigative adventure set in the great megalopolis of San Dorado. It introduces the players to the city and shows them a little of the dark underbelly of Capitolian politics. It is relatively simple and designed to kick start an ongoing campaign.

The basic plot is simple. A Capitolian Director, Joseph Sherman the Third, has been doing clandestine deals with Alexander Stewart, a former agent of the Imperial Corporation, now a heretic. Sherman's son and heir went missing in action in the Venusian Warzones and fell into Stewart's hands.

Recently Stewart has been using this as a lever to blackmail Sherman. At the moment, things are tense between the two great megacorporations, and only a small spark is needed to bring war. This will operate to the advantage of the Dark Legion, which may well break out from the Doughpits while the two great powers are at each other's throats. Sherman might well be able to achieve this. Since he hates Imperial and loves his son, he is blind to the long-term consequences of his actions.

As well as being Director for Military Procurement, Ross is also head of the Sherman Arms Corporation and a rabid hawk who does all he can to promote the military. No one suspects him of working for an enemy.

No one, that is, except Nathan Kowalski, a freelance investigative journalist and muckraker who hates Sherman and who, quite by chance, stumbled across evidence of Sherman's involvement with Stewart. Kowalski has been down on his luck for some time, but this is the big story that is going to put him back on the top.

Unfortunately, the editor to whom Kowalski tried to sell his story reported it right back to Sherman. Kowalski is now on the run, pursued by hit men from both Stewart and Sherman. This is where the players come in.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

As Game Master, you should try to keep things moving and also to give a sense that the players are living in a world where all sorts of events are going on around them. To this end, we have provided news updates. You should give these to the players at the appropriate time. If they are reading a newspaper, then they should get the news items from that. Otherwise, they can hear them on the radio in their car, in the bar or in their office. Some of these items are red herrings, and some are important to the ongoing story.

PART ONE: THE FRIGHTENED MAN

GETTING THE PLAYERS INVOLVED

Ethan Kowalski is the pivot of this adventure. Assume that, in the past, at least one of the player characters has had some dealings with him and knows a bit about him (see his background section.) Kowalski was once an ace reporter, so he has had reason to talk to just about every type of character. If the player was a police officer, then he or she may have covered a murder case in which the player was once involved. If the player was a soldier, then Kowalski did a piece on a campaign the soldier took part in. If the character was a reporter, then he or she worked with Kowalski on a big story when Kowalski was a well-known name and the character was just a wet-behind-the-ears cub reporter. Use your discretion, but give the players a reason to hear the man out and perhaps to help him.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

One of the players gets a call from an old acquaintance, Ethan Kowalski, asking him or her to come to the Cantina Rosa in the Sprawl. Kowalski sounds frightened, and he asks the player to make sure to give any tail the slip. He tells the player that this is *big*, and puts the phone down. That's it. No more information unless the players check it out.

READ THIS TO THE PLAYERS

The night is cold. The metallic taste of the desert sand fills your mouth, mingling with the stink rising from the open sewers. You push your way through the ragged crowd toward the open doors of the Cantina Rosa. A legless beggar dogs your tracks, pulling himself along in a little cart. A painted woman beckons to you from the entrance of a corrugated iron shack. Thin, weary men look at you as if measuring you for a switchblade in the back. The lonely wail of a train echoes through the night. Far off in the distance, you can see the star-scraper towers of San Dorado. They might as well be on Venus. Here, in the Sprawl, it's a different world.

Inside the Cantina, a saxophonist is playing a sad tune. Three bar girls stop chewing gum for a moment and study the cut of your clothes. The barman lays off polishing his glasses. A drunk stumbles from a side room, pursued by a shouting woman. You can smell the vomit that covers his cheap suit.

Over in the corner, in the last booth, is Kowalski. He's sitting just where he said he would be. He looks just like he said he would look. You study him.

He's a small, pudgy, frightened-looking man. His clothes have seen better days, and so has he. His face is pale and sick. He is alternatively wiping his sweating forehead with a grubby handkerchief and then removing his thick-lensed glasses and polishing them with the same damp cloth. He looks up when he hears you enter. His face goes even paler for a moment, and he puts his glasses on and squints at you.

«Were you followed?» That's the first thing he asks. As you get closer, you smell the reek of cheap booze.

For the first couple of minutes of the meeting, the players won't be able to get anything out of Kowalski. He will constantly inquire whether they were followed, ask them what precautions they took and badger them about any suspicious-looking characters, especially a bald man. Once the players calm him down, he will become more business-like. If they ask what this is all about, he'll tell them that it's big. He's working on a story, and it's huge.

Eventually, he'll produce a large, sealed manila envelope. It's heavy and full of papers. He'll ask the players to hold it for him, unopened. He'll call for it in a couple of days, and then he'll pay them 10,000 Crowns. By then he'll have some money. Even if pressed, he won't say any more. He'll just tell them that it's important that they keep the envelope safe, and whatever they do, don't open it. Then he'll finish his drink and leave. Kowalski is very paranoid, and he won't give the players any more information. He tells them it's for their own safety.

NEWS UPDATES

Over the next couple of days, give the players the following news updates.

TROUBLE ON THE BORDER. Central News Agency reports a massive build-up of Imperial troops along the border of the Mandate. Imperial authorities claim this is an exercise, but analysts say it could be a prelude to an attack. Elements of the Second Capitolian Army have been deployed to counter this. The war faction of the Board of Directors claim the Imperial build-up is an outrage. They are calling for immediate military reprisals. Recent relations with Imperial have been tense, due to border incidents in the Graveton Archipelago.

Director Joseph Sherman has gone on record as saying: «It's way past time that we showed Imperial who owns Mars. The Mandate is ours. If we have to take it back, we will.»

Says Imperial Ambassador McKenzie: «Director Sherman's remarks are not helping an already difficult situation.» He fears that Capitol's military is spoiling for a fight.

More on this as the story breaks.

NEW MOVIE BREAKS ALL RECORDS. Jack Slade's latest movie, *Gunhawks*, has broken all box office records on its first weekend. In *Gunhawks*, Slade reprises his role as the tough and cynical private detective James Webster.

Imperial Ambassador McKenzie has lodged a protest against the film, claiming that the portrayal of Imperial employees as villainous thugs is totally misleading and just another example of a Capitolian propaganda offensive against his corporation.

Says Jack Slade: «Hey, man, it's just a story!»

MURDER RATE AT RECORD HIGH. San Dorado Police Chief Joseph Dos Santos says new murder figures are not an indictment of his department.

Despite murder figures in San Dorado megalopolis topping 10,000 last year, the local CSS chief claimed that his department is in control of the situation. He says most of the killings took place in the Sprawl, and that no one really controls that area.

Says Mayor Meyer: «Much more of this, and we'll have to open two new memoritaphs just for murder victims.»

PART TWO: THE PACKAGE

Within two days, Kowalski is dead, tortured and killed by Stewart. Before he died, he gave Stewart the player characters' address. This is where life gets interesting.

There are several approaches you can take here, depending on what line of business your players are in and what sort of characters they are. If your players are particularly stubborn, you may like to try all of them. In each of these cases, the thugs know nothing other than that they were hired by a bald-headed man with an Imperial accent. They are just low-grade muscle.

BURGLARY

The players' office or home is given a thorough and professional going over. If your players are the sort who never leave their home turf without good reason or the kind of people who sleep in their



offices, then they may well catch the burglars in the act. There will be two burglars. Use the profile given for thugs given below.

INTIMIDATION

Alternatively, if you want a good fight, then Stewart will send some leg breakers around to demand the package. There will be one thug present for every player. Things may well get violent.

THE AGENTS

Two men in Capitol business suits, button-down shirts and narrow ties visit the players. They claim to be Agent Taylor and Agent Kurtz of the CBI. They tell the players that they are in possession of important documents stolen from Bureau files and liable to prosecution if they don't hand them over. If asked for identification, the two men will show it. Anyone who has been an agent or any sort of investigator will know that the badges and the ID cards are good fakes. What happens next is up to the players. Use the thugs' profile for Taylor and Kurtz.

NEWS UPDATE

DIRECTOR CALLS FOR WAR WITH IMPERIAL. Director Joseph Sherman once more called for prompt military action against the Imperial Corporation after their provocative military build-up in the Mandate. He says: «If we don't hit them first, we're going to have another Valley Forge on our hands. Everybody knows the Imperials just take what they want! Let's show them that they can't take what belongs to Capitol. The Mandate is ours by manifest destiny.»

Many claim that Director Sherman is trying to settle a personal grievance against Imperial. His only son went missing in action two years ago during an Imperial border raid on the Graveton Archipelago. Nevertheless, recent polls show a groundswell of public support for Sherman's position. Polls for the Central News Agency show that at least one in three citizens now consider Imperial a greater threat to Capitol than the Dark Legion.

Says Imperial Ambassador McKenzie: «Such talk is irresponsible. In any clash between corporations, many lives will be lost.» He adds, «Of course, Imperial will take all steps necessary to preserve the integrity of its territory.»

An extraordinary convocation of the Board of Directors meets tomorrow to discuss the worsening crisis.

Cartel officials have offered to mediate the dispute. Unconfirmed rumors suggest that shots may have already have been exchanged between the two forces and that Fighter Command planes are flying sorties over the Mandate. All leave for military personnel at Camp Burroughs has been suspended.

THE BROTHERHOOD SPEAKS OUT! Brother Franz-Joseph Obispo, the Cardinal's spokesman in San Dorado, claims that the Mandate crisis is madness. He says: «When true humans fight, the only winner can be the Darkness.» He has called on both corporations to make peace and concentrate their efforts against the Dark Legion. He points out that if war comes over the Mandate, both sides will be terribly weakened and that the minions of Saladin may break out through the weakened McCraig Line.

REPORTER MURDERED. Ethan Kowalski, former special correspondent of *The San Dorado Herald* was found murdered in a seedy hotel near Industrial Sector One. Kowalski was found tortured to death. There were cigarette burns on his arms, legs, genitals and left eyeball. The only clue the police have is an empty packet of Imperial-manufactured Rex cigarettes found near the body.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

On hearing of the death of Kowalski, the players may now feel compelled to open the package if they haven't done so already. They will find the following:

A picture of a middle-aged businessman in an expensive Capitolian suit. He is seated at a table with a smiling, bald-headed man. The picture is grainy and has obviously been taken with a telephoto lens. In the foreground can just be made out the cowled head of a Rust Desert Nomad. From this and the style of the architecture in the background, the players should be able to deduce that the photo was taken somewhere in the Imperial Mandate, probably Lawrence.

Also in the package is an older photo of the bald-headed man. He is dressed in military gear and has a Blood Beret on his head. He is much younger in this picture. Clipped to this is a sheaf of papers containing the following information:

NAME: Alexander Stewart.
DATE OF BIRTH: 12/4/50.
PLACE OF BIRTH: Victoria.
CITIZENRY: Imperial.
INDUCTED IMPERIAL ARMED SERVICES: 5/7/68. Served with distinction two tours in the Venusian Warzones, 6/6/70 – 6/6/74.
DECORATED TWICE: Bravery in the Field Medal and Her Serene Highness's Cross.
Inducted Imperial Security Council Contra-Terrorist Squad, 2/8/75. Performed various clandestine operations within Mishiman and Capitolian territory until 4/9/88. Sighted in Venusian Warzones 2/9/90. Left ISC (causes unknown).
Currently subject to a termination order from ISC-4.
PREFERRED PROCEDURE: Capture and interrogate.
ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE: Immediate termination.
NOTES: This man is extremely dangerous. Do not approach unless authorized. The termination order from ISC-4 would seem to indicate a possible Dark Legion connection.

All these papers are photocopies and all bear the Capitolian eagle and the insignia of the Bureau. They have quite obviously been illegally acquired from Bureau files.

If any of the players can make an INT roll, they will immediately recognize the other man in the picture. He is Joseph Sherman. His picture has been in the papers quite a lot recently.

There is also a picture of Joseph Sherman's son, Joseph Sherman IV, taken just before his disappearance in the Graveton Archipelago. On the back of it, inscribed in red pen, is a large question mark.

The players may decide to investigate these clues for themselves. If they do, they can, with a little digging, find out a fair bit about Joseph Sherman. See his background. They may also try to contact the appropriate Capitol security agencies. Stall them at this point. Have them put on hold, shifted from agent to agent and treated as hoax callers. If they wonder why, point out to them that Capitol is currently on a full-scale military alert and that the agencies are probably busy rounding up suspected spies, gathering information and just being overwhelmed by callers.

NEWS UPDATE

CAPITOLIAN AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN. Imperial sources have confirmed that they have shot down two Capitolian aircraft. Robin Axelthorpe, Commander of Her Serenity's forces in the Mandate says: «These planes violated Imperial airspace. They were shot down. We will do the same to any other aircraft that violate our sovereign territories.»

Says Director Sherman: «This is an act of war and must be treated as such.»

The Board of Directors is about to enter an extraordinary general meeting. President Colding describes the situation as very grave.

CONTACT

Soon after the players have opened the package, they receive a phone call. (How soon is up to you.) A suave Imperial-accented voice asks them to come to the Imperial Grand Hotel. For their trouble, they will receive 100,000 Crowns. If the players don't have a phone or are not at their homes or in their office, they will be approached by a thug who will make them the same offer. They will be told to ask for Mister Parker.

PART THREE: AT THE IMPERIAL GRAND

THE MEETING

READ THIS TO THE PLAYERS: *After having any weapons removed by the discreet but incredibly thorough and efficient security, you walk through the revolving doors into the cool, spacious interior of the Imperial Grand. Huge chandeliers cast a brilliant light. The smooth marble pillars uphold a roof under which you could fly a plane. Servants glide quietly and efficiently about their business. Sleek and beautiful Imperial citizens sit around the small tables and drink tea from elegant china pots. At the huge oak desk, you ask for Mr. Parker and an immaculately-dressed clerk leads you through the lobby to a small table. As you approach it, a tall, athletic, shaven-headed man stubs out a cigarette and rises to greet you. He gives you a warm smile, although his eyes are cold.*

Your players have just met Alexander Stewart, former Imperial secret agent and high ranking heretic (see below). If anybody thinks to check the ashtray, they will see that the brand of cigarette is, indeed, Rex.

Stewart (or Parker as he is currently calling himself) asks the players to sit down. He politely offers them a drink and makes some quiet chit-chat before he comes to his point. He seems open, affable and charming. If anyone calls him Stewart, he will point out that there is some mistake. He is Michael Parker, and he has the papers to prove it.

Eventually, he will get around to mentioning the package given to the players by Kowalski.

«I believe you have in your possession some documents belonging to a mutual friend of ours. I am authorized to offer you 100,000 Crowns for the return of those documents, no questions asked. I am further empowered to offer you another 100,000 Crowns, payable in one week's time, conditional upon your discretion in mentioning this affair to no one.»

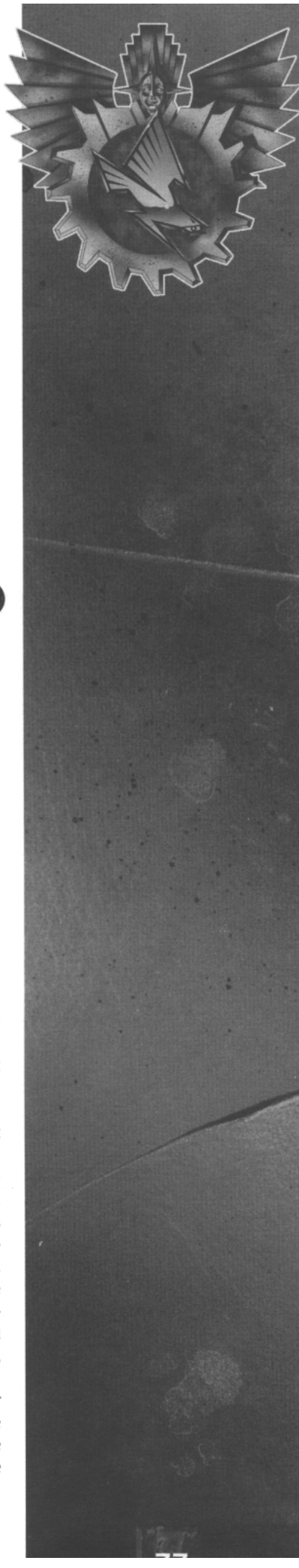
If the players accept, he politely asks for the documents. He produces a perfectly legal banker's draft drawn against the Cardinal's Bank for the sum mentioned. The players can take the money if they wish.

If the players don't have the documents on them, Stewart suggests an exchange at some mutually agreeable place. To be acceptable to him, that place has to be somewhere like the Imperial Grand (an open public place with good security where there is no possibility of him being gunned down). At the moment, he is dealing very much in good faith. In the future, he will have the players quietly liquidated.

If the players get nasty or try to start trouble, he is perfectly polite. If they are violent, the hotel's security removes them. If they make accusations, he simply looks innocent. If they threaten him with the Capitolian authorities, he just laughs and asks them what makes them think that the authorities don't know about this. (This is a bluff, but he carries it off superbly.) He even goes so far as to summon a telephone for them to make their call. He knows that by the time the Bureau can get agents there, he will be gone.

If the interview goes fairly smoothly, he hints to the players that it would be most unwise for them to refuse his offer. He tells them that the parties involved are very powerful people with great influence and that it would be unwise to cross them. He keeps them talking for as long as possible because he is mainly interested in keeping Sherman under his power until 5 p.m., when the Board meets to respond to the crisis and, potentially, declare war.

Once the interview is concluded, for whatever reason, Stewart gets up and leaves through the front door, stepping into a long black limousine driven by one of his thugs and departing into the long lines of traffic.





NEWS UPDATE

This flashes on the news screens throughout the foyer of the Imperial Grand during the players' interview with Stewart. The reaction from the Imperials present will be one of shock, disbelief and resolution. People will start to look quite tense and afraid. Phones will be called to tables. People will start making travel arrangements to leave San Dorado.

CRISIS IN THE BALANCE. This is an urgent news flash. It looks like the Board of Directors meeting will decide today whether war will be declared. The vote is very tight. A swing of 1% either way could decide it. The Board is expected to come to its decision at 6 p.m. San Dorado Time.

Says President Colding: «This is a very troubled time. A grave decision lies before us. We can only trust to the Light and pray that it guides us.»

PART FOUR: WHAT TO DO?

At this point, our heroes should have worked out several things: that war between Imperial and Capitol would work only to the advantage of the Dark Legion and that Stewart is probably a Dark Legion agent. It also seems likely that either Sherman is his ally, or that Stewart has some power over the Director, because the Director is really pushing for war. It also seems likely that our heroes are the only people who can stop the war.

The players have several choices available to them, and it's up to them what they do. They can pursue and try to apprehend Stewart. For this, you can use the car chase rules and then have a firefight. Stewart is in a black Ranger limousine. He is accompanied by two thugs.

The players can contact the Bureau and hand over the files. There will be considerable delay about this, as their call is handed from agent to agent. (The Bureau gets a lot of hoax calls.) Let them know that the clock is ticking. Sherman is due to make his speech at 5, and the Board votes at 6.

They can try to get to Sherman. This is very difficult since the security around a Board meeting is very tight. If they are clever, they might try calling Sherman directly and using the name of either Parker or Stewart. This will ensure that Sherman speaks to them.

Alternatively, they might try calling Imperial and notifying them about Stewart's presence. This will get them an instant response, since ISC-4 is very efficient and would really like to get their hands on their rogue agent.

Their best bet is to try to capture Stewart and then get to Sherman. They can blackmail him with the papers they have. If they let him know they have Stewart, then they can cut a deal with him. They are also now working to a deadline. They have at most three hours to save the day.

As GM, you should really decide before you begin this adventure whether you want the war to come. If an ongoing hot war between Imperial and Capitol would suit your campaign, then you should let the vote decide for war anyway. If you want peace and for the players to be heroes, let them capture Stewart and hand him over to Capitol or Imperial. His capture and the package will provide them with the evidence they need to get either the Bureau or ISC-4 to step in at the last moment and denounce the whole crisis as a Dark-Legion-inspired conspiracy.

Alternatively, let them blackmail Sherman into voting against the war at the last moment. This will discredit Sherman and the pro-war faction but will leave the players with two powerful enemies at large: Sherman and Stewart.

PART FIVE: THE GUNMEN

Unless the players have given the package to Stewart, as soon as they step out through the door of the Imperial Grand, they will be attacked by assassins. There will be one for each player, each armed with Bolters. They will try to take the players by surprise, but you should give them some warning. Let one of the killers get his gun entangled in his coat as he tries to draw it. Or have observant characters notice the suspicious people with bulging trenchcoats walking swiftly towards them.

PART SIX: THE WRAP-UP

REWARDS

If the players successfully complete the mission, award them two Hero points per player. If the players take a high profile route to solving the case, they become public heroes and acquire one Fame point each.

TROUBLESHOOTING

This adventure is fairly flexible. You can add a lot to it, and you can complicate matters as much as you like. If your players are really gung ho and like lots of violence, there are plenty of chances to throw in more gunplay. Two options are to have muggers attack them in the Sprawl or to have Stewart send a lot more assassins after them.

The main thing is to keep the players isolated from Capitol's authorities for as long as possible. After all, you want them to be the heroes of the case. It just wouldn't be the same if it was all tied up by the Bureau.

Fortunately, most of Capitol's agencies are tied up at the moment, dealing with the political crisis. Short of physically walking into their offices with Stewart and the files, the players are not going to

get a lot of attention. If they feel that you are being just too obstructive, drop a few hints about heretics in high places. Who knows—it might be true!

If your players are really tough, you might consider using some of the monsters from the *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook instead of thugs. Conversely, if they totally fail to spot the connection between Stewart and the Dark Legion, you might have a Centurion burgle their offices instead of the two thugs.

Just play it by ear. If your players go off in surprising directions, try to accommodate them.

AFTERWARD

This adventure is really designed as an introduction for a campaign. There will probably be a few useful loose ends at the end of it. If Stewart is still at large, he can make a good ongoing foe. He will want revenge on the players.

If the players don't hand Sherman over to the authorities, he may hire them to go into the Mandate and find his son. And tension between Imperial and Capitol won't evaporate overnight. War will still be a possibility, even if it hasn't broken out yet. You can build a lot of scenarios around this.

CHARACTERS

ETHAN KOWALSKI

APPEARANCE. As described in the introduction.

BACKGROUND. Kowalski used to be one of the best reporters around. Sure, he was a bit of a nut, always going on about conspiracies, but it didn't stop him from delivering the goods. His exposé on the drug syndicates won him the Owen Chrysler Award. His coverage from the Venusian Warzones was first rate. Then something happened. Nobody knows what, but soon after, Kowalski hit the bottle. His work started to slide. He was always going on about the Darkness, and his stories, even the simplest ones, were full of rambling hints about it. Soon, nobody wanted to employ him. Kowalski thought it was all just part of the conspiracy. For the past few months, nobody has heard from him. Rumor had it he was in the Mandate, collecting information for the story that would put him back on top again. Nobody really believed that.

STATISTICS. Kowalski will not fight, so there is no need for any combat statistics. If, for any reason, violence becomes necessary against him, use the thugs' profile. He has no gun.

JOSEPH SHERMAN

APPEARANCE. Medium height, heavy build. Steel-gray hair, thin lips. Commanding voice. Dresses well in the Capitolian fashion.

BACKGROUND. The first part of this is what is widely known about Sherman. The second part is for the GM's eyes only.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE. Joseph Sherman is a rich man. He controls nearly 1% of Capitol's stock and is president of the Sherman Arms Corporation. He is a great believer in a strong defense and is seen in some quarters as a warmonger. Given what his company sells, some people think he's merely an astute businessman.

It is true that he harbors a real grudge against Imperial because his only son went missing, presumed dead, during an Imperial raid two years ago. Since that period, he has been virulent in his condemnation of Imperial. He has also sponsored freelance missions into Imperial territory on Venus to look for prisoners of war. Imperial regards this as provocative.

GM ONLY. Sherman was contacted by Stewart about two months ago. Stewart has his son and can prove it. If Sherman does as Stewart suggests during the Mandate crisis, Stewart will give Sherman his son back.

Sherman doesn't know whether he can trust Stewart, but he has to take the chance. Also Sherman loves his son, and he hates Imperial to the point of madness, so Stewart is not really asking him to go against the grain. He truly does believe that war with Imperial is in Capitol's best interests.

If the players have Stewart and threaten to expose him, he will accede to their demands for the moment, until he finds out more. If they tell him Stewart is captured, he will be quite glad. Perhaps Stewart can still be made to give up his son.

STATISTICS. It's incredibly unlikely that the players will come into conflict with Sherman. If they do, use the thugs' profile and give him a Bolter.

ALEXANDER STEWART

APPEARANCE. Tall, athletic and immaculately dressed. Handsome regular features. Shaved head. Upper-crust Imperial accent.

BACKGROUND. Only what is in the manila envelope will be available to the players.

GM ONLY. Alexander Stewart is the very image of an Imperial agent. He is handsome, suave, charming, clever and utterly ruthless. He is also a heretic and rotten to the core.

The details in Stewart's file are essentially correct. At one time, he was a dedicated agent of ISC-4, but during his last mission on Venus, he fell into the hands of Minaziphar, a Nepharite of Semai. He was taken back to the Citadel, and eventually his will was broken, and he entered the service of the Lord of Spite. Since then, he has served the Dark Apostles as diligently as he once served Imperial. He returned to the service of Imperial after leaving Venus and penetrated the upper echelons of the ISC before being discovered and forced to flee. No



one knows how many agents he left in place behind him.

Since that time, he has shuttled between the Imperial Mandate and Burroughs, building up tension, spreading false information and generally fomenting trouble between Imperial and Capitol. He has assassinated several high-ranking officers in such a way that the blame has fallen on the other corporation. He has instigated acts of sabotage in the same manner. The whole plan came together when Sherman's son fell into the hands of a bunch of heretics disguised as Imperial troopers. Stewart had found the lever with which he could throw the two corporations into full-scale war.

In combat, Stewart is dangerous, but he will not fight to the death. If things go badly against him, he will surrender. He is quite confident in his ability to escape at some future point.

Stewart is a level 5 heretic. His suit is woven through with light, bullet-proof armor.

STATISTICS:

STR	15
INT	15
COR	16
PHY	15
MST	30
PER	25

MOVEMENT: 3/225
OB: +1
ACT/CR: 5
AVOID/PARRY: 10

	BPs	ARMOR (AV)
HEAD	4	none (0)
ARM	8	bullet-proof (3)
STOMACH	8	bullet-proof (3)
LEG	9	bullet-proof (3)
CHEST	9	bullet-proof (3)

ATTACKS: Stewart is armed with a Punisher handgun.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE: Combat 15, Firearms 16, Communication 14, Movement 14, Technical 12.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: None.

DARK GIFTS: Resist Pain, Dark Fire, Control Mind, Possess, Illusion.

THUGS

APPEARANCE. Variable.

BACKGROUND. These people are just hired muscle. They know nothing of Stewart or his plans. They are the sort of cheap thugs who are a Dollar a dozen in any Capitolian city. If their mission requires them to perform some special task, such as burglary, the appropriate skills will be at 13 rather than 11.

Thugs will rarely fight to the death. After they take their first wound, make an MST roll. If they fail this, they will flee. If flight is impossible, they will surrender. If one thug cracks, the remaining thugs must each make an MST roll or flee or surrender, too.

STATISTICS:

STR	12
INT	10
COR	11
PHY	13
MST	10
PER	13

MOVEMENT: 3/225
OB: +1
ACT/CR: 3
AVOID/PARRY: 6

	BPs	ARMOR
HEAD	3	none (0)
ARM	6	none (0)
STOMACH	6	none (0)
LEG	7	none (0)
CHEST	7	none (0)

ATTACKS: Thugs have either a Bolter or a Punisher handgun.

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE: Combat 11, Firearms 13, Communication 11, Movement 11, Technical 11.

THE CALIX CARBINE

The task to design a new standard infantry firearm for the AFC was put to 87 of the Solar System's largest arms manufacturers—it should be a light, easy-to-use, effective weapon with high fire-power, large ammo capacity, a long effective range and high reliability.

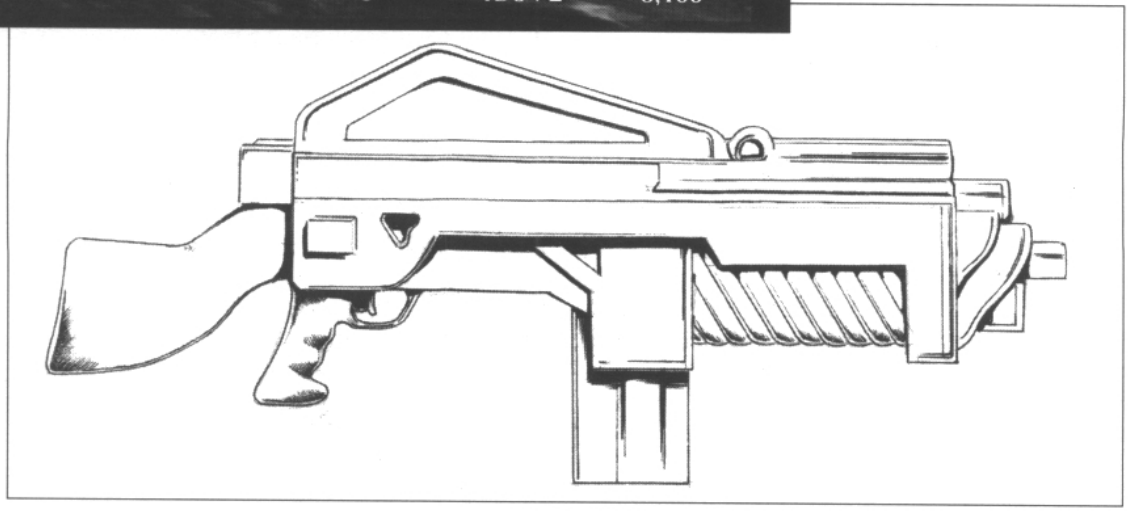
Eight months later there were 87 offers to choose from. The AFC had their choice ready—the MG-88, to be manufactured by Capitol under license from the Bauhaus-controlled Bauforce.

Then the «suits» had their pick. The weapon that the AFC ranked as eighth became the politicians' choice—the Calix A2—not a bad weapon, but with .85 rounds and built around a unique, previously untested mechanism, it was completely wrong for the needs of the AFC. But it was cheap, Capitol-designed, and, above all, manufactured by a company belonging to Jack Irving-Jorgensen.

It didn't become particularly popular, primarily because the high recoil made it inaccurate in the wrong hands. Still, the military makes use of it whenever a mid-length weapon of its sort is called for.

THE CALIX CARBINE

W	L	MC	TSS	GL	CB	TS
5.8	68	28	N	N	N	Y
FUNC	**RANGE**	**STR**	**RT**	**JF**	**DAM**	**COST**
3	400/600	29	1	8	1D6+2	6,100



ON GREAT SHIPS, THE PIONEERS OF MIGHTY CAPITOL WERE THE FIRST TO SET FORTH TO MAKE LANDFALL ON THE NEWLY RESHAPED WORLDS, WITH PEACE, PROFIT AND PROSPERITY AS THEIR PROUD AIMS. FIRST TO LUNA AND THEN TO MARS, CAPITOL'S PEOPLE FLOWED OUTWARD—THE DESERTS BLOOMED, THE FACTORIES CHURNED FORTH NEW CHATTELS. FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, IT LOOKED LIKE A NEW AGE OF PEACE HAD DAWNED ON THE WORLDS. IT WAS NOT TO BE.

OTHER CORPORATIONS HAD RISEN. RIVALRY LED TO TENSION. TENSION LED TO CONFLICT. CONFLICT ESCALATED TO WAR. THEN, THE GREAT COLLAPSE CAME. FROM THE NOTHINGNESS SURROUNDING THE SOLAR SYSTEM, THE DARK LEGION FELL UPON HUMANITY LIKE A SCYTHE IN TIMES OF HARVEST. FOR LONG AGES, THE SURVIVORS STRUGGLED MERELY TO STAY ALIVE.

BUT HUMANITY UNITED AND ROSE FROM THE CAVES OF IGNORANCE AND CONFLICT TO STAND AS ONE UNDER THE BRILLIANT BANNER OF THE SACRED BROTHERHOOD AND THE PRESIDENT OF CAPITOL. NOW IS THE TIME TO STAND STRONG, FLEX MUSCLES, SHARPEN MINDS AND LOAD WEAPONS.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR HEROES.



Experience the fantastic world of Capitol, from the boiling intensity and splendid glamour of the San Dorado penthouses and film studios, to the barren deserts and rotting trenches of the McCraig Line surrounding Saladin's Citadel on Mars. Adventure under the evil glow of Phobos and Deimos, eternally marked by the signs of the Dark Apostles, and seek new challenges in the shady alleys of the second largest city in the Solar System—San Dorado.

In this sourcebook, you find everything you want to know about Capitol and its citizens—new backgrounds, more special forces, heavier weapons, unique armor and equipment, more vehicles and new rules for vehicle combat, extensive descriptions and maps of locations on Mars and in San Dorado, a thrilling adventure: «Fear and Loathing in San Dorado», and much more.

NOTE: In order to be able to use «Capitol», you must have access to «Mutant Chronicles™ the Techno-Fantasy Roleplaying game».

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HEARTBREAKER