

DENVER™

• THE CITY OF SHADOWS •



DENVER™



FACE IT YOU FRAGGERS,
DENVER IS A SUB-DIVIDED,
PAIN-WRACKED, SCHIZOPHRENIC,
SELF-SERVING, EPILEPTIC,
SADO-MASOCHISTIC HAVEN FOR THE
DIVINELY WARPED.

AND I LOVE EACH AND EVERY ONE
OF YOUR BITTER,
THRICE-DAMNED SOULS.

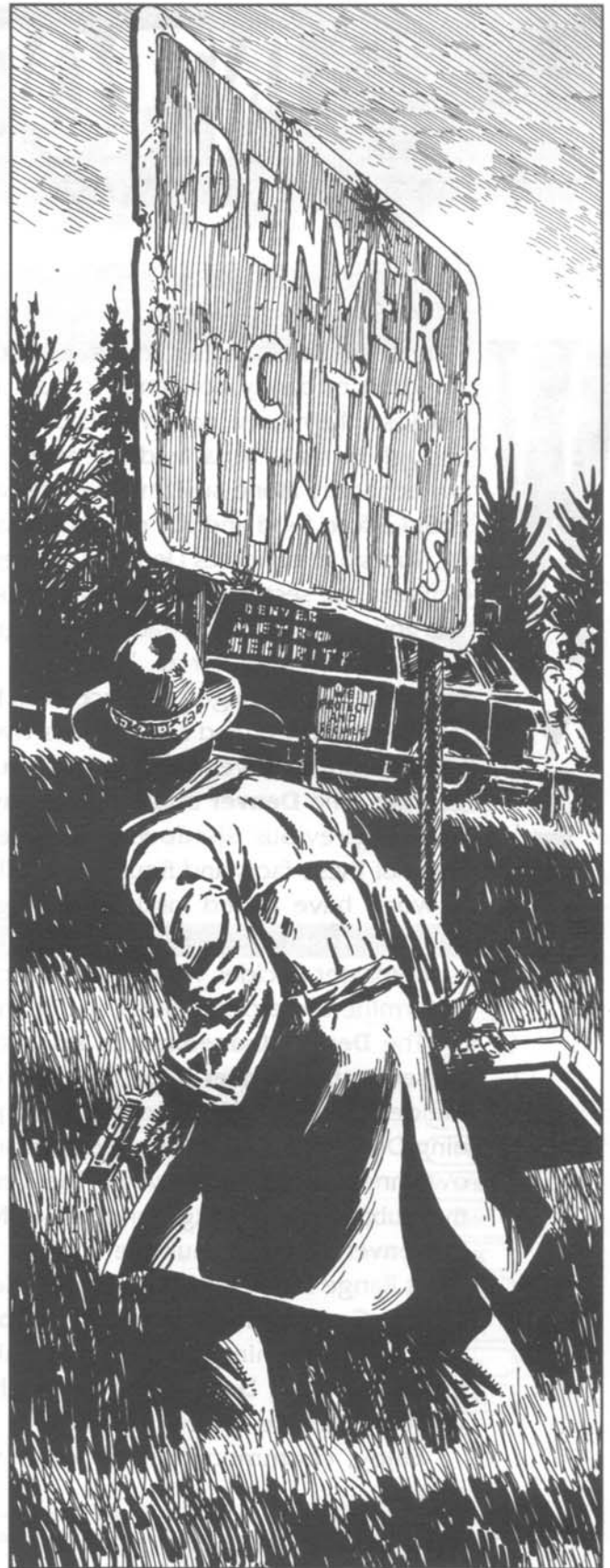
—RIGHT REVEREND DONALD R. BYRNE,
NEW CHURCH OF THE FINAL UNCTION
(INTRAZONE ONLINE/REF# BDIU202-A)

FASA CORPORATION

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Denver, also known as the Front Range Free Zone. It's a simmering cauldron of barely contained chaos. The city's six political sectors coexist only because they have no other choice. The sectors' laws and economics conflict enough to make legal trade between them virtually nonexistent. Denver's shadow economy alone sustains the city; without the black and gray markets, no one could afford food and the other necessities of life.

This situation forces Denver's residents to ignore as well as they can the borders between the sectors. People and products must cross sector borders daily, and only the governments try to track the dangers and opportunities that cross at the same time. Denver's free-for-all, Wild West attitude attracts powerful players, and that makes Denver a dangerous place even for the most experienced shadowrunners.

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The **Denver** boxed set contains two sourcebooks, one for players and one for gamemasters, seven maps of various sizes and content, and other assorted goodies. The **Denver** book for the players offers public-access information in the style of previous **Shadowrun** sourcebooks such as **Seattle** and **Tir Tairngire**. Most of these facts and figures are reliable, but previous readers from the fictional world have added innuendo, allegations, opinions, misunderstandings, and some outright lies—just like electronic documents in the real world. The gamemaster decides what is fact, fancy, or fallacy. The player characters can only determine these distinctions by digging, probably deeper than they'd like.

The **Denver Gamemasters Book** tells the real story behind the subjects discussed in the **Denver** book. Sections on the spirit of Denver, the people behind the decisions, and the places they go provide hints, clues, and guidelines for running Denver as a campaign location or just as a frequent stopping place for shadowrunners who love to travel. The **Denver Gamemasters Book** suggests alternative subplots and background stories for the people, places, and things described in **Denver**, offering multiple choices that help the gamemaster to make every Front Range Free Zone experience unique.

The **Gamemasters Book** also provides rules for unique situations likely to arise when running in Denver. Finally, this section includes a few notes on gamemastering Denver and highlights those previously published rules that gamemasters are most likely to use.

Enjoy, chummers. Let us know what kind of flowers you'd like on your grave....



WELCOME TO...

SHADOWLAND

**"I have taken all knowledge to be my province."
— Francis Bacon, 1592**

CATEGORY

Message Base/Mail System
Special Category/Topics (SIGS)
Library Archive
Fields of Fire (Mercs and Guns!!)
Corporate Shadowfiles (Corp Dirt! Dig In!)

DENVER COMPILATION (TREATY CITY STUFF!)

Shadowtech Compilation (Weird Science 101)
Tír na nÓg (Eire Uncovered)
Real Life Compilation (Real Cool!)
Lone Star Security Uncovered!!! (Soon!)
Germany (We got it!)
Tír Tairngire (Those Wacky Elves. . .™)

GO TO:

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DENVER

Read All about It

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What You Need to Know

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How It Got This Way

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How It Is Now

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The Real Power

OK

The Nexus

OK

Aztlan Sector

OK

CAS Sector

OK

Pueblo Sector

OK

Sioux Sector

OK

UCAS Sector

OK

Ute Sector

OK

DOWNLOAD ALL?

OK

NOTE FROM CONTROL—Anyone with any knowledge regarding sabotage to this system should contact me ASAP. Censorship will not be tolerated!

READ ALL ABOUT IT

<<Denver—Look No Further (you can't see over the Rockies anyway!)>>

—C.R. Mudgeon, longtime Denver citizen (Advertising slogan contest sponsored by the Department of Tourism/REF# HYP-456zo36)

Mile-high Denver, the Treaty City. Cradled in gently rolling plains set against the beautiful backdrop of the Rocky Mountains' Front Range, Denver has many personalities that encourage different cultures to meet and mix, creating a unique ambiance more reminiscent of twentieth-century Europe than anything on the North American continent.

Or some such drek.

We've posted these files on Denver here on Shadowland for your edification and amusement. As always, this is the place to come to learn the real intel about the Treaty City—not the fluffy bulldrek that travel guides and other consummate liars try to pass off as useful truth. This is the straight gain, hard and deep to the core.

▼
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The travel guides do get a few things right. Denver is a city of many personalities. And different cultures do touch here—unfortunately, they rarely mix, and they frequently have each other by the throat. And if you put your imagination on overtime, Denver might be said to resemble twentieth-century Europe—but only if that definition of Europe includes pre-*glasnost* Berlin or maybe eastern Europe midway through the Euro-Wars.

Now, don't take my cynical tone in the wrong way. Denver's a wiz place to live. I've been here nearly all my life, and my longest absences have hardly been by choice. It's a great place to do biz, no matter what kind of biz you're doing. More fortunes have been won—and lost—in Denver than just about anywhere else on this continent.



But as we all must know by now, any city whose shadows are worth running holds enough danger to make it easy to get scragged if you don't know *exactly* what you're doing. In Denver, any sector's "security consultants" will cheerfully geek you where you stand for setting one foot wrong, as will various t-bird jammers and uncounted entrepreneurs who consider the cost of ammunition expended while eliminating potential competitors to be just another business expense.

The Treaty City has more idiosyncrasies than most big cities. Apart from the political and economic intricacies of the sectors and the varied levels of security surrounding each one, visitors must also know a few other odds and sods if they want to stay alive in Denver—such as the safest time to cruise Five Points, for example, or how to find your way through the Trap. The high rate of immigration into Denver, aside from the flood of immigrants clutching the appropriate paperwork who practically cascade out of CalFree into the Free Zone, makes publicizing these idiosyncrasies more important every day. In most other cities, the establishment ignores out-of-plex runners who hose up and get themselves geeked. But in Denver, so many out-of-plex runners have found interesting and novel ways to be scragged that they're drawing uncomfortable levels of official attention to the *resident* shadow community. So you see, it's in our own best interests—not to mention yours—to keep you alive while in our backyard.

We compiled the following files from several sources to provide an overall view of our little territory out here among the mountains. If you're planning to pay us a visit, take the time to read them over. Take the information to heart—you'll be glad you did.

Maria Dancer (Crystal)
Assistant SysOp
Denver Data Haven

>>>>>(Greetings one and all, and welcome to the latest major post on Shadowland Seattle. In keeping with our aim of giving you slags on the streets the wherewithal to keep sucking air past your gums should biz take you further afield, we offer this latest posting from down Denver way. I kept the Denver-based comments intact if I thought they might make some sense to Seattle denizens, and I've glossed them myself if I figure they're important enough. I also ran this intel past some local experts for an appropriate Seattle slant. As usual, feel free to annotate the drek out of everything on this subboard. (As usual, keep your slippery little icons off the primary data. As usual, we acquired some wiz new black IC from the topnotch slicers at the Nexus along with the data itself. Doubt me at your own risk.)

Shadowland Seattle, my colleagues, and me hereby disclaim all responsibility for any errors in this data and any personal losses or deaths resulting from said errors.

Go to it, say I, and with a will.)<<<<<<

—Captain Chaos, SysOp (11:48:39/5-17-54)

>>>>>(An additional warning. As anyone who's been paying attention for a decade or so knows, all data has a half-life. Because Denver changes more quickly than most other cities, the half-life of all this background drek is *very* short indeed. If I know something in this posting has changed since Crystal put the files together, I'll flag it. But I recommend that you take all this drek as nothing more than guidelines. Denver might well change profoundly between the day the authors wrote this info and when you arrive there. It's just that kind of place.)<<<<<<

—Leo (04:03:42/5-18-54)

>>>>>(And that's why I have no intention of ever moving back to the backwater burg of Seattle.)<<<<<<

—Broncomanic (15:09:58/6-1-54)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

<<Front Range Free Zone? Ain't none of it up-front. Life's better if you're downrange from the drek. And it sure as frag ain't free. And I'd rather zone out than deal with any of it. Name makes sense, if you ask me.>>

—Alec “Box-O’-Rocks” Mandello, Denver Citizen (Marketing Survey: New Names for Denver!/REF#DDA-0020)

hummers, you're going to Denver and nothing we can do will stop you. So savvy the rough stuff. This first part won't talk about random loss of life (your own or the other fragger's)—just how and where to keep your skin dry. The second part raps on running the line. Download and retrieve at will.

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Total Population:	3,620,000
Human:	62%
Elf:	14%
Dwarf:	4%
Ork:	18%
Troll:	1%
Other:	1%
SINless Population:	543,000
Per Capita Income:	21,750¥
Below Poverty Level:	29%
On Fortune's Active Traders List:	1%
Megacorporate Affiliation:	44%
Education:	
High School Equivalency:	50%
College Equivalency:	23%
Advanced Studies Certificate:	7%
Regional Telecom Grid Access:	According to sector (see local listings)



>>>>>(Let me highlight two points for all of you out there. First, the Basic Data population figures refer to the entire Denver area (officially known as the Front Range Free Zone—FRFZ—though calling Denver “free” is a real fragging oxymoron), not just the Denver metro area. The pop numbers include metro Denver, Boulder, Colorado Springs, and points between. And yes, the three cities are physically separate. Yeah, okay, they had merged at one time, but then came the Treaty and its committee-rule cluster-frag, and it decided to raze a bunch of areas fragging near down to bedrock. Open space separates these cities, strange as that may seem to residents of the Seattle plex. Keep in mind that SINless people in this plex only count as citizens of the street if they’ve been in the FRFZ for a month and no more than three of four limbs are the ones they were born with.

Point Two: Each territorial sector uses unique RTG access codes and security paradigms. The Sioux Sector is NA/SIO, the Pueblo Sector is NA/PUE, and the Ute Sector is NA/UTE. The remaining three sectors use non-intuitive access codes: UCAS Sector (NA/UCAS-WE), Aztlan Sector (NA/AZ-NO), and CAS Sector (NA/CAS-TX).<<<<<<

—Link (13:41:44/5-18-55)

>>>>>(That means—according to the RTG routing, at least—that part of Denver finally belongs to Texas. Har, har, har.)<<<<<<

—Ranger (18:32:08/5-22-55)

>>>>>(And that slots off a lot of people. Scan the history files to get a better understanding why.)<<<<<<

—Leo (05:45:39/5-31-55)

>>>>>(Apart from the sociopolitical consequences, this RTG separation adds complexity and cost to doing biz in Denver. Say you’ve got your office on the north side of Colfax Avenue, which happens to be the demarcation between the Ute and Pueblo sectors. Your chummer lives within spitting distance, just on the other side of the demarcator. To give him a call, you’ve got to link through a totally different RTG routing, with all the additional cost that requires. Pain in the hoop.)<<<<<<

—Tambor (17:04:52/5-31-55)

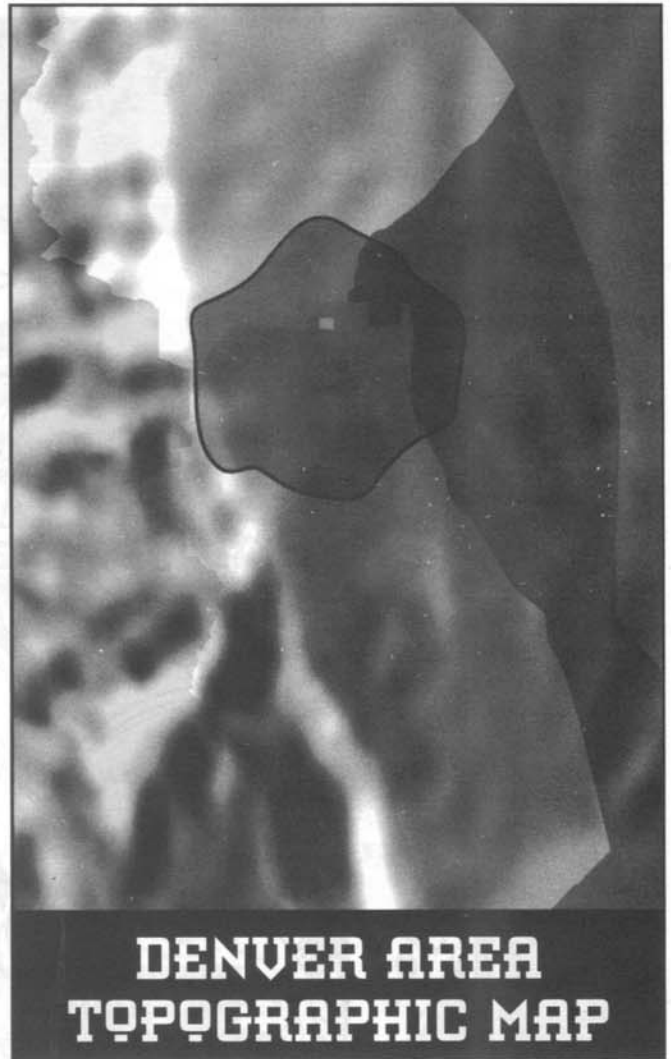
>>>>>(Deal with it, pink boy.)<<<<<<

—Top Shot (17:04:52/5-31-55)

THE COLORADO REGION

The geography and topography of the Front Range Free Zone area significantly affect just about every part of life in Denver, from climate to politics to the underground economy. We’ll explain this in as few words as we can, but it’s important to understand at least something of the lay of the land. If you keep just two facts in your heads—Denver is at a high altitude, and it has rugged terrain—all the implications should fall into place.

The highest spot in what used to be the state of Colorado is Mount Elbert, at 4,402 meters (that’s 14,433 feet, for you non-metric dinosaurs). Mount Elbert’s a mere 70 clicks outside the Free Zone. The lowest point in the region rises 1,022 meters



DENVER AREA TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

above sea level (3,350 feet). The average elevation, 2,100 meters (6,800 feet), is high enough that you’ll notice, trust me.

Terrain varies throughout the FRFZ. To the east, an extension of the Great Plains gives way to the foothills of the Rockies at the Front Range, which gives the Free Zone its name. The Rockies run north and south through this region, and this stretch of hills contains 51 of the 80 peaks in North America that rise to over 4,267 meters (14,000 feet) in altitude. The topographic display of the area we’ve dropped in proves that this is rugged country, no drek.

These little hills make a natural habitat for t-bird operators, especially “free traders” and smugglers (are there any other kind?). And so many people agree with that last statement that Denver’s the t-bird capital of the continent. T-bird riggers can run their LAVs all the way from El Paso in Aztlan as far as Whitehorse in the Athabaskan Council without ever leaving the relative safety of the Rockies’ “spine.” Denver’s the perfect way station on that route; it’s close to the major t-bird routes like Route Pack 1, the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and the Autobahn, and the

political situation in the Treaty City makes Denver the closest thing to a free port you'll find in North America.

>>>>(Hold on for one tick here. This makes no fraggin' sense to me. The only place I've seen t-birds in their glory is down south, on the Aztlan/Pueblo border—running hot and fast over the plains. Why would anyone in his right fraggin' mind take something as clumsy as an LAV into the fraggin' mountains? That's gotta cut your top speed down to a fraggin' crawl.)<<<<<<
—Nimby (11:22:34/5-26-55)

>>>>(Not true, Nim Boy. High-speed runs into and out of Aztlan are what you see on the trideo and read about in the screamsheets, but that style is only one way to run a bird, and one likely to get you killed.

Sure, like any other speedfreak rigger alive, I live for the ya-yas you get when you wind your t-bird out and feel the unholy wail of your turbines through every fiber of your body.

But you're also begging to be splattered. I mean, think about it. You're out on this pool-table-flat desert, going like a bat out of hell, kicking out who-knows-how-many lumens of IR flux—slapping back a juicy big blip on the screen of any radar rig looking your direction. Your rooster-tail is visible from clicks away, and you're leaving a sonic footprint like the wake of a speedboat on a mirror-flat lake. Trust me—out on the desert, you're missile-bait.

Now let's look at the alternatives. Instead of hurtling across the desert, I'm cruising it nice and easy through the mountains. My LAV doesn't care—broken ground feels just like the desert to its sensors. But what do those radar rigs see now when they look in my direction? Ground clutter, that's what. Noise from the fraggin' terrain itself—and that's true even on look-down rigs. Suddenly I'm a wraith, and to spot me, someone's got to pretty much fly right fraggin' over me or end up in the same canyon at the same time. Of course, the hills hold ground-sited arrays—listening posts, IR trackers, that kind of drek—but any free trader worth the name knows where to look for them and how to avoid them.

That'll do for the moment. I'll have more to say later.)<<<<<<
—Little AI (19:49:53/5-27-55)

WEATHERING THE WEATHER

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Anyone who's ever lived in Denver will tell you that the city gets a bad slam from news media across the continent (maybe even the rest of the world) and always has. Every time you hear reports of "an overnight dump of 50 centimeters of snow around Denver" in April or May, note that the key phrase is "around Denver." Not *in* Denver. The high country does get lots of snow, but it's the fragging Rocky Mountains, *omae*. Down in the city itself and in most of the FRFZ, the average annual total precipitation stands at about 40 centimeters. And more than half of that's going to be rain. In an average year, Denver basks under 300 days of beautiful, nontoxic sunshine.

>>>>(Eat that, Seattle.)<<<<<<
—Broncomanic (15:17:03/6-1-55)

>>>>(Describing Denver's primary weather as 300 days of sunshine may be overstating conditions a bit. Call it 300 days a year without rain.)<<<<<<

—Woppler the Weatherman (23:48:54/6-1-55)

January's the coldest month, with an average daily high of about 6 degrees Celsius and an average nightly low of close to -8 degrees Celsius. But even in January you can bet on an average of 22 days of sunshine. July's the hottest month, with August a close second. In those months, expect daily highs of 30 degrees C and nightly lows of 15 degrees C, with 21 or 22 days of sunshine a month.

What makes Denver so temperate? The "weather shadow" of the Rockies. Most weather patterns travel west from the ocean and so have to climb over mountain peaks a thousand meters higher than the city's elevation. Any moisture in that air drops as rain or snow in the mountains, and the air that spills over the range onto Denver is dry and more temperate because it warms up as it slides down the eastern foothills of the Rockies.

Sometimes during the winter Denver has the pleasure of a wind called the "chinook." Locals love this warm, dry wind off the Pacific because it can raise the temperature by more than 20 degrees C within an hour or two, an especially welcome development in January.

While not technically climate, the altitude does affect the environment. Back before metric, Denver was called the "Mile-High City," and for good reason: it's 1,609 meters (5,280 feet, or one mile) above sea level. Though visitors to the mountain communities inside and outside the FRFZ are the most likely candidates for altitude sickness, people get it in the city, too. If you feel out of breath from even limited activity, and if you have headaches, fatigue, and difficulty sleeping for no apparent reason, you're probably suffering from altitude sickness. Denver's dry air can create the same symptoms for dehydration. The cure for both is simple: just slow down until you're feeling more like your usual self and drink lots of fluids. (And no, that does not include alcohol—alcohol just dehydrates you more.)

>>>>(Visitors from downslope take note: alcohol packs a considerably heftier punch at altitude, at least until your body adapts. As a rule of thumb, one drink affects you at the equivalent of one-and-a-half drinks at sea level. Some people regain their normal alcohol tolerance in a couple of weeks. Some never do, but most of those learn to enjoy the quicker buzz.)<<<<<<

—Smirnof (12:21:13/5-19-55)

>>>>(Save your jokes about Denverites being cheap drunks. It's more to the point for all too many of you slags that this decreased tolerance extends to almost all other narcotics. Like Smirnof said, normal tolerance usually comes back within two weeks, if you snap back at all.)<<<<<<

—MedMan (02:27:22/5-20-55)

>>>>(Couple of my chummers who moved to Denver finally went the bionetics route and got their lung volume increased. Altitude doesn't seem to faze them anymore.)<<<<<<

—Todd (08:39:42/5-20-55)

>>>>>(Spellcasters might need to take it real easy for the first couple of weeks in Denver. The lower partial pressure of oxygen in the air means that tossing spells is going to take a lot more out of you than the same stunt does at low altitude, until you get used to it.)<<<<<

—Morlock (15:36:12/5-22-55)

>>>>>(Back to the matter of weather. (Yeah, I know you're getting bored, but if you're skulking around in a back alley during the winter months, you'd better account for the fact that the temperature can go from -12 ° to 16 °C—or vice versa—with no warning. Don't know about you, chummer, but when it's way below freezing, I want to be wearing something warmer than a Kevlar T-shirt.) In the winter, a balmy, spring-like afternoon can give way to a howling blizzard by nightfall.

Every FRFZ administration takes this unpredictable weather very seriously because it racks up a decent death toll every year. Lightning storms, hail storms, flash floods, avalanches, even the occasional tornado—they all manage to geek a couple of folks.

The summer's changeable as hell, too. For example, all week we've been baking in temperatures higher than 35° C, but today it's dropped down to about 24° in the city, and it's fragging snowing in the high country. Happy Fourth of July!<<<<<

—Leo (20:17:32/7-4-55)

>>>>>(Leo's right about the freaky weather. Anyone who doubts should just remember the "hurricane" of '41 and the blizzards of '38, '44, and '51. The FRFZ has plenty of the weather weirdness that's plagued much of the continent's west and mid-west for the last thirty years or so.)<<<<<

—Firelight (10:18:59/7-5-55)

COMING AND GOING

You gotta get there somehow, and you usually gotta leave again.

In the Air

The following seven international airports (able to accommodate suborbital and semiballistic traffic) and more than a dozen regional facilities (equipped to handle short-haul carriers that I won't bother to describe) serve the Front Range Free Zone.

Stapleton Airport serves the UCAS Sector of Denver. Stapleton was decommissioned and closed in the mid-1990s, but it reopened after the Treaty of Denver was signed.

>>>>>(And it opened pretty quickly and smoothly, considering most of the buildings on the old airport site had been destroyed in various skirmishes and the rest had been razed to the ground before UCAS officially took possession.)<<<<<

—Leo (05:46:33/5-23-55)

>>>>>(Even though it was rebuilt from the ground up, Stapleton still shows its age in a few little ways. For example, the runways are just short enough to make landing a fully laden semiballistic a real hairy proposition.)<<<<<

—Sky Pilot (22:39:33/5-29-55)

UCAS has a second facility, along the western outskirts of Colorado Springs. Originally the municipal airport, this facility has more or less merged with Peterson Air Force Base.

>>>>>(That's not the way the UCAS tells it, you can count on that. "Peterson AFB? No such thing, chummer. This is Peterson Civilian Airport, got it? Civilian traffic only, no military presence. Those fighter-bombers? In transit only, cross my heart and hope to ralph. Never in one place for more than 12 hours."

Right. The UCAS uses Peterson as a civilian facility purely to justify keeping it open, because one of the provisions of the Treaty was the closing of Peterson AFB. UCAS sidestepped that by officially decommissioning the base and renaming it with a civilian designation. (No restrictions on civilian airports, see? Greasy bastards.)

At any given time, between four and twelve fully fueled, fully armed fighter-bombers—F-B Eagles usually, though you sometimes see the more esoteric birds put in an appearance—are sitting on the runway. UCAS justifies their presence by claiming they're "in transit," merely staging at Peterson while en route to other bases. And, in fact, no single plane is on the runway for more than 10 or 12 hours, but new planes are always coming in. (They cycle in and out in two- and four-ship elements. Quite a sight.) According to the letter of the Treaty, that's legal, though it twists the intent into a Moebius strip.)<<<<<

—Zoomy (00:16:36/6-2-55)

>>>>>(And the other signatories put up with this drek?)<<<<<

—Tommyknocker (03:09:50/6-2-55)

>>>>>(So far. Go figure.)<<<<<

—Zoomy (23:58:14/6-4-55)

A larger facility, originally built to replace Stapleton and named Denver International, serves the Sioux Sector. Though Denver International by definition is considerably more modern and efficient than Stapleton, it shows "a marked lack of upkeep," to quote an official Sioux source. In other words, the place is drek-kicked, because nobody wants to spend the nuyen to keep it up.

>>>>>(And it's a cryin' fraggin' shame. Ever seen this place? Seriously wizzer, priyatel. The terminal's got a cable-tension roof that looks like a multi-peaked tent, sort of a visual paraphrase of the mountains to the west. When the lights are on, it glows white at night—very impressive. When it was built in the early 1990s, it was designed to handle triple simultaneous landings, and apparently still could, though it doesn't support anywhere near that level of traffic anymore.)<<<<<

—Albright (12:37:32/5-28-55)

Lowry Airport serves the CAS Sector. The facility occupies the site of the old Lowry Air Force Base, which was also closed in the mid-1990s. CAS turned the old AFB site into a commercial airport after the Treaty signatories split up the city. Though technically an international facility because it's equipped to handle that type of traffic, the vast majority of Lowry's flight activity



is to and from the rest of the CAS. Flights occasionally arrive from other sources or depart to other destinations, but most of those commutes carry corporate flaks, not the public.

The Aztlan Sector can only get up enough traffic to keep a single airport busy, and it stands where the Chamberlain Observatory once stood. The facility cannot handle semiballistics or suborbitals, or even HSCTs, for that matter, which means it doesn't qualify as "international" by the definition above. I'm tossing it in here anyway, because it's a fragging busy place, constantly turning around F-B Commuters and heavier V/STOLs. It's also the Azzie Sector's primary contact with the outside world. All traffic into and out of Denver's Aztlan Sector is controlled by Aero Montezuma, a carrier owned by the Aztlan government and managed by Aztechnology.

>>>>(A very scary combination.)<<<<<
—Chacmool (21:10:56/5-30-55)

>>>>(As if there was a difference between the two.)<<<<<
—Freedom Cryer (13:02:14/6-01-54)

Pueblo's sole international facility, small as such facilities go, can be found in a place called Sedalia, south of Denver. It can't land anything heavily loaded, but it does fall into the definition of an international airport.

>>>>(Just.)<<<<<
—Wingz (00:58:21/5-28-55)

>>>>(Hey, what about the old U.S. Air Force Academy? Why not just take over that place?)<<<<<
—Talbot (09:22:30/6-1-65)

>>>>(A couple of reasons, Talbot. First, the old academy's located in the foothills—a pretty fragging lousy place to put an airport, all in all. Contrary to what most people think when they hear "Air Force Academy," this ain't the place where the zoomies practice their touch-and-go drek in fast jets. They do that elsewhere, where there's fewer mountains to run into. The Academy only ever had a small field, just to handle prop-driven trainers. (Yes, pilots still do their initial training in prop planes. Much cheaper if they happen to break a couple.)

Second reason? The Treaty Commission decided the Academy land should belong to Pueblo. The United States had to swallow that pill, but they did it with style. Before the U.S. Air Force pulled out, they leveled every damn installation on the site. ("You want the land? You got it. But we don't have to leave anything standing on that site.")

And that's why Pueblo didn't open up their airport at the Academy.)<<<<<
—Moraya (19:35:08/6-3-55)

>>>>(Stunner, your scope is flat. Down and dark on the e-rail!)<<<<<
—Wire Styler (IV:NO:ID/HA-HA-HA)

>>>>(Persistent buzz says the United States didn't destroy everything on the site. Apparently the charges planted in some of the underground facilities—shelters and frag-knows-what-else—didn't go off.)<<<<<
—Huahine (16:15:19/6-7-55)

>>>>(Shoulda nuked the site from orbit. It's the only way to be sure.)<<<<<
—Hicks (21:44:46/6-9-55)

>>>>(Try. They won't go off. We've seen to that.)<<<<<<
—Top Shot (21:44:46/6-9-55)

>>>>(Some parts the U.S. Air Force didn't bother to flatten and Pueblo hasn't bothered to renovate. One of these areas sprawls just south of where the maglev, Intercity 25, and the Zone demarcator swing west for a stretch—hundreds of rusted-out cars and trucks, old tumble-down buildings, and markings that have to be old runways.)<<<<<<
—Raster (16:02:38/6-10-55)

>>>>(That used to be the training strip Moraya was yipping about earlier. (Or one of them. I guess there's evidence of another area marked for runways out there. Maybe they moved the facility at one time, or maybe something else was going down. Not that it matters today.) Anyway, it seems the old strip didn't contain anything sensitive to blow up, so I guess somebody's going to build on it at some point, when they get around to it.)<<<<<<
—Vance (19:31:08/6-10-55)

>>>>(You really don't know what's there, do you?)<<<<<<
—Katrila (22:48:57/6-10-55)

>>>>(Leave 'em to scream, Katri. More HAs for us.)<<<<<<
—Wire Styler (IV:NO:ID/HA-HA-HA)

Back before the Treaty, Boulder supported only a small municipal airport. Since the Treaty, the Ute government saw the wisdom of upgrading the facility to accommodate international traffic. Niwot Airport, as it's known now, mostly handles short-haul flights to the rest of the Ute Nation, only rarely handling suborbital or semiballistic flights from more distant destinations—and all those are special corporate charters. No international public carrier operates into or out of Niwot.

>>>>(No international public carrier would dare. Even speculating on its feasibility would jack its insurance premiums sky-high.

And while I'm on the subject of safety, let's take a look at the whole air-traffic set-up around the FRFZ. We've got seven—count 'em, seven—international airports counting the Azzie field. Seven major facilities, all in an area about 175 klicks long by 55 klicks wide. Each with its own flight scheduling, air-traffic control system, radar system, transponder codes, comm systems, and dreckcetera. To add to the fun, we throw in a dozen minor airports, each with its own flight schedule, blah blah blah. And add the military (oops, transient military) traffic at Peterson. (Bet your hoop that fighter jocks don't take well to some civilian air-traffic controller telling them, "Stay in the pattern, you're number fifty-two for landing.")

And the result? Absolute fragging chaos. Free Zone airspace sees more close-approach incidents than anywhere else in the world (and that includes O'Hare and Narita). The only reason you don't read about it as a major statistic is that the brass split up the total among those seven major fields.

Oh, and don't forget those dracoforms flying in and out of the Aztlan Sector. Most of them don't even show up on traffic-

control radar, and a feathered serpent is likely to be even less thrilled than a military fighter-jock with the news that he'll have to wait for an hour for landing clearance.

The few times I had cause to leave Denver, I traveled by land and caught a flight from somewhere more sane. And I came home the same way.)<<<<<<

—Sky Pilot (22:49:14/5-29-55)

On the Road

The Treaty changed very little of Denver's basic transportation infrastructure; the several main highways and countless smaller roads leading into Denver still run into the Front Range Free Zone.

Highway 87—which becomes Intercity 25 as soon as it enters the Free Zone—serves as the main artery from the north and enters the Free Zone from the Sioux Nation. As soon as it crosses the Treaty line, however, it becomes international territory. In other words, most of Intercity 25 represents the demarcator between sectors and so does not belong to any one sector. Here's how it works. You cruise down I-25 from Cheyenne and enter Denver without crossing a single border. Until you hit Colfax Avenue (and that's Exit 210), the only border crossings are on the *exits* from I-25. For example, if you exit on Speer Boulevard westbound, you'll have to go through a Ute border post. Take Speer eastbound, and you face the wonders of UCAS customs and immigration. Got it? Good.

The border splits away from I-25 at Colfax, Exit 210. At this point, the way's blocked by heavy security, because the highway is passing into Aztlan territory. It runs through Azzie turf until Exit 201, at Hampden Avenue, where you'll face more heavy security; this is the border between Aztlan and CAS turf. (And we all know in what affection and respect those two nations hold each other.)

I-25 stays in the CAS Sector to the Academy Boulevard exit (Exit 150) just north of Colorado Springs, then becomes international territory until it exits the Free Zone south of Colorado Springs and enters Pueblo Corporate Council territory.

In the west, Route 70 comes in from Ute and belongs to that nation until it hits the edge of the Free Zone, where it becomes international territory in the same way as I-25. At Exit 262, a place called Pleasant View, Route 70 re-enters Ute territory while the Zone boundary follows Highway 40, otherwise known as Colfax Avenue. On those parts of Route 70 that are international territory, all exits—except those blocked off with tank traps and land mines, of course—have border-crossing posts of the appropriate country: Ute to the north, Pueblo to the south.

>>>>(Getting confused? Good—that's getting into the Denver spirit.)<<<<<<

—Bung (08:25:44/5-31-55)

As it did before the Treaty, Route 70 will also bring you in from the east, from the Sioux Nation. The highway's considered Sioux territory until the interchange at Exit 282, just east of Stapleton Airport, when it becomes reclassified as an international highway.

>>>>(The people who sliced up Denver must have just loooved that "international highway" bit.)<<<<<<

—Mombasa (13:06:39/5-30-55)

>>>>(Actually, none of the parties involved liked the idea. It's kludgy, inelegant, and it doesn't even work most of the time. But it was the only scheme for highway upkeep and regulating traffic that the Treaty signatories could agree on. (In the Free Zone, a lot of systems reflect decisions made that way. Sheer, lowest-common-denominator compromise—not the best answer to a problem or even a good one—but the only one everyone will sign off on.)<<<<<<

—Leo (04:59:23/6-1-55)

>>>>(Stress this again. Any time one of those brain-fragging "international" highways enters or leaves territory held exclusively by a sector, heavy-duty border posts and security out the hoop will be waiting.)<<<<<<

—Underground Art (08:43:29/6-1-55)

Intercity 25 also runs north to the Zone from Pueblo territory. As soon as it hits the border of the Free Zone just south of Colorado Springs, I-25 gets the international designation—though for obvious reasons, the Pueblo side of the road doesn't need high-grade security. At the intersection with Route 470—that's Exit 194, if you're counting at home—the border cuts west, and I-25 continues into the CAS Sector.

And now you know all the major land routes into Denver and its environs. Security along the other, minor routes varies, depending on what nation a road originates in and which sector it enters. For example, Highway 24 westbound runs through Pueblo into the UCAS Sector, so you can expect serious security at the border. Highway 24 eastbound, however, also originates in the Pueblo Corporate Council, but it enters the FRFZ in the Pueblo Sector. Same country, no border hassles.

>>>>(That's almost true. A very real border completely surrounds the FRFZ, even in countries that adjoin the sector they officially own (for example, the Pueblo Corporate Council adjoining the Pueblo Sector). Every time you cross the Free Zone boundary you must pass through security, regardless of where you're coming from and where you're going.

Why? Because the Free Zone's a very special case, chummer. The laws and jurisdiction in any given sector theoretically match those of the owning nation, but in practice the sectors rarely enforce those laws as vigorously as they could. (That's the beauty of the Free Zone.) To continue the Pueblo example, it's quite possible for someone to live happily and even legally in the Pueblo Sector and be *persona non grata* in the Pueblo Council itself. Track me? The point is, again, that there'll always be some level of security any time you cross into or out of the FRFZ. Count on it.)<<<<<<

—Sturm (20:57:04/6-1-55)

>>>>(You picked a bad example, *friendo*' mine, because the border between the Pueblo Council and the Pueblo Sector is actually pretty porous. Of course, they maintain a requisite and reasonable

number of border posts and checkpoints, but the guards only stop the travelers they consider most suspicious on their worst day. Otherwise, passing between the two is a cakewalk.)<<<<<<

—Firelight (09:20:17/6-2-55)

>>>>(What's the deal with t-birds crossing Pueblo territory? Sometimes it seems like hostile ground all the way, but then I hear about jammers who cross the plain straight and legal. What's the biz?)<<<<<<

—Fickle (20:10:26/6-2-55)

>>>>(Different jammers get different deals. Those who smuggle things into Aztlan run pretty much unmolested once they hit Pueblo territory—as long as they're not known to smuggle things back in. If you generally smuggle things into Pueblo or through the sector, you're on the *drek* list. How do you get on the happy list? You can't apply for it, you gotta work the scene. Eventually, if you're on the up-and-up, the Pueblo boys'll put you on the happy list themselves. Right nice of them, *neh*?)<<<<<<

—Firelight (01:18:53/6-3-55)

>>>>(How did this place get so fragging complicated, can you tell me that?)<<<<<<

—Horrorshow (02:54:46/6-3-55)

>>>>(You know the old jokes. A camel is a horse designed by a committee. An elephant is a mouse built to government specs. So what the frag can you expect from a committee of governments?)<<<<<<

—ILS (08:57:16/6-3-55)

>>>>(Oh, come on. Most people scanning this board get into the FRFZ hunkered down in a fragging t-bird, don't they? Null this tourist sludge and get down to the real bytes, *neh*?)<<<<<<

—The Mad Monk (11:44:52/6-8-55)

GETTING AROUND

Once you've overcome the difficulties of getting into the FRFZ, you'll still need to deal with some unusual constraints in order to get around. Remember that the Treaty signatories sliced up the city of Denver *and* the entire surrounding area; refer to the digitized maps scattered throughout this sourceboard to get a clear idea of the scope of the hatchet job they did on the place. Before you start planning *any* travel, you'd best know precisely whose turf you'll be wandering into and through. Consider yourself warned.

Flying

Like everywhere else in this civilized world, the FRFZ is lousy with small airports, which are infested with short-hop carriers. If you plan to fly, you can choose from two kinds of travel: in-sector and transsector. Each offers certain advantages and disadvantages.

If you take off in one territory and land somewhere else in the same territory, that's "in-sector" travel. Say you want to get from Manitou Springs to Shamballa Ashrama (who knows why).

in sector flights...

eagle feather transit

#1 short hop carrier
IN THE
SIOUX
sector

Both are in the Pueblo Sector, so it's a straight in-sector hop. No immigration problems, no borders to fret over. It's about as legally confusing as flying from one side of Santa Fe to the other, which is to say not at all.

Because some sectors were cut into odd shapes, it's not always that easy. Some sectors get a little twitchy—for real or imagined reasons—over having short-hop carriers belonging to a rival sector flitting through their airspace, even if the carrier takes off and lands in the same sector. Say you're flying from Commerce City (UCAS Sector, in northeast Denver) to Doctors Hospital Medical Center (UCAS Sector, in southwest Colorado Springs). That's an in-sector flight, but the straightest line between the two places takes you over CAS territory. Depending on relations between UCAS and CAS at the moment, your flight might be diverted way the hell east so that you remain strictly within UCAS airspace. This can add a fair bit to your flight time. It gets downright unpleasant if CAS suddenly decides to actively hassle UCAS flights through its airspace. They might force you down and demand that you submit to the border patrol. It can be a major inconvenience.

>>>>(Fraggin' inconvenient if you happen to have a warrant out for your arrest in CAS (to use the same example). Then things get nasty.)<<<<

—Bongo (12:09:16/6-2-55)

The established short-hop carriers of the nation that owns the sector usually handle in-sector flights. This means that in the Pueblo Sector the job's done by Airlink. In the Sioux Sector, you fly Table Top, Skybus, Eagle Feather Transit, or with one of the other usual suspects. Refer to **Danchecker's Primer on the Native American Nations**, Volumes 1 and 2 (posted elsewhere on this board) for stats on reliability, cost, comfort and so on.

Transsector flights run between two different sectors. Your welcome upon landing depends on where your flight took off, but you'll get roughly the same treatment in terms of customs checks as if you came in from elsewhere in the world. Your welcome also depends (as might be expected) on current relations between the two countries or sectors.

Most of the same carriers handle both in-sector and trans-sector hops, but your choice of flights and companies is usually much more limited for transsector movement.

>>>>(Mainly because the carrier has to be licensed in the territories of origin and destination, and it's too much trouble for most of these small businessmen to bother.)<<<<

—Sky Pilot (22:57:21/5-29-55)

>>>>(Look in the Immigration section on this board for each sector that you're interested in visiting before you actually take to the air. Some sectors treat visitors very casually, while others—Aztlán comes to mind, of course—will shake you down so hard you'll wonder why you bothered.)<<<<

—Polaris (09:14:23/6-5-55)

>>>>(By the by-oh, flyers face a regular hazard these days in the FRFZ: what are happily called "poppers"—fuzz-brained kids using homemade rocket launchers to take shots at passing aircraft. Pops occur mostly at night, and usually within a klick or two of the less hospitable areas of town.)<<<<

—Firelight (10:28:13/6-7-55)

Riding Above

Before the unpleasantness of the Indian Wars, the Great Ghost Dance, the Treaty of Denver, and the breakup of the United States, the U.S. government built a maglev train line linking Boulder in the north to Colorado Springs in the south—looping through the heart of Denver, of course. Completed in 2011, the maglev line was loudly touted as a shining example of clean, efficient, modern technology because it drew much of its power from the solar collectors that shade the track bed like a silver-blue, mirrored awning.

>>>>(You people've been reading far too much government propagand. That oh-so-wiz solar array provides a grand total of 5 percent of the power requirements for the maglev. The rest comes from the nuke plant at Greenland, Pueblo Sector. Efficient, but not quite so clean.)<<<<

—Frasier (21:08:50/6-11-55)

>>>>(Maybe, maybe. But the solar array does look like something out of a fantasy trid, particularly when you see it from the

air. A sinuous mirror-blue river, maybe, or a magical road built somewhere they couldn't get yellow bricks.)<<<<<

—Wind (01:53:39/6-12-55)

The station farthest north sits at the heart of Boulder's pedestrian mall at Walnut and 14th streets. The maglev maintenance yards are farther west, out toward Fifth Street. From its northern terminus, the track runs east until it hits Intercity 25 at Wattenberg, where it swings sharply south and parallels Intercity 25 into the heart of Denver, where it stops at another main terminal, Union Station. From there, the route follows Speer Boulevard until it hits South University, then it loops back and rejoins Intercity 25 in Englewood, then follows the highway south into Colorado Springs, ending at Ivywild.

The maglev has four parallel track beds that allow for a mix of commuter and express service. The express nonstop makes the run from Boulder to Colorado Springs in less than an hour. The commuter service stops at forty-three stations and takes 4 hours to run the entire route.

A holding company named the Front Range Transit International—jointly owned by the six countries that run a slice of Denver—manages the maglev. The six countries share maintenance costs and revenue.

Fares depend on distance and time of day. At one end of the scale, traveling from one stop to the next might cost as little as 2 nuyen, while the express from Boulder to Colorado Springs could cost 85 nuyen or more.

>>>>(Pull up one of the digitized maps they stuck into this post and take a look at the maglev route. This damn train crosses eight sector boundaries! Eight! Think about the hassles this service represents to immigration officials. The nonstop runs are pretty clean. If you're going straight from Boulder to Ivywild, you start in Ute and end in UCAS. The immi officials treat everyone getting off the train in Ivywild as a visitor from Ute, with all that entails.

But with commuter service, the train stops at every fraggin' station along the route. Let's say the train pulls into the Washington Park station (Aztlán Sector) and people get out. Where the frag did they come from? Maybe they got on at the Denver Health and Hospitals station—the stop before, still in the Aztlán Sector. But hell, they might have boarded at any one of twenty other stops, in three other sectors. In general, everyone who gets off a maglev train gets the full immigration credstick-and-ident check, just as if they got off a plane.)<<<<<

—Margo (23:09:28/5-30-55)

>>>>(Okay, so getting off a maglev train means you face the immigration drek for the sector you're entering. But getting on the maglev system is a challenge in its own right. Front Range Transit insists on a separate security system for all its stops, and here's how it stacks up. When you slot your stick to enter the platform area, you go through this big turnstile stuffed full of magnetic-anomaly detectors and chem-sniffers. If you're trying to make it on to the train carrying weapons, ammunition, or explosives and the sensors pick them up, you'll look up to find yourself facing at least four of the biggest, meanest sec-guards

you'd ever go a long way to avoid. Stun batons and narcoject weapons are SOP, but if they really don't like your attitude, they'll cut you in half with SMGs. If you manage to zero these guards and try for the platform, the sec-guards watching nice and safe through closed-circuit trid will gas the place down. Stun gas only, of course, but enough to neutralize everyone in the area. (They'll apologize to their other customers later.)

Let's say you protect yourself against the stun gas and make it to the platform. So what are you going to do now? Get aboard a train? Each car in the maglev can be isolated because the doors operate on distributed control systems. Remember those guards watching by trideo? They'll see which car you get on, clamp the doors shut behind you, and fill it with stun gas. They sure as frag won't let the train leave the station. So where does that leave you? Locked in a big metal can full of gas, trapped at the station, watching through the transplast windows while a whole fragging army of sec-guards forms up outside. When that army is good and ready, they'll open the doors and slide you out.

Moral of this story? Don't mess with the maglev system. You'll end up in a world of hurt.)<<<<<

—Chaka Zulu (17:34:45/6-6-55)

>>>>(Trust a mundane to act like there's no such thing as magical security. In general, you've got watcher spirits periodically patrolling the trains. They're trained to alert the guards if someone tries to pack some ridiculously powerful enchanted item onto the train, but otherwise they only kick up a fuss if someone gets magically active in socially unapproved ways. If you get my drift.)<<<<<

—Tor (22:98:19/6-7-55)

>>>>(Why so much security, you ask? Because the maglev is one big, juicy, political target for terrorists of all stripes. Again, you ask why? Because it passes through every sector, and because people of every national affiliation depend on it.

Take a case in point. During the past year alone, a political action committee thought to be associated with Alamos 20K tried to blow the tracks to protest how the nations "sold out" Denver to the "savages." A couple of weeks later, another terrorist group, this one thought to be associated with the Kachinas, tried to bomb it to destroy a symbol of the nations "going soft" on Anglos.

If I was running the maglev, I'd have even tighter security.)<<<<<

—Ryan (21:51:50/6-9-55)

Riding Below

Around the turn of the century, Denver began construction on what was supposed to be an extensive subway system running under the heart of the city. Only a few of the proposed tunnels were ever completed. Denverites wanting to cross the city east to west or vice versa could use the subway. Those traveling north to south didn't have this option.

In the FRFZ, only one line still operates, and it only stops at a few of its originally scheduled stations. This line terminates in the east in the CAS Sector near the Chamber of Commerce and the Fitzsimmons Medical Center at East Colfax and Potomac

Street. From here, the line swings north along Iola Street and runs under Stapleton International Airport. Because Stapleton is part of the UCAS Sector, the airport stations still exist, but the trains no longer stop at any of them.

>>>>(That's easy enough to fix.)<<<<<
—Bonkers (11:52:47/6-3-55)

>>>>(Well, yes, you might be able to stop the train at any of the station platforms that you can see as the train goes by. But who's to know if you can get from those platforms to the surface? If I were a paranoid UCAS slot, I'd have sealed off the exits from those platforms a long time ago.)<<<<<
—Tenmace (20:23:06/6-3-55)

From the airport, the subway follows Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Parkway, back in CAS territory. The train stops at all stations along this street, follows Larimar southwest, then swings south on Broadway, stopping at all these stations, too. The line then enters the Aztlan Sector and passes under the Civic Center, where the train stops and opens its doors on a solid wall of concrete, no platform. The line swings north to the CAS Sector again, with the final stop at Union Station.

>>>>(The last active station on the route. The tunnel for the line continues west into the Ute Sector, but the train itself no longer travels this section of the tunnel. And to the best of my knowledge, this part of the tunnel is still physically accessible. Service ends at Union Station because the control software of the subway train stops it from heading any further west. It simply pulls into a kind of underground switching yard and returns the way it came, down the other side of the double tunnel. I'd guess a good enough decker could tap into the control system and just keep that ol' train rolling.)<<<<<
—Darwin (16:49:40/6-1-55)

>>>>(Sure, roll it down tracks that haven't been serviced in how many decades? Through a tunnel that might have collapsed? To stations that probably have no access to the surface?
No thanks.)<<<<<
—Bronwyn (12:55:43/6-7-55)

>>>>(Lots of abandoned tunnels under Denver, chummers. Good places to pull a fade if the heat on the surface gets too harsh for you. Assuming you believe they're actually empty ...)<<<<<
—Archon 1 (17:21:14/6-9-55)

Driving

Denver isn't the easiest city to get around in by car. Drive a couple of clicks in any given direction, and you run into a wall or a fence—all minor streets are blocked off at the sector boundaries—or you'll find yourself under the scrutiny (and gun sights) of a border-crossing post. This changes as soon as you leave the boundaries of old Denver, of course.

Most roads won't put your vehicle in danger just driving down them, but the level of repair varies from sector to sector.

For example, all road surfaces in the Pueblo Sector are just fragging cherry, but in Sioux, you'll be dodging potholes and watching nervously as metal spalls off bridge supports.

>>>>(Hey, buttoned up in my Banshee t-bird, I don't care squat for potholes or spalling bridge supports.)<<<<<
—The Mad Monk (11:49:47/6-8-55)

>>>>(Ah yes, screaming around in an LAV, throttles cracked wide open, jets screaming, bouncing back IR and radar signatures so beefy that no tracking system within a hundred clicks could possibly miss you, kicking out so much heat that even the lowest-tech AVM seeker head's going to bore right in and blow you to little bitty pieces of shrapnel. Sounds like a rush to me, priyatel.

Sometimes stealth counts for a lot more than horsepower, Monk. Or haven't you figured that out yet?)<<<<<
—Argent (23:11:31/6-10-55)

>>>>(Just like sometimes stealth and subtlety are nothing but a waste of time.)<<<<<
—Hardesty (23:12:04/6-10-55)

>>>>(Granted.)<<<<<
—Argent (23:12:10/6-10-55)

CROSSING THE LINE

We know this is the data you really want: how to run the I Line, and how to get your sorry hoop inside the Line (that's what the riggers call the Boundaries). But once you're in, the rest is up to you.

The Free Zone is roughly kidney-shaped, about 175 clicks long, north-to-south, and less than 90 clicks across at its widest point. The Free Zone extends as far north as the town of Mead on the extension of Intercity 25 leading north from Denver toward Cheyenne. The border of the Free Zone, known as the Outer Boundary, extends west to include the settlements of Longmont and Lyons. The Boundary then swings west of Boulder and passes through Ward and Rollinsville as it curves south. The indentation of the "kidney" swings in to include Golden, then the Outer Boundary heads almost due south to take Buffalo Creek and Deckers within the sector.

>>>>(Deckers? Great name for a town.)<<<<<
—FastJack (02:07:08/5-21-55)

The Outer Boundary passes through Divide and bends south of Colorado Springs. When it reaches the Cheyenne Mountain tollway, it follows the fence line of the Fort Carson Military Reservation. From the town of Fountain, it bends northeast to pass just outside Yoder, then swings up through Kiowa and passes east of Denver just beyond Watkins. Curving back around to the northwest, the Boundary passes just west of Hudson and half a click south of Platteville to close off the Free Zone.

The total land area of the Front Range Free Zone is approximately 17,500 square kilometers, and the Outer Boundary is approximately 600 kilometers long.

THE OUTER BOUNDARY

The level of security along the Outer Boundary of the Free Zone varies, depending on the relationship of the territories on opposite sides of the line. For example, you'll obviously meet less security where the Pueblo Sector lies adjacent to the territory of the Pueblo Corporate Council than where the UCAS Sector abuts the Sioux Nation. Regardless of the juxtaposition of nations, however, all parts of the Outer Boundary maintain some level of security.

Generally speaking, the Outer Boundary marks the border of the Free Zone with a double fence line, broken only by official border crossings. These fences are usually about 10 meters high, topped by a few strands of razorwire or monofilament cutwire (nasty!), and reinforced strongly enough to stop a speeding semitrailer. Some Sectors, unsatisfied by the stopping power of mere fencing, built walls.

>>>>(Riggers take note: the fences won't stop a high-balling t-bird. I've proven this to my own satisfaction on more than one occasion.)<<<<<

—Little AI (19:52:34/5-27-55)

>>>>(They're not built to stop flying armored cars, but the system does register a "fence-integrity failure" as soon as you break through. So why not just fly over the fraggin' thing?)<<<<<

—Firelight (03:20:18/5-29-55)

Despite rumors to the contrary, the Outer Boundary fences are not juiced. They do sport plenty of alarms, though; if you take your handy-dandy bolt cutters to the wire, the nearest security post gets the alarm and sends a few large men with large guns to pay you a visit.

>>>>(Don't be too sure about the fences not being juiced. The entire fence line may not be electrified, but I can personally testify that some parts do have a healthy charge running through them. Take the section of the Boundary near Watkins along Highway 70 heading east out of Denver. The UCAS Sector meets the Sioux Nation, and neither side likes it. The border crossing itself looks like a fortress, and the Boundary for several clicks north and south of Watkins has heavy reinforcement and plenty of electric deterrent. Trust me.)<<<<<

—Gund (13:26:26/5-30-55)

>>>>("Personally testify?" I guess we can read that you got zapped, huh? Ga-harf, ga-harf.)<<<<<

—Tron (04:32:08/6-3-55)

>>>>(No, you scroffy skell. It was some smart-mouthed shadowrunner or who got himself zapped. Died on the wire, and he sizzled and crackled and cooked for fragging near an hour



before anyone bothered to drag down what was left of his ugly face. Still laughing, Tron?)<<<<<

—Gund (12:00:42/6-4-55)

>>>>(Public service announcement: for those who don't know, Gund—a.k.a. Cpl. Bart Majendie (ret.)—used to serve with the UCAS Sector Boundary Patrol. Word to the wise.)<<<<<

—Crystal (01:30:44/6-6-55)

Depending on the idents and 'tudes of the territories facing each other across the Boundary, the terrain between the two fence lines varies widely. Along some stretches of the Boundary, it's just open space—a billiard table-flat killing zone, but without any nasty surprises. The space along other stretches is a demo dweeb's wet dream: sensors of all kinds and landmines of various flavors (anti-personnel, anti-vehicular, "bouncing Bettys"), if even half the rumors are true. Elsewhere, standard troops with guard dogs or paranormal animals patrol the no man's land. One particular stretch—a potentially high-traffic area outside the UCAS Sector northwest of Truckton—dips down into a concrete ravine 30 meters wide and 15 deep, specially designed to give many t-bird jammers a nasty, nasty surprise.

>>>>(Null persp—just shift attitude short of the lip, catch some height, and fly. If you're moving at pace, say even 300 kph, you cross 30 meters in half a second. That trench hasn't stopped a true t-bird jammer yet. Now pansy-hooped hover-boys, then we're talking wall cake.)<<<<<

—Racer X (20:19:14/6-2-55)

Here's our best advice: if you're planning to cross the Boundary, legally or on the sly, expect the unexpected. Security varies wildly from place to place and time to time, so run recon before you go.

>>>>(Sheesh. Did I miss the end of the age of magic? Despite the apparent fact that no one on this board has ever heard of magic, in the real world, if you're planning on running the Boundary, that oversight can cost you your life. Long stretches of the Boundary—maybe all of it—are constantly scrutinized by watcher spirits and other astral observers. Only really sensitive areas will mount anything capable of actively messing you up, but even the wimpiest little scrap of astral consciousness can whistle up a patrol.)<<<<<

—Kargad (23:47:11/6-3-55)

Border Crossings

Depending on the circumstances, border-crossing posts range from "soft" structures that do little more than protect the border personnel from inclement weather, to hardened and revetted bunkers that look tough enough to shrug off a tactical nuke. Two buildings guard most crossings: one handles traffic bound into the FRFZ while the other handles outbound traffic. Depending on the stretch of the Boundary in question, these two establishments often belong to two different nations—who sometimes despise each other.

>>>>(No farce. Remember last year when a fragging border skirmish broke out between the UCAS and Sioux crossing stations up by Horse Creek Reservoir? We're talking two buildings about 20 meters apart, and one day the border guards just open fire on each other across no man's land. Lots of fun.)<<<<<

—Halston (03:55:19/6-9-55)

>>>>(I remember, and there was something real strange about that one. According to the UCAS report, at least, some sort of weird psychic taint—that's the best way I can describe it—still hung around the area, even a week after the incident. It was like something pushed the border guards into cutting loose on each other. Don't know what.)<<<<<

—Lara (21:09:48/6-11-55)

>>>>(That's just UCAS covering up for a loss of control. "The Devil made me do it!" Yeah, right.)<<<<<

—Samizdata (00:13:16/6-12-55)

Security at border-crossing posts varies, too, from a skeleton crew of three or four lightly armed officers to a dozen heavily armed "customs officials," supported by a fire

team of skullcrushers and at least one combat mage for astral back-up. Vehicular support ranges from none to a Citymaster or two.

>>>>(Don't forget air support. You'll often see Wasps and Yellowjackets—sometimes supported by something bigger and nastier—patrolling the fence lines or hovering over border posts.)<<<<<

—Puget Deb (14:03:01/6-2-55)

>>>>(Those combat mages are more likely to be one-talent sorcerers, so-called magical adepts. Think enough full-blown magicians belong to the governments of these nations to staff every major crossing post on every shift? Get chipped, *omae*.)

—Firelight (09:20:18/6-3-55)

>>>>(Don't let these guys blow too much smoke, chummers. What you're scanning here is more or less the official line of drek, what the governments want you to believe. (Since when did Shadowland start accepting government press releases as chip-truth data?)

Theoretically, the Outer Boundary is an unbroken border. But do you really believe that all 600-plus clicks get patrolled regularly? Null. Do you think they send crews out immediately to replace fragged-up sensors? Null. Do you think the fence line follows every fragging cliff and ravine? Null.

Just off the top of my head, I'd say there are at least a dozen places—mostly west of Denver—where you can slip into the Free Zone without so much as seeing a fence or a guard or a sensor. Count on it. You want to get into the Free Zone without any official involvement? It can be done. Talk to me, I do it all the time. Relay at LTG# 1303 (35-0040.)<<<<<

—El Coyote (15:25:36/6-5-55)

>>>>(True, as far as it goes. But lots of places have no fences or other security because the terrain does a better job of interdicting entry than anything (meta)humanity can whip up.)<<<<<

—Log One (20:08:31/6-5-55)

>>>>(One last note on border personnel: inside the Outer Boundary—that is, in the Free Zone itself—the Treaty forbids the use of military assets. (We all know that just means the border guards are ex-military, nominally in the employ of private outfits, but let that slide for the moment.) Outside the Boundary? No restrictions whatsoever, chummer: sovereign territory.

What this really means is that security for coming out of the Free Zone is often much tougher than for going in. Look at a border crossing between the UCAS Sector and the Sioux Nation, for example. Who's watching the Sioux side of the border? The fragging Wildcats, that's who—Sioux Special Forces, shamanic commandos and physical adepts—not people you want to trifle with.)<<<<<

—Rex (15:30:05/6-7-55)

>>>>(That's just not as important a distinction as it sounds. Like somebody else said earlier, you don't have to have a military

commission to lay a heavy machine gun. It's not the commission or the rank, but the training and the gear that makes a soldier dangerous. Look at a border crossing into the Sioux Sector. Who's watching the demarcator? A bunch of "retired" Wildcats—no longer officially connected with the Sioux Special Forces, but that doesn't make them any less lethal.)<<<<<<
 —Sumner (12:09:42/6-8-55)

SECTOR DEMARCATORS

The people who signed the Treaty carved Denver and the surrounding area into autonomous sectors, separated by demarcators (a fancy bureaucratic word for borders—never let bureaucrats name *anything*). The security along these demarcators varies as much as the security along the Outer Boundary, maybe even more so.

For specific information on the demarcators of each sector, see the postings for the individual sectors. We can make some general remarks on the demarcators, but be warned—generalizations of any type are notoriously dangerous. Don't bet your life on these superficial remarks. As always, study the detailed intel, then do your own reconnaissance.

The standard level of security along a demarcator is the same double fence line you see at the Outer Boundary. Reinforced, 10 meters high, alarmed, and rarely electrified.

>>>>>(See my earlier comments. They apply here, too.)<<<<<<
 —Gund (13:30:01/5-30-55)

At least 20 meters of no man's land separate the two lines of the fence, and sometimes twice that or more. A low, single-wire fence running down the center of the no man's land marks the official border, but it's purely symbolic, because anyone older than about three can step over it easily. It's chill to install whatever security provisions you like on your side of the no man's land—patrols, land mines, whatever—but you can't do squat on the other side of that line. (Self-evident, I know, but it's best to make these things crystal clear at the outset.) According to the provisions of the Treaty, it is strictly illegal to take any hostile action against anyone on the other side of that tiny little fence. No matter what they may have done to you or your country or be planning to do or be in the process of doing. No physical, weapons, or magical attacks.

>>>>>(The Treaty also forbids the use of any kind of control manipulation on those bad people dancing just out of jurisdiction—something to coerce them into stepping into your half of no man's land, for example—though that particular law is tough to regulate.)<<<<<<
 —Neddy (23:09:42/5-23-55)

>>>>>(Sometimes it's so fragging tempting to break that provision. Here's a typical scenario: someone's on your side of no man's land, cutting his way through your fence, when you spot him. He sees you coming, and before you can do squat he's run 10 meters and hopped back over that little trip wire that marks the demarcator. You can walk right up to the line until you're

face to face with the guttermeat, but you can't do a thing to him. You can't even take a swing at him to wipe that drek-eating smile off his face.)<<<<<<
 —Gund (13:31:14/5-30-55)

>>>>>(Why do I think this Gund slot's speaking from experience?)<<<<<<
 —Hyperion (17:58:40/6-2-55)

>>>>>(I'd say 85 percent of the "political incidents" between sectors are a result of border guards not paying adequate attention to this provision of the Treaty.)<<<<<<
 —Lane (01:16:03/6-9-55)

>>>>>(This seems as good a place as any to raise an important point. No overall body of law governs the entire FRFZ. The Treaty of Denver is the closest thing to a common law, but the Treaty only constrains the actions of governments, not individuals (with some rare exceptions that will become abundantly clear in time). No one holds overall jurisdiction, and no central police force or justice system exists within the Free Zone.

Instead, each autonomous sector claims its own jurisdiction and enforces its own laws. When you're in the UCAS Sector, you're under UCAS law; in the Aztlan Sector, you're under Azzie law, and so on.

This leads to many interesting consequences, of course. Two adjoining sectors might have very different ideas about acceptable/legal behavior or what they consider contraband.

For example, most sectors consider it illegal for anyone to enter their territory without jumping through all the appropriate bureaucratic hoops (no big surprise there). But far fewer regulations apply to leaving a territory (unless they've got a warrant out for your arrest or some such drek). Let's think about the gentleman trying to cut his way into Gund's sector. As soon as the intruder steps back out of UCAS territory, he's in another jurisdiction, where his most recent activities aren't illegal. The UCAS forces don't have any legal recourse—they can't even go through the (generally useless) process of trying to extradite him.

Then there are the border markets, best exemplified by the BTL laws. Ute Sector laws are a lot more lenient when it comes to BTL chips and other electronic mind-benders than the laws in the Pueblo and UCAS sectors. "California hots"—chips without ASIST peak control—are as illegal as full-on beetles in UCAS, for example, but they're chill in Ute, as long as there's a health warning on the packaging. So what happens? Predictably, there's a booming business in the Ute Sector cranking out California hots—all perfectly legal—which are then smuggled across the demarcators to the hungry markets in other sectors.)<<<<<<
 —Patty (19:05:03/6-10-55)

>>>>>(There's also another level of complexity. The laws or the level of enforcement in a sector might be slightly different from the owning country. For example, weapon possession laws are more lenient—or, at least, not as stringently enforced—in the UCAS Sector than those in the UCAS proper.)<<<<<<
 —Sydney (20:54:51/6-10-55)



>>>>>(And don't forget megacorporate extraterritoriality. As they are everywhere else, megacorp sites within sectors are considered sovereign territory, outside the sector's jurisdiction. Step onto Yamatetsu property, and you're under Yamatetsu law no matter what sector you're in. (If you want more intel on extraterritoriality and what it means to you, I suggest you check out the **Corporate Shadowfiles** post elsewhere on this board.)<<<<<<

—Derek (23:17:13/6-10-55)

GOING BACK AND FORTH

Though it's often difficult, sometimes dangerous, and usually aggravating, for all the obvious reasons, the Treaty signatories had to make provisions for people to travel between sectors. If the Denver sectors block off any sector from contact with the rest of Denver, the city will collapse within a week or two. It's pure economics. Even if the parent country of the sector does its best to ship in supplies through airdrops or overland shipments, the sector still needs access to other parts of the infrastructure to function properly. The different sectors and their parent nations are always in competition and often at each other's throat, but they make it possible for each other to exist. Trade between the sectors, mostly illegal and underground, keeps them viable.

>>>>>(It's estimated that 30 to 40 percent of the people living in any given sector work in another.)<<<<<<

—Johnny Z (15:23:58/5-19-55)

>>>>>(Working outside your sector shows serious symptoms of brain-fry, if you ask me. One day you're going to find the border closed because one nation slotted off the other once too often, and you won't be able to get to work, or maybe you'll be cut off from home.)<<<<<<

—Todd (00:42:12/5-21-55)

>>>>>(Like sectors decide to commit social and economic suicide real often.)<<<<<<

—Trouty (14:16:28/5-22-55)

>>>>>(Hey, cry me a fraggin' river. When you choose to be a wageslave, you get to put up with drek like this.)<<<<<<

—Mung (03:37:50/5-24-55)

Security at the border posts—the official “transit corridors” between sectors, is far lower than most governments might like, and nowhere near as airtight as they like to claim, but still a matter for concern. Most border posts handle only pedestrian traffic and small motorcycles—the specific distinction is anything they consider too small to be capable of smuggling huge quantities of contraband or illegal aliens. Only a few posts handle larger vehicles. But vehicular traffic fails to be much of an issue because so few Denverites feel any need or desire to take their private vehicles into another sector. So few, in fact, that most of the signatory governments complain about the aggravation of maintaining any vehicular crossing points at all.

>>>>(Yeah, the governments bag about it, but they keep their vehicular crossing points open. Why? Take a look at the size of the next one you see, chummer, and then answer the question.

Most of the vehicular crossing points are fragging huge, much bigger than they need to be to handle a car, truck, or even a laden semitrailer. What kind of vehicles are they built to accommodate?

T-birds, chummer, that's what. LAVs jammed with "imports." Remember the intel about the sectors being dependent on the underground economy? Even if everybody in the Front Range Free Zone put their cars up on blocks and swore never to drive them again, the sectors would keep their vehicular crossing points open to let the t-birds make their "deliveries.")<<<<<

—Zak (15:43:02/6-5-55)

>>>>(They fly over the fraggin' fence! Geeeezz, stop thinking like t-birds have wheels!)<<<<<

—Firelight (20:28:28/6-6-55)

Walking Through

Take the kind of security checkpoint you go through at an airport and jack up the intensity a couple of notches—that'll give you a pretty good idea of the typical pedestrian crossing point.

Everyone going through the crossing point must walk through an archway just jam-packed with sensors—metal detectors, MADs, chem-sniffers—just to get into the "processing area." Anyone who triggers the sensor array will attract the attention of a handful of very large, very mean gentlemen and ladies, typically wearing medium armor and packing SMGs. One of the few ways of getting them off your case once they're on it is for you to submit to a strip search to prove to their satisfaction that the weapon detectors overreacted.

>>>>(Generalizations are often deadly, but here goes with a big one. The archway you walk through at your average crossing point contains a magnetic-anomaly detector (metal detector, for you morons) plus a chem-sniffer, both of average capability (sometimes much more, but this tech's not cheap). If either sensor goes off, guards will march you off somewhere private to explore the nooks and crannies of your body. For a more in-depth discussion on how this drek works, refer to the **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life**, somewhere else on the BBS.)<<<<<

—Hopalyte (16:20:34/5-19-55)

>>>>(There'll usually be a mage or shaman assensing the area too. If you're packing lots of foci and fetishes—or anything particularly powerful—you'll be led away to give a full accounting of just what you've got and why. Make your story convincing.)<<<<<

—Blackstone (21:16:42/5-20-55)

>>>>(I reiterate my doubts about the presence of magicians at every fraggin' checkpoint all the fraggin' time. Real life ain't the tideoo chuckles—there just ain't that many wizzers to be had.)<<<<<

—Firelight (09:32:088/6-3-55)

The sensors, however, are usually ramped pretty low to cut down on the false-alarms. The guards grab most of the people they hassle based on sight alone. Each sector distributes a series of "templates" to their border crossings of what constitutes a "suspicious looking individual" or "interdictable appearance"—in simpler terms, the kinds of people it's wiz to hassle.

>>>>(Guess who appears mostly on those lists? You got it—orks and trolls. It's racial bias, pure and simple.)<<<<<

—Remember Haiti (20:18:14/5-19-55)

>>>>(If you ask me, most racial bias is based on some level of truth.)<<<<<

—Armband (09:28:41/5-20-55)

Once you're through the scanner arch, the fun's only beginning. You'll have to explain to some hard-faced, sour-minded immigration slot just why you want to enter the sector, how long you'll be there, where you'll be staying and all the regular drek. As you're doing this song-and-dance, you'll also be asked to slot your credstick into the immigration officer's scanner and provide a thumbprint. (God help you if the data on your credstick doesn't look acceptable or if the thumbprint data encoded on it doesn't match the digit you're pressing against the scanner.) Most of the immigration officers working the crossing posts consider it their job, their duty and their privilege to put you through pure pluperfect hell before letting you cross. They have the right to refuse anyone admission into the sector for any reason that crosses their minds at the moment. And they have the authority to send you off to one of those little strip-search rooms without so much as telling you the reason why.

>>>>(True enough. But most sectors have at least some kind of "appeal" process in place. If you think you've been jacked with—refused entry unfairly, cavity-searched for no reason—you can usually file an official appeal (some nations call it a "protest" or an "exception"—check the terminology and requirements before doing anything). You probably won't get any satisfaction from it, but the mechanism is in place.)<<<<<

—Monk (16:29:11/5-23-55)

>>>>(What about cyberware?)<<<<<

—Luke (22:48:40/5-23-55)

>>>>(Depends on the sector you're trying to enter. Also depends on whether the immigration grunts know it's there, of course. Some sectors—Aztlán, for example—won't let you in at all if you've got any cyberware other than data headware or pure-and-simple prostheses.

Others are more live-and-let-live, unless you've got some kind of offensive weapon system—spurs or a built-in gun of some kind. Before sectors like this will let you in, you'll have to have the offensive system "restrained." Basically, this is a sensor wired into the control circuitry for the offensive system and

connected to a series of small charges—that’s right, explosive charges—positioned near where the cyberlimb meets the meat. If you use the offensive system—if you extend the spurs, for example—the charges trigger, neatly amputating the cyberlimb! Needless to say, the “restraint” system has an anti-tamper circuit built in, so trying to disconnect it will just trigger the charges.

For obvious reasons, some kinds of cyberware can’t be “restrained” this way—extendible fangs come immediately to mind—so most sectors will simply deny you entry if they know you’ve got gear like that installed.)<<<<<<

—Wu (19:47:20/5-25-55)

>>>>>(If you think I’m going to let anybody wire a fragging bomb into my metal, you’ve got another fragging thing coming, boyo.)<<<<<<

—OK (19:48:13/5-25-55)

>>>>>(A perfectly understandable sentiment. Just don’t expect to be allowed across sector demarcators—legally, that is.)<<<<<<

—Wu (19:48:59/5-25-55)

>>>>>(Anyone ever see the maintenance records on this gear? You know the drek that operates around the clock, isn’t cared for properly and usually is partially exposed to the elements (and probably supplied by lowest contract bidder). Half the time a given piece of gear is acting up, giving questionable results or down completely. Usually the troopers working the line leave them in test-mode so they look like they’re working, but they’re not. If you can figure out which ones aren’t working on a given day (say by raiding the databases of the repair services) you might find access to various sectors a literal walk-through.)<<<<<<

—Firelight (21:20:14/5-26-55)

>>>>>(Software runs all this gear, telling the hardware what to do. And software gets updated, sometimes quite often. How do each of these units get their software updated? They’re on the Matrix. Have a nice trip.)<<<<<<

—Top Shot (21:20:14/5-26-55)

Frequent Travelers

Obviously, this kind of security leads to serious tie-ups at crossing points if there’s any degree of traffic at all. There are enough “frequent travelers”—wageslaves doing the nine-to-seventeen across a demarcator—to give the governments at least some incentive to speed up the process. The “frequent traveler” program now coming into wide use was pioneered by the Aztlan Sector.

Under the program, anyone wishing to be a “frequent traveler” must apply in person to the immigration agencies of the sectors he or she will be traveling into, from and through. The details of the application procedure vary, but it’s always quite harrowing. The applicant must convince all the governments involved that he is no security threat and that he truly warrants “frequent traveler” status. Once he jumps through all the bureaucratic hoops, the applicant receives a special passcard

that contains a microtransponder. The device contains encoded personal information—the kind of data you’d normally find on a credstick. The applicant is urged to keep the passcard safe at all times—a replacement *won’t* be issued.

Once you’re accepted as a frequent traveler, you can use a “fast-track” path through border crossings. You still have to pass through the sensor archway, but instead of dealing with an immigration grunt you just walk through another doorway. This doorway contains a system that interrogates the transponder on your passcard and compares it to existing records. As long as both data sets match and are acceptable you just breeze on through. If anything *doesn’t* match, expect to see the inside of one of those little interrogation rooms.

>>>>>(Before anybody asks, forging a passcard is possible—difficult and costly, but possible.)<<<<<<

—Meister (22:44:22/5-26-55)

>>>>>(So much easier to, um, acquire, a passcard from somebody who’s already gone to all the work of getting them. Hmm? (Of course, this gives you a built-in time limit. Eventually somebody’s going to guess what happened to the original owner and cancel the frequent traveler authorization.))<<<<<<

—Cain (05:31:38/5-28-55)

Vehicular Crossings

Getting through a vehicular crossing point is much more of a production than passing through a pedestrian crossing. The actual procedure varies from sector to sector, but generally everybody in a vehicle has to get out and submit to the same kind of checkpoint process as a traveler at a pedestrian crossing. At the guards’ request, all luggage and objects in the car must be unloaded for a hand inspection. Meanwhile, the car—or whatever the vehicle happens to be—gets its own going-over.

The level of *attention*, shall we say, varies depending on a wide range of factors—whether the driver and passenger look harmless or suspicious, whether there’s any reason to suspect something amiss, the level of suspicion prevalent between the sectors, the phase of the moon, and the way you happen to comb your hair on the morning in question can all figure into this. You can never be sure. One day the border grunts give your car a quick once-over with a hand-held chem-sniffer and scope out the underside with mirrors, taking a grand total of maybe sixty seconds. The next day they fragging near strip it down to the frame. There’s no way of predicting what treatment you’ll get.

>>>>>(Take note that border personnel do have the right and the authority to strip your car if it suits their fancy. And they have no obligation to help you reassemble it afterward.)<<<<<<

—Z Bart (11:10:50/5-24-55)

>>>>>(Speaking from personal distasteful experience, attractive women are far more likely to get hassled at a check point of any kind. The greasy bastards.)<<<<<<

—Widowmaker (10:23:13/5-25-55)



>>>>(Most sectors will automatically confiscate any vehicle engaged in any kind of smuggling—zero tolerance.)<<<<<

—Lew (21:40:31/5-25-55)

>>>>(True, but remember that different sectors have different ideas on what comprises contraband.)<<<<<

—Legal Beagle (09:36:21/5-27-55)

Frequent traveler passes are available for vehicles as well, but usually only for certified delivery vehicles and the personal vehicles of corporate or government officers. Like the personal pass card, the vehicle pass contains a transponder encoded with a drekload of relevant and irrelevant data. The data—the appearance, weight, configuration, number of passengers, and so on—is compared against the data on file. If it matches, wiz. If not, you're fragged.

All deliveries have to be logged into the system at least 24 hours ahead of time. Special transit passes are available for certified and bonded couriers who handle same-day inter-sector delivery, but most data's shifted via the Matrix so few companies work that turf.

>>>>(Also note that customs drones aren't obliged to examine your vehicle. If you've got some kind of "in"—say you're running a regular "delivery" and they're expecting you—they might just let you cruise on through.)<<<<<

—Trisha (09:21:44/6-2-55)

>>>>(I've had it up to fragging here with all this noise about how to get into and out of sectors legally. Why the frag bother and why waste my bandwidth? Somebody cut to the fragging chase here and tell me how to hop sectors without fraggin around with legalities.)<<<<<

—Bonzo (02:14:18/6-3-55)

>>>>(Spoken like a true macho bulldrek shadowrunner. "Why get what I want through legal means when I can risk my hoop and waste a whole lot of effort by doing it illegally?")

But since you asked...

Anyone willing to make the effort, pay the price and take the risk can find ways to get around sector demarcator security. Going over (or under) a wall or fence, spoofing the

sensors long enough to hop over no man's land, dodging the ordnance various folks will be directing your way—it can all be done. It's particularly easy for the wired among us: how long does it take someone with boosted everything to sprint 20 meters (or to jump it, for frag's sake)? Not very long. (Speaking of jumping, heard the rumor in the Ute Sector about this slag nicknamed "Jumpin' Jack Flash"? According to the buzz, he cleared the free-fire track into the Pueblo Sector in one jump.)

And one can always find an enterprising young lad able to forge the datawork you need to slip through a crossing post without grief, even if you don't go the frequent traveler route. Like anywhere, the cost for forged datawork varies wildly, from drek-cheap to outrageous, but you usually get what you pay for. If you've got the wherewithal—magical or technological—just "acquire" the appropriate datawork from someone who has no further use for it. (The trick here is to make sure your physical ident—thumbprint, and so on—matches the intel in the datawork.)

Check out the later section on Infrastructure, and you'll see that some people cross sector demarcators without any drek from the border badges at all. DocWagon™, recently hired by the council, comes immediately to mind. Now if an enterprising young lass could find a way to "hitch a ride" with one of DocWagon™'s emergency response teams ... Bonded couriers get through, too.

And you can always try getting through the old-fashioned way—by tipping your border guard generously. But I wouldn't recommend flashing hard currency at border crossings. Someone might take an unfriendly interest in why Officer Friendly is pocketing a thousand nuyen note—although some people have managed it. (Gutsy slags—or lucky slags, I don't know which.) Much better to make a donation to the Border Guard's Charity Fund in exchange for future consideration.

Of course, if you're feeling particularly John Wayne—or suicidal—you can always try blasting your way across a demarcator. People have done it and lived to tell the tale. Not many, but some.

Like I said, anyone who wants to can find a way.)<<<<<

—Tanya (12:36:00/6-3-55)

>>>>>(Anytime a need exists, entrepreneurs will be around to satisfy that need. Crossing sector demarcators is no different.

The Free Zone is home to a whole community of independent operators generally known as coyotes. These folks specialize in getting people—and sometimes merchandise—from one sector to another. Technique, professionalism, trustworthiness/honesty, scale of operations, price, and types of merchandise and the particular demarcators they're willing to take on all vary from coyote to coyote. For example, a slag calling himself Dutch specializes in getting individuals into the Azzie Sector. He won't handle merchandise that doesn't walk, he won't take on groups, and he won't even discuss getting you into any other part of the Free Zone.

Some coyotes are just specialized fixers—they offer

forged datawork, credsticks, that kind of drek. What you do with their "product" is entirely up to you. Others handle the whole procedure, shepherding you through a border crossing and providing corroborating evidence for the "legend" on your forged credstick. Still others have entirely different techniques, bypassing the demarcator security entirely by leading you through sewers, disused subway tunnels and that sort of thing.

How much do they charge? The lowest base price I've heard bandied about is 2,500 nuyen for a single person doing a one-way over a single demarcator. (I don't vouch for the professionalism of the person offering this low a price.) A more representative price is 10,000 nuyen for the same service, and it goes way up from there.

Obviously, there's no Professional Coyotes' Association. As with any fixer, do your homework before you hand over your cred and put your life in their greasy little hands. References are always a good idea, and if any coyote I'm negotiating with won't give me any, I'd suspect that none of his "clients" survived the experience.)<<<<<

—Magister (09:21:28/6-5-55)

>>>>>(I keep hearing the buzz that security assets from various sectors are posing as coyotes to entrap would-be smugglers. Anyone check me on that?)<<<<<

—Zil (12:10:30/6-5-55)

>>>>>(Hai, I've heard the same rumors. Makes sense, doesn't it? Of course, who are they going to nab but newbies too green to check things out before getting into something?)<<<<<

—Lennox (23:12:12/6-7-55)

>>>>>(Shadows are the same the whole fragging world over. You never do biz with someone you don't know personally and you don't trust—not for something as fragging vital as hopping sectors, at least.)<<<<<

—Argent (12:40:10/6-9-55)

>>>>>(The most popular way I know of quietly crossing sectors is underground, in custom tunnels. They start on one side of the sector border, usually a block or two away and out of sight of the border itself. They cross under the demarcator and exit in some other building a block or so away on the other side. Of course you gotta know somebody to get under and across. Good luck!)<<<<<

—Third Man (02:10:51/6-10-55)

EXTRADITION TREATIES

I'm sorry to say that this important topic always seems to be in a state of flux throughout the Front Range Free Zone. Sometimes two nations—Ute and Sioux, for example—might be working hand in glove, and a Ute request to the Sioux government to extradite some particular slag might go through as smoothly as drek through a devil rat, taking no more than a couple of hours from application to implementation. Next time you check it out, the Sioux chiefs may have decided to "file" (translation: lose) any extradition requests coming from Ute or

at least sit on them for months—plenty long enough for the subject of the extradition request to get herself safely lost in those comfortable old shadows. You can never really know what's going to happen, and the situation often changes even as the datawork is being processed.

>>>>(Most of the countries here never even bother with this extradition drek. If a perp has skipped to another sector, the nation where he pulled his crime usually goes one of the following three routes.

First, it may decide to forget about the slag and write the whole thing off as a waste of time. Of course they'll make sure the slag never gets back into their country.

Second route is pulling a snatch. Send a covert-ops team into the other nation, bag the guy and drag him back to stand trial. Kind of a "unilateral extradition," where you save the other country the potential aggravation of processing datawork.

The third route is simply icing the perp. Send in a covert-ops team again, but this time just geek the guy.

Options two and three have potentially unpleasant consequences if the nation playing host to the perp catches on. (Most nations get a tad twitchy about foreign covert-ops teams running missions on their turf. Funny how that is ...) But it does send a message to all other would-be malcontents—the arm of the law is very, very long, and sometimes it's holding a silenced pistol.)<<<<<

—SPD (20:19:26/5-19-55)

>>>>(Aztlán has raised options two and three to an art form.)<<<<<

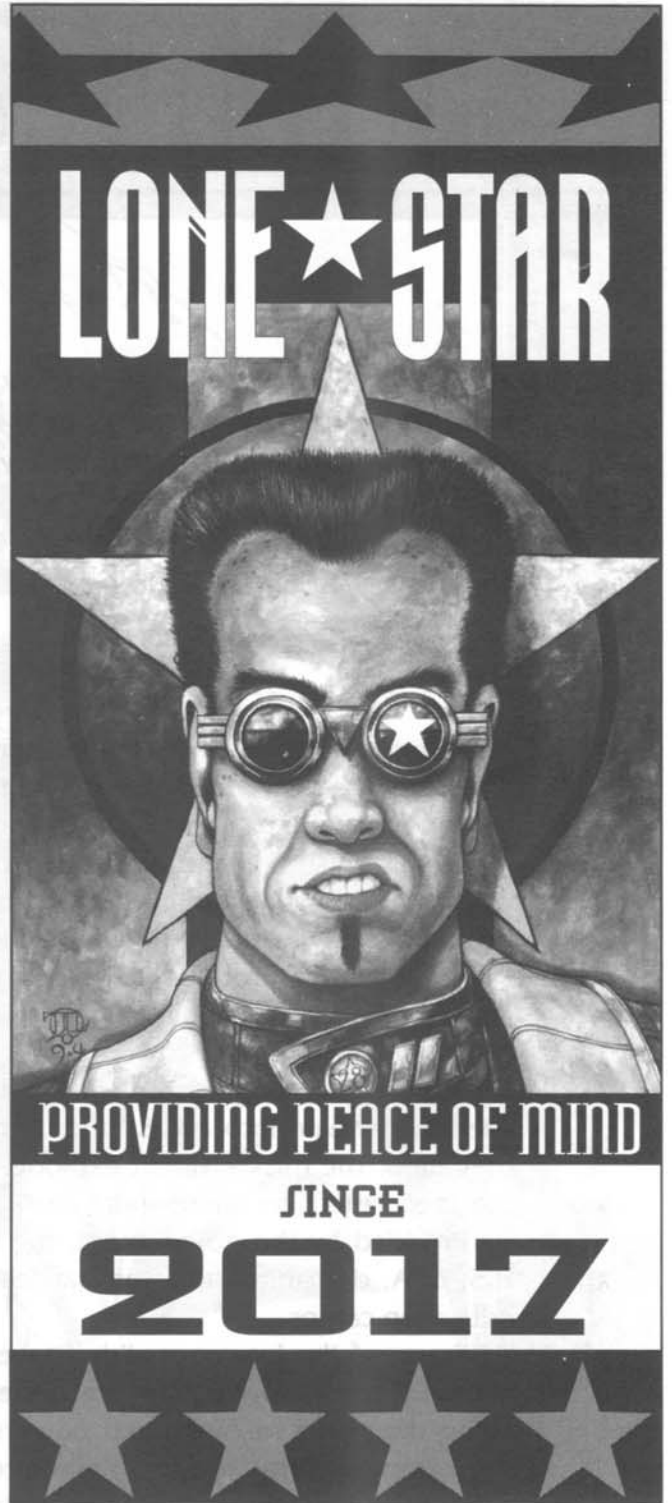
—Pyramid Watcher (01:53:19/5-22-55)

>>>>(Sioux's tried it a couple of times, too, sending in the Wildcats—oops, sorry, retired Wildcats—to "deliver a message." They're not as smooth at it as the Azzies, and they've been caught in the act at least three times to my personal knowledge. Of course the Sioux government immediately disavows all knowledge of the team's actions and existence, but these protestations of innocence usually fall on deaf ears.)<<<<<

—Pammy (20:01:55/5-23-55)

If you really need a guideline here, assume you'll be extradited only if you did something that's considered a crime in the nation you're currently in. For example, murder is illegal pretty much everywhere, so it's likely the CAS Sector will extradite you to the Pueblo Sector if you geeked someone on Pueblo turf. On the other hand, Ute will probably laugh when the UCAS requests they hand over that dangerous dealer of "California hot" simsense, because Cal hots are legal in Ute.

>>>>(Megacorps are even more arbitrary and unpredictable in their responses to extradition requests from sovereign states or other megacorps. Again, a key issue is whether the "crime" that prompted the extradition request is actually illegal under the jurisdiction where the perpetrator is sheltering. Public relations considerations will sometimes affect the behavior of a corp more than they will the behavior of a government, however.



Refer to the **Corporate Shadowfiles** post for more discussion on corporate jurisdictions and extradition practices, and keep in mind the "maximum drek" rule—assume that everything will transpire in such a way as to get you in the deepest drek possible and plan accordingly.)<<<<<

—Valerie (22:42:05/6-1-55)

HOW IT GOT THIS WAY

<<The FRFZ we live in today came about because the Treaty quickly became a game where real estate, face, and people's lives were the pieces. Unfortunately, it was a game no one could ever really win.>>

—Professor Linda Twenton-Chen (A City Divided: Denver After the Treaty/REF# DATT082-scrn110)

dds are that anyone who's logged onto this sourceboard already knows at least one version of what really happened to Denver, but just for you slots who didn't come to the meetings, here's a *really* quick rundown. Pay attention.

Starting just after the turn of the millennia, the old U.S. government started conspiring with the big corps to hand them federally protected lands so that these long-neglected resources (land, clean water, forests, you know the drill) could be put to "productive" use. To that end, the government perverted existing law, illegally ran Native American tribes off lands granted to their ownership, blah, blah, blah.

Some tribes fought back and died for their troubles. One tribe protested by sneaking a team into a U.S. nuclear missile silo and launching a missile before they died. The missile didn't explode. Lots of theories as to why, no proof. Save the speculations for somewhere else.

Prodded by the government, the God (or something)-fearing citizens of the U.S. of A. demanded that the "lawless Injuns" be rounded up and placed in re-education camps.

Some of the internees didn't take well to this treatment, and one of them named Daniel "Howling Coyote" Coleman led a revolt on Christmas Eve, 2011. Using the newly re-Awakened powers of magic, Coyote led his followers out of the camp and into history. Years later, out in the wilderness, they and other natives who practiced the ancient shamanic arts performed the "Great Ghost Dance" and forced the government to back down and hand a big chunk of the continental United States back to its original owners.





This was all legally recognized in the Treaty of Denver, signed in 1808. As part of the treaty, Denver was subdivided among the powers that bordered the city (or had muscled in on the deal)—the United States of America, the Ute Nation, the Pueblo Corporate Council, the Sioux Nation, and Aztlan.

WEATHERING THE STORM

So, what had been happening in Denver during the chaos that historians later called the Indian Wars? Plenty, chummers. Effectively, the city was beleaguered. All parties involved recognized Denver's significance as a transportation and communications hub. The military installations around Denver, Boulder, and Colorado Springs made it a vital part of the United States' battle against the SAIM (Sovereign American Indian Movement) and later the NAN (Native American Nations). For the same reason, the area became a prime target for guerrilla raids by Howling Coyote's followers. Both sides escalated their offensives in response to each

other's actions. Guerrilla raids turned into meeting actions, and at one point—right near the end, when the NAN forces scraped together enough hardware to outfit a couple of military units—it looked as though a genuine slugfest would erupt over rights to the city.

>>>>>(That was mid-2017. Scary times, chummers. For nine days, nothing made it into the city except military airlifts—and man-pack SAMs knocked a lot of them out of the sky. And what were those airlifts carrying? Food for the populace? Null. Ordnance, mainly, and supplies for the doggies doing the fighting. Anything left over for us civilians? Again, null.

Ever been in a city short on food? Not just the shadows and the alleys, but the whole fragging city? I was thirteen at the time, and even now, 37 years later, I remember what it was like. People geeking people for the last can of peas on a store shelf. Neighbors hunting down dogs and cats. Riots. Nightmares.)<<<<<

—Abraxas (15:09:31/5-19-55)

>>>>(Why put this kind of provision in at all? I assume the Treaty Commission—the slags hacking this thing together—wanted to prevent any country from “gouging” Denver through ridiculously high tax assessments or trying to blockade it economically through prohibitive trade tariffs.

Great idea, in principle. In practice? The consequences should have been pretty fragging obvious to anyone with half a brain, but somehow the commissioners didn’t catch on. (Could have asked me.)

We’ll examine those consequences in exquisite detail later on.)<<<<<

—The Chromed Accountant (13:58:37/5-23-55)

The council, on the other hand, had the power to implement an income tax, a value-added tax (the dreaded VAT), and other “incidental levies.” The council would set tax and levy rates based on current conditions, but the Treaty itself set caps on those rates.

>>>>(It should come as a surprise to nobody that as almost its first action, the council immediately voted—in one of the few unanimous decisions ever reached—to raise the income tax and VAT rates to the maximum allowed under the Treaty.)<<<<<

—The Keynesian Kid (09:40:51/5-23-55)

The Treaty also prohibited any nation from stationing military forces in the Free Zone or moving military personnel to within the boundaries of the Free Zone.

>>>>(As I posted in the NAN files a long time ago, the Treaty Commission didn’t understand the military mind worth a frag. No country has active, commissioned military units in the Front Range Free Zone, true. But they all maintain “civilian security services” that work with contracted “consultants” and “advisors” drawn from their standing armed forces. The security services personnel are, strictly speaking, purely civilian—they hold no commissioned or non-commissioned ranks and draw no salaries from the military. But they all pack mil-spec weaponry and receive military training. Same damn thing, as far as I’m concerned.)<<<<<

—Hangfire (20:13:44/5-24-53)

>>>>(The Denver nations find other, creative ways of getting around the provision—like the fighter-bomber squadrons “staging” out of Peterson.)<<<<<

—Zoomy (00:23:54/6-2-55)

Furthermore, the Treaty specifically stated that the Denver area would be “open” for all claimant countries (presumably the *Free* in Front Range Free Zone). The actual wording of the Treaty is a lawyer’s wet dream and an English teacher’s nightmare, and this section alone runs to several terapulses of data. (If you’ve got nothing better to do with your life, it’s posted somewhere on-line. Go to, and have fun.) What it boils down to is the commission’s attempt to prevent the city from being divided up into autonomous sectors like Old Berlin before German reunification in the last century.

>>>>(Didn’t work worth a frag, did it?)<<<<<
—Hammer Damaged (21:00:46/5-29-55)

>>>>(No, but it was a damn good try. Those provisions of the Treaty held for nearly 20 years before the United States managed to find and exploit a loophole.)<<<<<

—Loree (01:42:35/5-30-55)

TAKING A STAND

The Treaty’s voting provisions seemed workable on the surface, but their faults soon became obvious. The three-of-five majority provision enabled the three tribal nations—Pueblo, Sioux, and Ute—to form a voting bloc (a logical alignment, because their goals were more often parallel than opposed). That left the States and Aztlan holding the drekky end of the stick.

>>>>(Are you talking some kind of “tribal solidarity” here? Never been no such thing.)<<<<<

—Olivia (14:30:09/6-1-55)

>>>>(In any other context I’d agree, Olivia, but remember the political situation. Years of war in which the tribals saw the United States as the ultimate enemy were just coming to an end. Regardless of disagreements and rivalries between the Amerindian nations, wouldn’t you think they’d rather side with each other than give anything to the United States?

And then there’s Aztlan. On the surface, it looks like another aboriginal, First Nation kind of place. But it’s from Central America, not the main continent—and even in 2018 it was a big, big mystery. Not likely that the tribal nations were going to feel overly comfortable with Aztlan.

The result? A solid voting bloc.)<<<<<

—Lucy Wu (10:23:58/6-5-55)

Despite a “tribal bloc” born of a common enemy rather than common interests, the first five years following the Treaty passed in a general spirit of cooperation. The Treaty provided many deadlines for relocating “Anglos” from tribal lands, and the United States fell way behind on most of these commitments almost immediately. The States figured that “playing well with other children” on the Council of Denver was the best way to deflect criticism that it wasn’t living up to its obligations. If the U.S. representative kicked up a ruckus on the council, it seemed likely that the tribal nations would respond by taking the United States to task for missing their relocation deadlines.

In 2023, the States reached a breaking point. The U.S. representative, Marlene Weiss, realized the tribal bloc was railroading through certain resolutions for the sole purpose of fragging with the United States. Animosity for the States still ran high among the tribal representatives, and the U.S. government became convinced that they were using their position of dominance in the council as a blunt instrument with which to beat on the U.S.

Weiss didn’t react to this insight right away. Instead, she discussed the perceived situation with her superiors in the U.S. government and proposed a solution. It didn’t take much to

convince her superiors to take action, galled as they were by their "defeat" by the Ghost Dancers. They authorized preparations to be made under a cover of impenetrable secrecy.

>>>>(I'd call it more porous than impenetrable. The NAN nations knew what was coming. They had spies and informants so deep inside Washington that they knew what the cabinet would decide before the president did.)<<<<<<

—Eagle Feather (02:03:07/5-30-55)

>>>>(Why didn't they act, then?)<<<<<<

—Moraya (16:29:40/6-2-55)

The plan Weiss proposed was basically the same one the East German government had used in 1961. All along the border of the U.S.-held Denver territory, construction units—officially civilian, yet using military equipment and techniques—moved into place and prepared for action.

At the council meeting on April 8, 2023, after an impassioned speech denouncing the tribal nations for breaking the spirit of cooperation underlying the Treaty, Marlene Weiss officially withdrew from the Council of Denver, taking with her all American citizens in the Free Zone's government. This action rendered the council at least temporarily powerless, because the Treaty had no provision for a quorum less than full attendance. (In other words, all representatives must be present for any vote or resolution to be binding.) The tribal nations quickly tried to end this dilemma by declaring themselves a quorum, but the Aztlan representative—for reasons of his own, never stated nor discussed—blocked this attempt.

>>>>(No great difficulty guessing why he did that. Remember, he'd been on the drekky end of the tribal bloc for as long as Weiss. His motivation was nothing more than a case of good, old-fashioned bugger-your-neighbor.)<<<<<<

—Laserlight (11:12:36/5-24-55)

As soon as Weiss pulled out and effectively immobilized the council, the U.S. construction teams began their work. At the same time, Weiss addressed the citizens of the Free Zone via a high-amplitude "pirate" trideo feed beamed directly from a low-orbit U.S. comsat passing over Denver.

>>>>(Nominally it was a comsat. Actually, it was a spysat. Denver was then, and still is, in the footprint of at least one surveillance bird every second of every day.)<<<<<<

—Rage (23:09:19/5-25-55)

The other members of the council tried to jam the feed, but failed.

Weiss claimed that the U.S. government was taking action to protect its citizens in Denver from "overt aggression" by the Native American Nations. To this end, the United States was now creating an "autonomous defense zone" where these citizens could live safely and peaceably, free from the attempted oppression of the other signatory states. As she spoke, the construction crews were demolishing buildings and throwing up a

dividing wall around a whole segment of eastern Denver. More than 75 kilometers long, this wall dwarfed the long-vanished Berlin Wall.

>>>>(Note that the lines of this original wall don't exactly match the current borderlines. During 2034 and 2035, the borders between all the sectors shifted around a lot. You can still see the wide "avenues" and sometimes even the rubble that mark that original wall, though.)<<<<<<

—Fromer (05:24:21/5-28-55)

If the NAN nations had reacted immediately and together, they could have blocked the creation of this "autonomous defense zone." The construction crews were merely unarmed civilians hired to do a job, and virtually any show of military strength would have stopped them in their tracks. But the NAN states apparently sat back and watched.

The most popular explanation for their failure to act proposes that the NAN representatives were reluctant to violate the provisions of the Treaty by bringing military assets into the FRFZ. At least, that's how the tribal representatives later justified their inaction. The truth of the matter was that each of the NAN nations believed the others would take advantage of the situation if they created a military presence in Denver. This mutual mistrust paralyzed the tribal nations for four vital days. By the time they agreed on a response that answered all their misgivings, the autonomous defense zone was a fait accompli. The wall was nearly complete, and dismantling it would surely have meant war. Instead, the tribal bloc responded by establishing a native sector.

Suddenly caught between two militant factions, Aztlan carved out its own territory in the heart of the Denver metropolitan area, more or less the same area it controls today. After this bout of polarization, things settled down. Denver enjoyed an uneasy peace, with the three factions—the United States, Aztlan and the tribal bloc—glaring at each other across dividing walls and free-fire zones.

>>>>(Free-fire zones? I thought there was no military presence.)<<<<<<

—Puget Sounder (23:47:11/5-21-55)

>>>>("Civilian security consultants," remember? You don't have to be a full-on soldier to fire a 50-cal.)<<<<<<

—Lang (07:08:19/5-24-55)

CAS JOINS THE PARTY

This situation held for ten years. Then, in 2034, ten southern states seceded from the UCAS (the former United States) and proclaimed themselves the independent Confederated American States (CAS). Aztlan immediately recognized the new nation, and eventually the UCAS grudgingly accepted the new world order by signing the Treaty of Richmond with CAS.

It didn't take long for certain bright sparks in the UCAS government to realize they might be able to use this apparent setback to their advantage, at least in the limited realm of the

FRFZ. Even though the nation still felt a good deal of animosity against the CAS, the UCAS decided to “make a place at the table” for the newly formed country. Interpreting one of the few vague provisions of the Treaty of Denver in a way that suited them, UCAS voluntarily split its autonomous defense zone roughly in half, ceding one portion to CAS. At the next meeting of the council—called by the tribal bloc specifically to blast the UCAS for jacking around with the Treaty—a CAS representative appeared at the meeting table, claiming to be a bona fide full member of the Council of Denver.

Predictably, the tribal nations protested vehemently, but neither the UCAS nor the CAS representative would back down. To add to the confusion, the Aztlan representative just as vehemently supported the UCAS/CAS faction. After several days of negotiations that came across more like screaming fits, the tribal bloc recognized they weren’t going to budge the other council representatives and accepted—albeit with a very bad grace—the legitimacy of the CAS representative.

The addition of the CAS representative changed the balance of power in the council forever. According to the Treaty, decisions could only be approved by a majority of representatives. “Majority” shifted from three of five to four of six, suddenly eliminating the Pueblo-Sioux-Ute domination. Incidentally, it also prevented the non-tribals—UCAS, CAS, and Aztlan—from forming their own voting bloc.

>>>>(The numbers change also created the possibility of voting deadlocks, something the architects of the Treaty hadn’t anticipated. You could argue that bringing CAS into the council put an end to that body’s effectiveness. After 2034, nearly every important resolution to come before the council ended in a deadlock. The wonders of democracy, neh?)<<<<<
—Randolph (06:58:55/6-4-55)

The three tribal nations immediately disagreed about how best to handle their loss of power. This initial disagreement eventually grew so heated that it led to a complete breakdown of diplomatic relations between the nations. As UCAS, CAS, and Aztlan looked on—heartily amused, no doubt—the tribal bloc disintegrated, and Pueblo, Sioux, and Ute carved the common native sector into three autonomous zones.

>>>>(And that’s the way things still stand today. Six zones of influence—armed camps, in many cases—under the nominal governance of a deadlocked and impotent council.)<<<<<
—Randolph (07:02:04/6-4-55)

Since that radical power shift, nearly every decision splits the council into two even factions. Depending on the nature of the resolution before the council, the members of each faction shift. Sometimes the three tribals band together against everyone else; other times Aztlan will side with Pueblo and CAS against the three “northern” nations. The Treaty contains no tie-breaking provision, because the possibility of a tie simply did not exist when the council first convened.

Unfortunately, the Treaty is crystal clear on at least one point: any change to the structure of the council must be

approved unanimously by the representatives. If the council can’t reach a majority decision on anything that matters, how can it ever hope to reach a *unanimous* one?

>>>>(Hey, wait a tick. They changed the council once, by bringing in CAS. Do the same thing again.)<<<<<
—Halle (12:15:58/5-20-55)

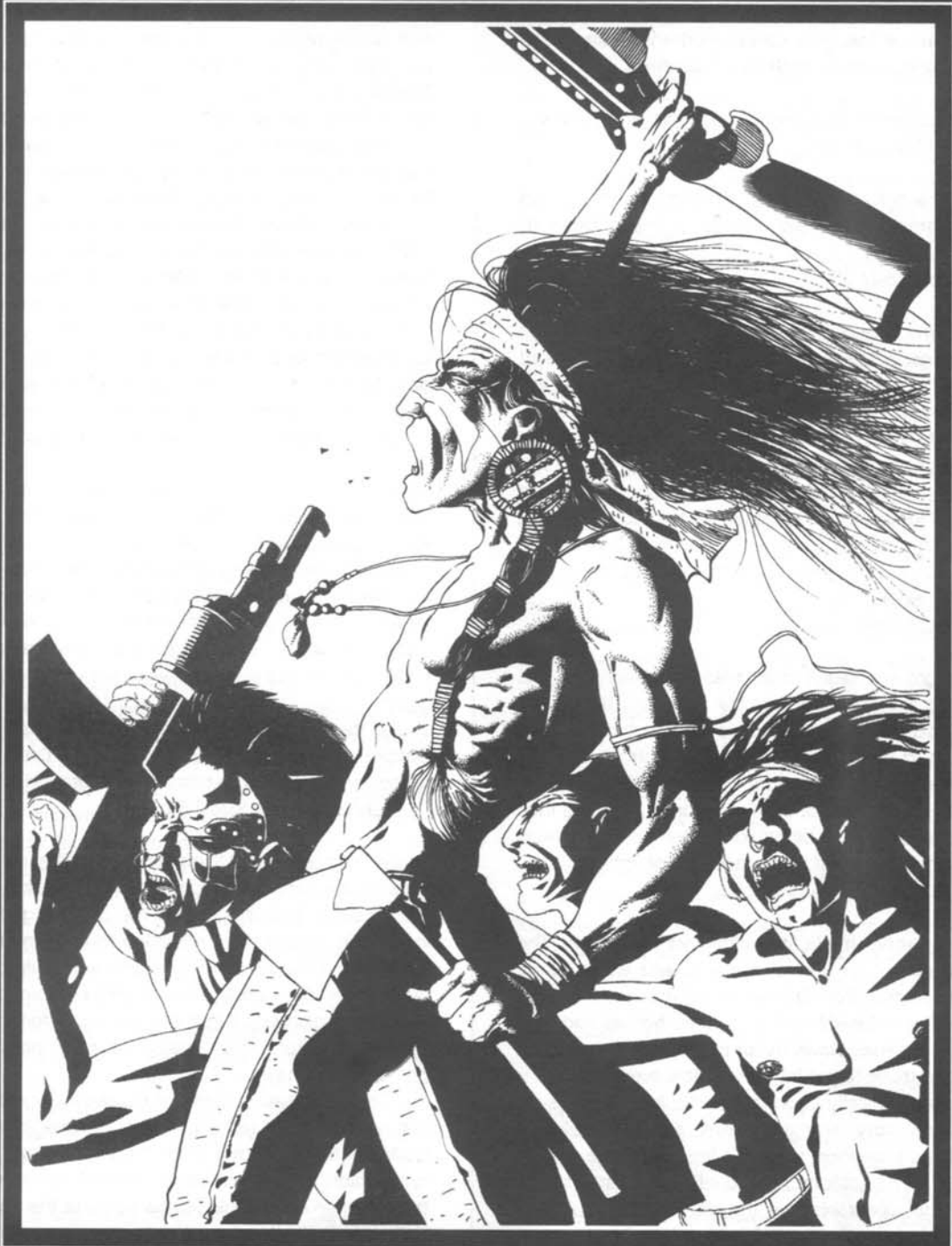
>>>>(Special case, Halle. It only worked that time because the UCAS basically split in two, voluntarily ceding some of its territory and diluting its influence on the council. Theoretically, any of the nations could break the deadlock by doing the same thing: splitting themselves in two. For example, if Pueblo schismed into—say—a Zuñi and a Hopi nation, each of the new countries would get a cut of the Pueblo Sector. Not particularly likely, considering.)<<<<<
—Leo (06:03:13/5-23-55)

>>>>(Hey, Leo. I keep hearing weird, recurring buzz about people getting choked over Texans controlling Denver. What’s the intel on that?)<<<<<
—PPP (15:05:19/5-28-64)

>>>>(There’s been some real animosity against Texas and Texans for at least a couple of centuries. Way back in the Civil War, a Texan unit was ordered to capture the city of Denver and the gold fields of what used to be called Colorado. They failed—the Colorado Volunteers kicked the Texans’ hoops at the Battle of La Glorietta Pass in New Mexico. Back toward the end of the last century, a lot of people believed that Texan tourists and investors were trying to take Denver by buying it, because they had once failed to take it militarily. Plenty of Free Zoners still consider themselves “true” Denverites and Coloradans. (I guess I’m one.) And it picks them no fragging end to see the CAS flag—with the Lone Star of Texas prominently displayed—flying over part of our city.)<<<<<
—Leo (05:43:32/5-30-55)

RAZING THE SPRAWL

Before the Indian Wars, Denver offered a classic example of urban sprawl. Granted, it wasn’t nearly as huge or as badly managed as the metroplexes lining the SoCal coast or stretching ever-outward from New York. But the fact remained that the once-distinct cities of Boulder and Colorado Springs had been absorbed by pseudopods of the amorphous mass that was the Greater Denver Metropolitan Region (GDMR). It was an accurate generalization to say that most tribal people considered all sprawls clear representation of the Anglos’ rape of the land—and the GDMR was no exception. During the last tense months before the failed Genocide Campaign, when Denver was beleaguered by magical and mundane attacks from Amerind guerillas in the foothills, the U.S. Army razed some areas of the sprawl as a tactical defense. The army engaged in this “enforced urban renewal,” as some wags called it at the time, out of desperation. Over the decades, the GDMR sprawl had spread out to



surround many of the region's key military bases, a situation that seriously compromised their security. They were well aware of how much easier it is to sneak a few man-pack SAMs within striking distance of an airbase through a tenement neighborhood than across open ground. U.S. forces, then, took the opportunity created by the tribal-Anglo tension to clear extensive "security zones"—otherwise known as killing grounds—around most military installations.

>>>>(What happened to the people who lived there?)<<<<<
—Shakra (05:10:46/5-21-55)

>>>>(You think the army gave a frag? Chummer, entire armies of homeless roamed the area, trying to find places to squat.)<<<<<
—Timor (17:36:17/5-24-55)

>>>>(Don't get me wrong, I'm not defending the destruction of peoples' homes. But a good portion of those "armies of homeless" bailed out voluntarily. Frag, thousands took to the highways long before those areas met the bulldozer's blade to get the hell out of Denver now, before the food riots got worse and before the Amerinds took over the city. And many didn't want to leave Denver entirely, but were real keen to get as far away from military installations as possible. (Would you like to live within spitting distance of a big, juicy military target?) When the wrecking balls swung, a lot of the buildings they tore down had been deserted for weeks.)<<<<<
—Montcalm (23:49:48/5-26-55)

>>>>(The killing grounds didn't really help that much. The U.S. military still had a conventional warfare mindset. They either hadn't understood or refused to acknowledge that most of what they described as "artillery" and "missile" attacks against their bases were actually magical effects—spells cast by shamans safely in the foothills of the Front Range, spotting their targets through telescopes or binoculars. After all, spell effects don't diminish with distance. All you need is line of sight.)<<<<<
—Midnight Rocker (13:23:10/5-27-55)

These security zones made little difference in the end. The Great Ghost Dance put an end to the war, and when peace broke out, many refugees from Denver turned around and headed home, expecting to be able return to their houses and take up their business as usual. Some major provisions of the Treaty of Denver changed those hopes into impossible dreams.

Denver was symbolically important to the NAN nations—it represented their victory over the States, and their spirit of cooperation. (This cooperation wouldn't last, of course, but at the time it was highly significant.) Many influential natives considered it totally unacceptable that the city remain an Anglo-style sprawl. They insisted that something be done *now*.

To address the tribal nations' stated concerns, Clause CCXCVII-A of the Treaty stated that certain areas of the Denver sprawl would be "returned to their natural state"—in other words, razed to the ground. Enough of the city would be bulldozed during the next five years, the Treaty promised,

to convert the GDMR back into three distinct cities. Further, the Treaty slapped a categorical restriction on further building. No new buildings could be constructed on razed ground, or in such a way to extend the cities beyond their "traditional limits."

An interesting idea in theory, but in practice, the interpretation of this provision almost led to a resumption of hostilities. Just what were the "traditional limits" of the cities of Denver, Boulder, and Colorado Springs? And just *which* areas of the sprawl would be "returned to their natural state?"

After several months of vicious wrangling, the three tribal signatories settled on an acceptable answer. (Neither the United States nor Aztlan liked it, of course, but at the time the tribal bloc could railroad through any resolution it had a mind to.) NAN declared that the "traditional limits" of the three cities would coincide with the oldest accurate map still available. This turned out to be a 1987 U.S. Geodetic Survey map. The official interpretation of Clause CCXCVII-A, then, was that buildings could remain or be constructed on any tract of land developed prior to 1987. If the 1987 map showed an area as vacant land, any structures currently covering that area would be razed, and no building would be allowed on such land at any future time.

>>>>(And did that cause trouble. The United States and Aztlan eventually agreed, but that didn't mean that the Denverites living on "proscribed" territory had to sit still for it. Now, this provoked the generally peaceful Denverites into armed insurrection. The tribal nations sent in their "civilian security assets" to sort things out, but that just led to more bloodshed. Finally, the NAN nations leaned on the U.S. government—basically saying, "You settle your Anglos down, or we'll fire up the old Ghost Dance again."

In the end, the U.S. government provided aid to the tribal nations in evicting tens of thousands of Denverites from their homes and razing those homes to the ground.)<<<<<
—Macro (08:29:53/6-1-55)

>>>>(Even with the U.S. government taking a hand in the evictions, many people still didn't go quietly. In the period between the cessation of hostilities and the actual signing of the Treaty, low-grade terrorist-style resistance to any Amerind presence in Denver and the surrounding region was fairly common. Of the two main factions behind this activity, one group called itself the Colorado Volunteers (I didn't know the historical significance of that name before; thanks Leo), and the other organization simply called itself Unity.

Thirty-five-year hindsight makes it very apparent that a staunch group of retired military people formed the central cadre of the Colorado Volunteers—a couple of old generals and majors, and a half-senile admiral, namely—who believed they'd taken on a battle for the honor of the good old U.S. of A. Unity, on the other hand, felt more like a policlub, and its founders were later shown to have close ties with Alamos 20K. Though the two groups shared the same ultimate goal—to end outside influence over Denver—their philosophies were very different. Unity had at its core a very strong racist, xenophobic slant, while the Volunteers' motives were more pure.

When the U.S. government caved in to pressure and assisted the tribals in clearing the "superfluous" portions of Denver, the leaders of the Colorado Volunteers bowed to the inevitable and gave up their battle. Unity just increased the intensity of its terrorist activities, and its membership swelled. Many of the rank-and-file Colorado Volunteers had given up on the battle along with their leaders, but some decided to continue the fight with Unity. And hundreds, maybe thousands, more were moved to do something when their own government "sold them out."

The new interpretation of the "Renewal Clause"—known to most Denverites as the "Demolition Clause"—set off five years of on-again-off-again terrorist activity against everybody involved in the relocation process.)<<<<<

—Mongoose (10:31:38/6-3-55)

>>>>(By 2030, the terrorism just kind of faded away. The occasional flare-up still occurs in "garden spots" like Five Points, but all vestiges of an organized program of resistance ended around that year. Unity is still around today, though as your typical anti-Indian anti-metahuman anti-just-about-fragging-anything Alamos 20K-aligned poli, spouting its rhetoric of hatred.)<<<<<

—Teowynn (09:28:57/6-9-55)

The "harmonization" of the Front Range Free Zone, as it was optimistically called by the tribal bloc, was more or less complete by 2027, only a year or two after the target date.

>>>>(Not completely. Take the Aurora "Warrens," for example. Back in the 1980s, a real estate crash led to a lot of homes being reposessed and then resold at bargain-basement prices. This allowed many low-income families to move into the area. As the Aurora region sprawled, more and more low-cost housing sprung up, including a high-density subsidized-housing area known locally as the Aurora Project. The Project, of course, was built after 1986—as was much of southern Aurora, for that matter—and so stood on proscribed land. The relocation teams came in, as everyone knew they would, and moved the people out. The project buildings stood empty, waiting for the bulldozers.

They didn't come. Thirty years later, the Project—now called the "Warrens"—still stands. It's packed to the fragging eaves with squatters and gangers and others with little or no income. It's infested with vermin, of the two-, four-, and six-legged varieties. It is not a good place to go after dark, and it's not much better when the sun's shining.)<<<<<

—Leo (06:04:49/5-30-55)

>>>>(Doesn't make any sense at all. Who owns the land and the properties in the Warrens—the council?)<<<<<

—Bombardier (06:05:13/5-30-55)

>>>>(Nobody owns it. According to the Treaty, it's proscribed land. Nobody can own it, nobody can build on it. It's supposed to be vacant land, "returned to its natural state," remember?

Kind of "given back to Gaia." Nobody can own this kind of land.)<<<<<

—Leo (06:08:51/5-30-55)

>>>>(Then why the frag haven't the corps moved in?)<<<<<

—Bombardier (06:09:59/5-30-55)

>>>>(Anybody awake in there? What have I just been saying? It's nobody's land, officially supposed to be razed and turned back into desert or scrub land or whatever. Remember, Clause CCXCVII-A is still in effect. At any time, without any kind of official warning, the bulldozers can roll in and take out everything. What corp in its right mind is going to invest millions of nuyen in any kind of operation where they can get closed down and cleaned out at any time, without any hope of restitution?)<<<<<

—Leo (06:13:37/5-30-55)

>>>>(Okay, you pedantic slot, I get all that. But will the council do that? The tribal bloc doesn't have a lock on all voting any more.)<<<<<

—Bombardier (06:15:00/5-30-55)

>>>>(Oh, it's not a dumb-hoop question after all. It's not a council question anymore, Bombardier. The council ratified the interpretation of the Relocation Clause back in 2019. It also put in place what you could call a "standing subcommittee," to handle relocation and "harmonization" issues. That subcommittee's still in place, and its mandate remains unchanged. To change the mandate or shut down the subcommittee entirely would take a council vote. A couple of votes on the issue have been called during the past couple of years, but they've all resulted in deadlocks. The relocation subcommittee still exists, its personnel still draw salaries. And, on any morning when the urge strikes its fancy, the subcommittee can start the bulldozers rolling into the Aurora Warrens.)<<<<<

—Leo (06:16:56/5-30-55)

>>>>(But would they roll the dozers, that's the question? Think it through. The Aurora Warrens is the last area that hasn't been razed. So as long as the Warrens exist, the relocation committee hasn't finished its job, and its members can continue to draw salaries. I'd bet nuyen that that's the real reason the Warrens still stand—and will continue to do so.)<<<<<

—Control (11:08:32/5-31-55)

Obviously, the population of Denver and its environs today is considerably greater than in 1986. This meant that razing "proscribed" land increased the population density, necessitating the proliferation of high-rise residential buildings. Though some regions of the FRFZ still contain single-family dwellings, these are few and far between, and land prices for these isolated plots are in the stratosphere.

>>>>(Translation: Single family dwellings only in little luxury-class enclaves, most of them surrounded with enough security to make them armed camps.)<<<<<

—Hyperion (15:07:16/6-2-55)

HOW IT IS NOW

<<Sink Seattle, bomb LaLa, sell off Chicago. If you want the razz, the risk, the sheen, the feeling that now is all that's left, where the edge is so sharp it'll cut you if you breathe wrong, Denver's the zone.>>

—Tiger Faust, citizen of the Sioux Sector (*Public Voice/REF#PV-1298-INT2*)

THE COUNCIL OF DENVER



>>>>>(We compiled this section from a recently published hyperbook called **A City Divided: Denver After the Treaty**, by Professor Linda Twenton Chen. We're using it as the base text (without permission of course) because it provides a fairly clear picture of the cadre of incompetents that runs the city.)<<<<<

—Crystal (09:28:18/5-15-55)

>>>>>(You know, you could have asked. I'd have said yes. I think this might be interesting.)<<<<<

—LTC (11:10:21/5-22-55)

The supreme governing body of the Front Range Free Zone is the Council of Denver, sometimes (incorrectly) called the Council of Representatives.

>>>>>(Lots more names for it, chummers, most of which the sysop here would censor in a nanosecond.)<<<<<

—Derry (14:25:59/5-26-55)

The council is made up of six representatives, one from each of the signatories of the Treaty of Denver and one from CAS.

The council meets in Council Hall, the building that once served as Denver's city and county building. The facility is located near the west end of the "harmonized" area once known as the Civic Center, bounded by West 14th, West Colfax, Bannock, and Cherokee streets.



>>>>(That puts the Hall in the Aztlan Sector. See that section for details.)<<<<<

—Leo (06:35:51/5-31-55)

>>>>(The council meets on Aztlan turf? That worries the frag out of me.)<<<<<

—Corn (02:09:28/6-1-55)

>>>>(It should.)<<<<<

—Erydne (21:56:17/6-1-55)

WHAT THEY DO

The Treaty of Denver made the council responsible for “maintaining” the Front Range Free Zone and enforcing all provisions of the Treaty (i.e., “harmonization” of land). The spirit of the Treaty seems to imply that the council holds complete and unchallenged authority over *everything* to do with Denver and its environs.

In reality, the council is nothing but a paper tiger, incapable of accomplishing anything important—and not just because most votes end up deadlocked. The bottom line is that the council has no way to enforce its decisions.

Students of history can compare this situation to the old United Nations. Representatives of the member nations meet and discuss weighty issues just as though they had the assets needed to implement the decisions they eventually reach. Just as the old UN had no real army of its own—certainly nothing capable of enforcing the body’s will on any nation that did not voluntarily agree—the Council of Denver has no security forces of its own and no law enforcement personnel, and so no real authority.

>>>>(Not true, professor. The UN always had access to peace-keeping forces, neh? And wasn’t the First Gulf War a UN op?)<<<<<

—Wolf (14:23:08/5-20-55)

>>>>(Those peace-keeping troops were seconded to the UN by member nations, Wolf, and could be withdrawn at any time. (And certainly would be withdrawn if the UN decided to send them after the nation that provided them in the first place.) And the First Gulf War—frag, let’s not open that can of worms. Suffice it to say that the UN had no teeth of its own, though certain member nations occasionally lent it a pair of clip-on fangs.)<<<<<

—LTC (11:36:51/5-22-55)

Though outsiders and its own charter describe the council as the “supreme authority” over the Free Zone, it actually serves largely as a figurehead or symbol, charged with making sure garbage gets collected and no enterprising pyromaniac burns down the city.

>>>>(Makes no fragging sense at all.)<<<<<

—Teflon Shoes (16:38:49/5-29-55)

>>>>(You’ve got to look at it from the right angle. Consider it as the Treaty giveth and the Treaty taketh away—both at the same fragging time. The Treaty gives the council all these

responsibilities and the authority to discharge them. But then it neglects to give the council any troops. And it enjoins the council from doing anything that infringes on the sovereignty of the signatory nations. The council can’t do both.)<<<<<

—Drebin (00:40:37/6-1-55)

The only tool the council has at its disposal to persuade any signatory nation to go along with any of its declarations is a kind of peer pressure. The council cannot send out jackbooted enforcers to clap in Irons the manager of a sector that fails to pay its taxes. It cannot dispatch troops if the UCAS blocks relocation teams from entering the Aurora Warrens. The council members can only condemn such actions and try to prevent or reverse them through diplomatic channels.

>>>>(Don’t sell “international peer pressure” short, here. The professor chose a relevant example. When the relocation teams originally started cruising the Free Zone with their eviction notices, the UCAS did kick up a fuss and try to block them. (Something to do with the council planning to “harmonize” some land that happened to house a UCAS comsat ground station.) The council couldn’t take any direct action. But it had a quiet word with the governments of the other nations—specifically Sioux, Ute, and Pueblo, of course. Traffic analysis on the secure diplomatic circuits at this time shows that each of those three nations sent a barrage of messages to the UCAS government. Nobody knows the content of those messages, but the UCAS ceased its disruptive actions and did nothing further to interfere with the relocation teams. (My guess is that the messages said, more or less, “You signed the fragging Treaty, and if you don’t stand by it we’ll fire up those old Ghost Dancers again.”))<<<<<

—Gonzo (00:26:28/5-30-55)

>>>>(Another kind of pressure also comes into play. Call it “enlightened self-interest.” For example, there were two particular Treaty provisions that grated pretty hard on the UCAS in the early days. The first prohibited tariffs or excise taxes on the FRFZ. The second prohibited military units anywhere in the Free Zone. The UCAS hated both of those. So why didn’t it just say “frag you!” to the council and do what the hell it wanted?

Because everyone else would have done the same thing. Pueblo and Ute and Sioux and Aztlan would slap on their own tariffs and taxes and duties and all that drek, and the Free Zone economy would just fragging collapse under the weight of bureaucracy. Meanwhile, Pueblo, Ute, and the rest would be rolling their own armies into the Free Zone in response to the UCAS’s “military provocation.” How long before somebody looked at somebody else the wrong way and shots were fired? Hours, I’d guess. A day later, everyone’s back at war.

Nobody’s particularly happy with the way things get done in Denver. No nation likes being told it can’t tax or apply duties to trade into or out of its territories. But, no matter how fragged up things may be in Denver, they’re a lot better than war. And that would be the outcome if any nation decided to tear up the Treaty once and for all.)<<<<<

—Zelda (22:22:54/6-3-55)

>>>>(What happened to the rule of law? You're telling me that everything in Denver depends on this kind of fragile compromise between six nations, going along with the council only because the alternative's chaos?)<<<<<
 —Pierce (06:05:41/6-4-55)

>>>>(Yup.)<<<<<
 —Zelda (23:07:02/6-4-55)

>>>>(And chaos reigns, regardless.)<<<<<
 —Arioch (20:17:18/6-6-55)

HOW THEY GET THERE

The Treaty provides almost no requirements for the members of the Council of Denver, other than that the council must include one representative from each of the signatory nations. The Treaty does not restrict how each nation selects its representatives, how long they serve, or their qualifications.

Currently, their respective governments appoint all council members. During the first decade after the Treaty, both the Ute and Pueblo nations experimented with selecting their representatives democratically. The Ute Nation allowed all citizens of the nation to vote in the election, while Pueblo limited voters to Pueblo citizens living in the Free Zone itself. No extremists or fanatics ended up seated at the council table, but both nations eventually gave up popular elections for their representatives, Ute in 2030 and Pueblo in 2034.

>>>>(What they discovered, of course, is that democracy empowers free thinkers. Each nation decided it preferred to have a yes man in Denver rather than be philoso-politically correct.)<<<<<
 —Quess (20:19:42/6-2-55)

Getting Rid of a Rep

Though the council cannot influence the selection of representatives, the Treaty does empower the council to impeach a representative. Expelling an unwanted representative requires a majority vote from the council, but because the subject of the impeachment proceedings can vote on his or her own removal, a deadlock is likely unless a representative abstains.

>>>>(What?! Fragging insanity.)<<<<<
 —Lorimar (02:08:14/6-4-55)

>>>>(Yep. Read on—there's more blather on this topic later.)<<<<<
 —Glacier (12:29:59/6-10-55)

Once the council votes on a move to impeach one of its members, that same resolution cannot be directed toward that representative for four months. This provision prevents rivals from wasting the council's time with ongoing impeachment attempts aimed at removing one another.

>>>>(That may be the intention, but the result is to give unscrupulous representatives an opportunity to manipulate the

system for a little breathing room if they're up to something shady. Let's say Representative A is planning something underhanded and knows the council will try to impeach him as soon as word of his movements gets out. So before getting involved in his underhanded biz, he cuts a deal with Rep B. Rep B tables a resolution to impeach Rep A—a resolution both know will fail. The impeachment's shot down, and nobody can come after Rep A for another four months, no matter what unpleasantness he gets up to in the interim.)<<<<<
 —Xycom (04:16:27/5-28-55)

Again, because the Treaty offers no provision for an acting quorum short of full attendance, a successful impeaching effectively paralyzes the council until the nation in question appoints a successor. On two of the three occasions when the council impeached a representative, the nation in question—Aztlan, both times—"punished" the council by taking weeks to appoint a replacement.

>>>>(The other nations had the jam to impeach the Aztlan rep? Risky.)<<<<<
 —Nena (00:09:10/5-27-55)

>>>>(Both times they'd been pushed pretty fragging far. Aztlan seems to intentionally pick reps who get a charge out of slotting off everybody else.)<<<<<
 —Instigator (23:20:45/5-28-55)

>>>>(The record shows only three official impeachments, two Aztlan reps and one from CAS. But a formal impeachment is only one way to oust a rep you can't stand to face across the table even one more time. Two representatives—one from Ute, one from Sioux—resigned from their positions without warning or explanation. (And apparently without clearing it with their governments first.) Shadowsnoops who looked into these "resignations" dug up some pretty convincing evidence suggesting the councilors quit because persons unknown were terrorizing their families. Needless to say, that part of the story never aired on the Front Range Voice. A couple of pirate tridcasters picked it up, however.)<<<<<
 —Alchemy (10:18:00/5-31-55)

>>>>(And then there was Dorothy Malmgren, rep for UCAS back in 2049. A sniper put a single bullet into her ear as she was leaving the Council Building. UCAS replaced her surprisingly quickly, but her replacement didn't share her steadfast opposition to Aztlan's use of paranormal beasties as watchcritters. Coincidental, huh?)<<<<<
 —Lilith (08:07:41/6-1-55)

>>>>(You're saying the Azzies cacked Malmgren?)<<<<<
 —Hillite (17:29:29/6-1-55)

>>>>(It's an open secret in some circles. No proof, of course.)<<<<<
 —Dispater (06:24:19/6-3-55)

>>>>(Pure fragging bulldrek! Malmgren got taken down by an Alamos 20K hitter.)<<<<<<

—Lucien (08:09:17/6-3-55)

WHO THEY ARE

The following list names the current members of the council as of May 14, 2055. A thumbnail sketch of each representative appears after the list. Please feel free to annotate these brief bios with current details.

Aztlan: Hector Ramirez

CAS: Elizabeth Kalheim

Pueblo: Jonathan Popé

Sioux: Mary Cat Dancing

Ute: William Huhuseca

UCAS: Jeremy Falloon

Hector Ramirez (Aztlan)

Probably in his mid-50s, Hector is a small, slender man with skin like tanned leather and hair so black it looks blue in some light. As far as we've been able to dig up, his background is strictly corporate. He was a major suit with one of Aztechnology's Chihuahua-based subsidiaries until 2048, and he joined the council in 2049.



>>>>(Hector is still an Aztechnology exec. In 2048 he jumped from Excelsior SA—the subsidiary you mentioned—to the central cadre of Aztechnology proper. The next year he was named to the council. That tells me Aztlan considers Denver to be important. Otherwise, why send one of their high-power suits to hold down a council seat?)<<<<<<

—Teagarden (19:16:40/6-1-55)

>>>>(Ramirez is a burnout. Sure, he was a real comer with Excelsior, and he earned his ride to Aztechnology HQ. But it looks like he couldn't make the transition—kinda like getting bumped up from the Triple-A Urban Brawl league to The Show: it's a whole different brawl game. He caved, but the Big A figured it owed him enough to slip him off to a nice, safe post like the Council of Denver. End of story.)<<<<<<

—Quark (13:20:31/6-3-55)

>>>>(Are we all talking about the same fragging Hector Ramirez, here? The guy I know about ain't no burnout case. He's a shaman powerful enough to strip the skin from your flesh as easy as looking at you (and he'd probably fragging prefer it). Old Hec was what you'd call a shamanic "expediter" or hatch-

et man for the Big A, and I ain't seen nothing since 2049 to make me think he's changed.)<<<<<<

—Solly (21:19:28/6-5-55)

Elizabeth Kalheim (CAS)

Betty to her friends—I think she has two. Young and drop-dead gorgeous, Kalheim usually wears her dark (but sometimes blonde!), shoulder-length hair pulled loosely off her face to accent blue eyes deep enough to drown in. And she has a voice like honey, with just enough of a Southern drawl to add a touch of spice. (No wonder the Free Zone Voice usually asks Betty to do the council sound bites.)



But Betty Kalheim is a hard piece of work, a master at reading and manipulating people and as ruthless as they come. We've been unable to unearth her background. Kalheim joined the council in January of 2054.

>>>>(I've often wondered how Betty Kalheim makes it through the metal detectors out front of the Council Hall without setting

off every alarm in the place. That pretty skull of hers is packed with headware, chummer: gobs of memory, secondary processors, and four—count 'em, four—chip slots in the base of her skull under that golden crown of glory she calls hair. Ever wonder how it is that someone in her early 30s could develop the back-stabbing instincts of a suit who's been climbing the corporate ladder longer than she's been alive? She just slots the data, chummer. In a way, you could call Betty Kalheim a talking head, a mouth-piece. She's just the attractive "front." All the decisions are made by the people who program her headware.)<<<<<<

—Cujo (20:56:30/6-2-55)

>>>>(Betty Kalheim—well, let's use her real name, Elizabeth Knight—is part of the Knight clan at Ares, a niece of Damien Knight. Born and raised to money, I don't know how she ended up in CAS, and a political appointee at that.)<<<<<<

—Rat (01:36:21/6-3-55)

>>>>(Pretty easy to guess, isn't it?)<<<<<<

—Winger (04:48:46/6-4-55)

>>>>(You know, I get a big kick out this "family" supposedly belonging to Damien Knight. You know that name's a pseudonym, right? There really is no Damien Knight. The man called Knight was born David Anthony Gavilan, best known as Major David A. Gavilan, United States Air Force, liaison to the National Security Agency and head of the infamous Echo Mirage virus-busters of '29. I've spent a lot of time and effort researching

Gavilan, and I'm pretty sure he used proprietary U.S. government technology and programs to execute elements of his "Nanosecond Buyout" of Ares Industries from the primitive Stockholm data haven in 2033. Anyway, a couple of points:

1. Betty Kalheim has no association with Ares Macrotech. Don't know who she is, but she's not on the Ares payroll.

2. Second, how can someone with a pseudonym have relatives (Betty Kalheim aside)? Check out Karen Knight-King, who sits on the Seattle Council (a niece), Peter Knight, Phillip Knight, and the ever popular Susanna Knight, who's a fraggin elf (all supposedly nieces and nephews, mind you). Does he sell slots in the family tree? All I've been able to tell is that each of these people is using pseudonyms, too.

That's the scoop. Said my tale. Outta here.)<<<<<

—Turner (20:14:19/6-5-55)

>>>>(Anytime I see someone influential who's as young and good-looking as Betty Kalheim, I always check for a relationship—love or just sex—because that's a ready-made lever if you ever need to apply some kind of pressure. Our Betty has no "significant other" and doesn't seem to date (rumors linking her with Mary Cat Dancing to the contrary). What she does have is a taste for dominance/discipline games, with her pretty white hand holding the whip. Currently, her tastes are catered to by a slimebag who goes by the name of de Sade, operating out of the CAS sector.)<<<<<

—Witchsight (22:33:56/6-6-55)

Jonathan Popé (Pueblo)

Popé is about as straight-arrow as they come. He's a tall, slender gentleman—and I use that term because it fits. In his late 40s, his eyes are so dark they look as though they're all pupil with no iris at all. Before coming to Denver in 2052, Popé was a junior vice president on the Pueblo Corporate Council. The nation's board of directors asked him to take on the position of representative to the Council of Denver in 2051, but he persuaded them he could do more for his country at home in Santa Fe. The next year they offered him the position again—a "promotion," as these things are viewed in the Corporate Council—and this time he accepted it. He lives comfortably, if not flashily, with his wife and two children.



>>>>(Ah, leverage on the hoof.)<<<<<

—Tenmace (07:59:11/5-28-55)

>>>>(I'd be careful slotting around with Jon Popé. He's not a hard man—one look at him tells you he's more comfortable with

a book in his hand than a gun—but blowing someone's brains out is only one way of evening a score.

Do you know how Popé made his way onto the Pueblo Corporate Council? Through the Computer Resources division, that's how. He was a novahot systems analyst and security expert who cut his teeth as a combat decker dogfighting with intruders into the Pueblo subnet. He probably let his expertise slide since he became official, and his chops may be rusty, but bet your hoop he's still got friends in the trade. Mess with him and one morning you'll wake up to find your credit rating slashed and every bit of tech you own infected with killer viruses.)<<<<<

—Firelight (03:43:20/5-29-55)

>>>>(Popé's a corrupt rat-frag, for sale to the highest bidder. If he's even taken the dustplug out of his datajack since 2052, it's been to jack in BTLs. The man's got a beetle on his back, and he'll do anything for the cred to support his habit another couple of weeks.)<<<<<

—Grendel (20:17:02/5-29-55)

Mary Cat Dancing (Sioux)

Councilor Cat Dancing is a small, dark-skinned woman who resembles a hunk of chewed leather. She's one of those ancient people who looks as though she weighs next to nothing and seems so fragile that a stiff breeze would break her bones.



But if her body's ancient, her mind doesn't know it. She's smart as a whip, with a real memory on her. She claims to remember the face and name of anyone she's ever been introduced to, and so far nobody's been able to put the lie to this claim. Mary Cat Dancing joined the council only last year. Before that, she sat on a judiciary council in the Sioux Nation and earned a reputation as an unshakable justice.

>>>>(Ever seen Mary Cat Dancing? Judging from her body, you'd say she's been dead a couple of months. Actually, who knows? You look in her eyes and you get the feeling that stubborn, fiery personality would keep her body moving around even after her heart stopped, just because she's too fragging hard-hooped to admit that death could beat her.)<<<<<

—Star (10:28:00/5-24-55)

>>>>(Want to know something real interesting? Mary Cat Dancing may look 90-some years old, but she's really only 53!

Even stranger: go back to the Sioux Nation datafax archives and dredge up a holo image of Mary when she was a judge, just a couple of years back. (The one I scanned is dated 2051.) You'll find she looks her age—a hard-faced 50.

What can age someone that much in three years?)<<<<<<
—Drac (13:05:19/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Are you sure it's even the same woman?)<<<<<<
—Bridger (22:42:21/6-1-55)

>>>>>(It's the same woman, Drac's right. I had the misfortune to be arraigned before Mary Cat Dancing in Sioux back in 2050, on a charge of murder. You don't forget the eyes of the judge who condemns you to the Big Trip—death by lethal injection—and the Mary Cat Dancing on the council is the same woman.

And before anyone asks, Mary overturned the death sentence when the corp that had her in its back pocket suggested it might be better to let me skate.)<<<<<<
—Papillon (03:22:38/6-4-55)

>>>>>(So the question remains. What can age someone that way?)<<<<<<
—Star (10:43:28/6-5-55)

>>>>>(Perhaps she Dances.)<<<<<<
—Anonymous (02:18:32/6-6-55)

William Huhuseca (Ute)

An ork, Representative Huhuseca is the only metahuman currently serving on the council. He's also a Coyote shaman, apparently fond of stirring up trouble just for the exercise. If there's a particularly controversial resolution polarizing the council, odds are that Huhuseca helped author it.



The 30-year-old Huhuseca is a chief of the Pawnee tribe and the son of a chief. Despite his irreverent, drek-disturbing approach, he's actually got a reputation among his own people as a shrewd, fair leader. Huhuseca isn't married and has no known long-term relationship. Rumors occasionally link him with Elizabeth Kalheim, but nobody who knows either party gives these any credence. Representative Huhuseca joined the council in late 2052.

>>>>>(Huhuseca's one of the only reasons to watch the media coverage of council business. He's real good at stirring up the other fruit loops on the council, and he usually offers a wise-hoop crack for the trideo cameras.)<<<<<<
—Drac (13:09:31/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Huhuseca is that rarity, a politician with ethics. Once he's bought, he stays bought.)<<<<<<
—Itasca (10:59:37/6-3-55)

>>>>>(Have you ever seen William's "executive assistant," Tammy Smithe? She makes Betty Kalheim look like Mary Cat Dancing. There's something going on between the two of them, have no doubt. (What I wouldn't give to have Tammy Smithe "taking dictation" in my private office late at night.)<<<<<<
—Hef (23:55:54/6-3-55)

>>>>>("Tammy Smithe" is a free spirit, an anima.)<<<<<<
—Walks Far (13:37:56/6-4-55)

Jeremy Falloon (UCAS)

Various wags in the media have a vested interest in portraying Jeremy Falloon as an idiot (what vidcaster could resist making fun of "Jeremy Buffoon"?). But this bad humor at the representative's expense is doing the citizenry of the Free Zone a severe disservice. Jerry Falloon is no bimble-brain. He's highly competent, utterly ruthless, and he hates to lose—at *anything*.



Falloon is in his late 40s, and since losing his wife three years ago, he seems to have lost interest in female companionship. His background is in corporate law, and he worked as a lobbyist in Washington before joining the Justice Department in 2045. According to our

research, Falloon was never in the forefront of the back-stabbing and conniving endemic to Washington. However, when rivals tried to "knife" him on several occasions, the would-be Machiavellis found *themselves* ousted. Falloon obviously knows how to play the game when he has to—he just doesn't go out looking for a scrap.

>>>>>(Either that or when he plants the dagger, it's done so smoothly that the victim doesn't know he's dead until a week later, and Jerry's already covered his tracks.)<<<<<<
—Mack (03:02:01/5-23-55)

Jeremy Falloon was appointed to the Council of Denver in 2052, though he maintains his association with the Justice Department.

>>>>>(Wrong. Jeremy Falloon made a lateral move to the National Security Agency in 2050, and the NSA still pays his salary (through a "blind account" at the Justice Department, granted.)<<<<<<
—Dybbuk (05:08:11/5-23-55)

>>>>(Falloon can take care of himself in theaters outside the political arena, too. Two months after he came to Denver, he was the target of some kind of gang attack. (Nobody knows whether it was random violence or something else.) Falloon walked away unharmed and left six metalled-up gangers dead in the gutter.)<<<<<
 —Jerri (08:10:27/6-2-55)

HOW IT HAPPENS

Any committee or council established by a government is almost guaranteed to be bound by complex policies and procedures, described at great length and in excruciating detail. The Council of Denver represents an extreme example of this principle. And because the council was established by five governments and must now balance the interests of six, these policies and procedures practically hobble its members.

>>>>(Fear not, we don't intend to waste your precious bandwidth with an exhaustive discussion of council procedures and precedents. Only two major procedural elements have any potential effect outside the council room itself.)<<<<<
 —Crystal (09:41:41/5-15-55)

Chairman

The position of council chairman is largely symbolic. The chairman may vote freely on all issues before the council, and he manages council debates according to a heavily modified form of Robert's Rules of Order. Officially speaking, he also prepares the agenda for any given meeting (according to the results of the previous meeting and current concerns) and limits the discussion to the items on that agenda.

>>>>(Hold the phone here. That gives the chair plenty of influence over council activity. If he doesn't want the council voting on a certain issue, it's just a matter of keeping it off the agenda. Sounds like significant power to me.)<<<<<
 —Consul (13:56:45/6-2-55)

>>>>(It would be, if the procedure manual didn't give the other council members half a hundred ways of getting around that policy. In reality, they can jam whatever the frag they like on to the agenda in a few different ways, or use a "point of personal privilege" to open discussion on anything that's not currently on the agenda. From a parliamentary point of view, it's a nightmare, and the chairman can't do a thing about it. In fact, all he really gets is a bigger share of abuse from everyone and his fragging dog.)<<<<<
 —Mentor (08:28:45/6-3-55)

The position of chairman rotates to another nation every two months, progressing in alphabetical order of nation name (Aztlan, CAS, Pueblo, and so on). Because the chairman position rotates to the nation being represented, not the representative herself, a change of rep doesn't mean the nation loses its turn. If, in the middle of her tenure as chairman, for example, Mary Cat Dancing were replaced, the new Sioux representative would serve as chairman for the remainder of the two months.

>>>>(Chairman? Fragging sexist fossils. It should be chairperson or chair. Or chairwoman when it's a woman holding the position.)<<<<<
 —K.D. (02:02:23/5-30-55)

>>>>(Chairperson is an abomination. Chair is an inanimate object. Historically, the position is chairman. If it's a woman, the form of address is "Madam Chairman." Anything else is revisionist and ugly.)<<<<<
 —Caroline Ducas (19:30:32/6-1-55)

Voting

Every representative has a vote on every issue, the chairman included. The Treaty of Denver was carefully worded to avoid disenfranchising any of the signatory nations by excluding any representative from any vote.

>>>>(Which leads to an interesting aberration if the vote is to impeach a councilor. The subject of the resolution—the person up for impeachment—gets to vote on his own removal! Crazy, I know. But one of the central tenets of the Treaty was to give each nation equal say over everything that goes on in Denver. They asked, how can we maintain equal representation if a nation's sole council representative is excluded from even a single vote? To be impeached, a rep must be very unpopular, because he'll automatically have at least one vote against impeachment—his own.)<<<<<
 —DND (15:24:55/6-8-55)

The one-vote-per-representative provision also prevents a subset of the council from declaring itself a quorum and continuing council business without the participation of some representatives.

It seems appropriate at this point to say again that the Treaty contains no provision to break a deadlock. As initially drafted, for the Treaty to acknowledge the possibility of a deadlock would admit the possibility of one of the representatives abstaining from a vote—something the creators of the Treaty considered particularly unlikely. Undoubtedly, every current representative would like to put some procedure in place to break deadlocks, but none will approve any such legislation unless it provides him some advantage over his fellow council members or at least denies them an advantage. Betty Kalheim recently suggested that CAS, as the nation least likely to vote according to traditional rivalries, should be given tie-breaking status. The rest of the council voted unanimously against this change.

>>>>(Frag, democracy in action. Ain't it maaahvelous?)<<<<<
 —D00d (23:49:09/6-2-55)

THE BUREAUCRACY

According to the Treaty, the council determines policy and direction for the FRFZ (though some say its been providing precious little of either, recently). The Free Zone Administrative Branch, in turn, implements what few directives the council issues. As often is the case in government, the high-profile offi-

>>>>(Not quite. It's an autonomous private empire, managed independent of anyone's interest other than the bureaucrats themselves, focused entirely on sustaining and expanding its own structure while feathering the nests of the people at the pinnacle of the pyramid.)<<<<<<

—Hauberk (12:35:13/5-29-55)

>>>>(True enough, but the set-up has proven effective in keeping national interests from jacking with the Free Zone's infrastructure. The high-level muckamucks definitely understand their vested interest in staying autonomous.

Who knows, maybe the commission had this in mind all along and figured that nest feathering was a small enough price to pay for maintained autonomy.)<<<<<<

—Billiam (00:03:00/6-1-55)

>>>>(So why doesn't this fragging subcommittee or whatever do something to stop the bureaucracy from growing so damned fast? Every time I fragging look around, I'm being taxed to pay the salaries and expense accounts of more fragging fat-cat data-pushers.)<<<<<<

—Honey (06:55:21/6-6-55)

>>>>(The subcommittee doesn't stop the growth because it doesn't have a mandate to do that. The committee can deep-six an employee because he's deemed "partisan," but as long as the candidate doesn't meet the criteria of "partisan," the subcommittee can't say drek about his or her appointment, performance, and so on. Stupid, but true.)<<<<<<

—Lennox (23:50:18/6-7-55)

KEEPIN' IT ALL TOGETHER

The Administrative Branch maintains the infrastructure of the Front Range Free Zone. The Admin Branch acts under the (nonexistent) direction of the council, of course, and draws its operating expenses from the general revenue generated by various forms of taxation.

>>>>(Tax is theft. End of story.)<<<<<<

—Ragnarok (03:50:57/5-29-55)

(DEATH AND) TAXES

The Treaty made taxation of any kind the sole responsibility and privilege of the council, independent of all national interests. The sovereign government of the Front Range Free Zone—in other words, the Council of Denver—is the only entity that can levy any kind of tax or duty or tariff on residents of the Free Zone or on goods entering or leaving it. The council gave the Administrative Branch the authority to control taxation, and that body devotes considerable attention to this duty.

>>>>(Well, you can't feather your nest if the citizenry doesn't get plucked efficiently, can you?)<<<<<<

—Eagle (03:05:56/5-31-55)

Changes to the tax structure, such as alterations to collection methods and "significant" rate increases, require a resolution from the council, which means they rarely, if ever, happen. As a result, the Administrative Branch—specifically, the Revenue and Taxation Service (RTS)—operates more or less on its own.

>>>>(I'll be very surprised if anybody talking to this board pays a single nuyen of tax.)<<<<<<

—Libbie (09:01:37/5-28-55)

>>>>(Then you haven't thought it through, Lib. Every legitimate purchase you make gets marked up by 10 percent for VAT, which the prof discusses below. Sure, you buy the important things like weapons, ammo, and working gear out of the trunk of a car on some deserted parking lot, but you probably buy food the traditional way. Ka-ching—VAT. Do you pay rent? Ka-ching—VAT. And if your rent doesn't include power and water, then ka-ching, VAT again. Use the maglev? VAT's included in the price (don't you just love hidden taxes)? Us SINless types might not pay income tax, but we pay taxes.)<<<<<<

—Kwan the Oppressor (10:00:31/5-28-55)

VAT

The value-added tax (VAT) pervades every aspect of life in the Free Zone. It applies to *everything*—goods and services, concrete or intangible, permanent or instantaneous. That means it is added to every item of food, every official bill for consulting services, DocWagon's™ bill, water and other bills, and so on.

For business types, VAT applies at each step of the manufacturing process, each time value is added (hence the name). The manufacturer pays VAT on raw materials. The distributor pays VAT on completed goods. The retailer pays VAT on goods bought from the distributor. And the consumer pays VAT on goods bought from the retailer. The government makes money on each step of the process. A registered business can file a claim for a deduction or rebate for VAT paid on goods/services that are considered "essential to the conduct of business," for example, the manufacturer *can* file a claim for VAT paid on raw materials. But the datawork required to file for a rebate is labyrinthine and baroque, and registering yourself and your business to qualify for these rebates is even worse.

The VAT is a flat 10 percent rate—no questions, no exceptions. It constitutes a felony if a business fails to charge clients VAT on goods and services.

>>>>(Note: Some businesses will include the VAT in the price—like the maglev. Others will add it at the check-out counter or whatever.

And some will do both. Hideously illegal, of course, but very profitable. If you're not sure, ask.)<<<<<<

—Watchdog (11:04:50/6-7-55)

>>>>(Can't stress this enough. When you're out shopping for anything—on the legal market, at least—don't forget to add the 10 percent VAT to the price when you're figuring whether you've got the cred to make the purchase. For example, your fresh-off-the-assembly-line Volkswagen Elektro Triwheel

Commuter will have a sticker price of 7,200 nuyen in the Pueblo Sector. (See the price differentials later; I hear it'd list for 8,000 in Seattle.) The VAT will be 720 nuyen, raising the total price to 7,920 nuyen.)<<<<<

—Billiam (02:39:58/6-8-55)

>>>>>(Remember the good old days, when all we had to pay was an 8 percent sales tax?)<<<<<

—Zinger (10:41:32/6-8-55)

Income Tax

Calculating income tax requires simple math in the Free Zone. Determine your income, multiply that by a flat 15 percent, and remit that amount to the RTS—*promptly*. The council does not calculate using a sliding scale, or indexing, or “marginal rates.” Tax accountants find it hard to make a living in Denver.

>>>>>(There *are* loopholes, but they're incredibly well buried. Let's say, “all but the very *best* tax accountants find it hard to make a living in Denver.”)<<<<<

—Bean Counter (16:09:05/5-27-55)

>>>>>(Since people without SInS don't pay income tax, it's very unlikely anybody scanning this board will have to worry about it. Next topic.)<<<<<

—Crystal (06:008:05/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Well, some of us do have SInS, Crystal. We find that keeping up a facade as an honest, hard-working business drone has its advantages. And that facade involves (*gulp*) paying taxes and registering for VAT purposes and all that fun stuff.)<<<<<

—Honest-As-the-Day-Is-Long (00:03:45/6-5-55)

National Taxes

National taxes, tariffs, and other levies are strictly prohibited under the provisions of the Treaty of Denver. Regardless of the sector residents live in, they pay only the Free Zone income tax.

>>>>>(Of course, different nations handle this provision differently. Ute and Sioux both consider any income generated in the Free Zone null and void for purposes of national taxes. UCAS and CAS, however, consider taxes on such income “deferred.” Let's say you make 1,000,000 nuyen in the UCAS Sector. You pay your 15 percent to the RTS—150,000 nuyen (ouch)—but you don't pay anything to UCAS—yet. If you later leave the Free Zone and move to UCAS, *the income tax on that million comes due!* And the slots tax that money at the current rate—which is probably higher than it was when you made the money. If you're an “honest operator” with SIN and everything, keep this in mind. Do your research into tax liabilities before you pick up shop and move out of the Free Zone.)<<<<<

—Bean Counter (16:10:52/5-27-55)

STAYING HEALTHY

Initially, the Council of Denver left the issue of medical care in the Front Range Free Zone to the discretion of each signatory

nation. Independent providers entered and left the market freely, charging for their services according to the laws of supply and demand. The Treaty Commission saw no need for centrally managed health care.

>>>>>(No need? Ask the thousands of people who cacked because they couldn't afford for-profit hospital service.)<<<<<

—Canuck (17:21:03/6-2-55)

When the United States established its “autonomous defense zone” and the Free Zone balkanized, the health care issue suddenly became more complex. Each sector now had the opportunity to establish whatever kind of medical service it saw fit. The Pueblo Sector provided health care paid for with national tax revenue. Others let the open market determine medical care (UCAS) or totally ignored the issue (Aztlan).

In 2039, the council reversed its decision and declared health care an infrastructure issue that transcended the national interests of the individual Treaty signatories.

>>>>>(A “humanitarian gesture” that I'm sure had *nothing* to do with the fact that some council members and bureaucrats found themselves working in a sector—Aztlan, natch—that considered any discussion of health care a diversion of resources away from important issues.)<<<<<

—Sherman (23:05:53/6-2-55)

The council instructed the Administrative Branch to develop an emergency medical/paramedic service capable of providing on-site emergency care and med-evac services for the entire Front Range Free Zone. When the cost estimates for developing such a service reached four times the original projections, the council—in a rare display of unanimity—reversed itself yet again. It authorized the Administrative Branch to hire a private organization to provide health care services. And in 2043, the branch awarded the FRFZ contract for medical service to a local franchise of DocWagon™.

For the first few years, DocWagon offered only the most rudimentary services, though it did abide by the corporation's famous ten-minute-response guarantee. By 2046, however, the full range of DocWagon services were available: Basic through Super-Platinum, including Standard, Crisis, and High-Threat Response.

>>>>>(In other words, the service you'd get at home in Seattle. If you want more detail on DocWagon's SOP and gear, scan the **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life** elsewhere on the BBS.)<<<<<

—Shane (06:48:54/6-1-55)

All legal residents of the Front Range Free Zone, which includes everyone registered with the Administrative Branch who possesses a current SIN and is not in default of any taxation requirements, receives Basic DocWagon coverage, free of charge.

>>>>(Note that you *don't* receive credit for the cost of the Basic service (that the bureaucrats pony up) if you decide to go for higher coverage. Gold still costs you 25,000 nuyen, Platinum sets you back 50,000 nuyen, while Super-Platinum racks up a tasty 100,000 nuyen. If you're a SIN-bearing Denverite, the government is still paying DocWagon 5,000 nuyen in taxes for you, so if you pick up a higher level of service, the corp makes pure profit on the basic 5.)<<<<<

—Phrack (03:10:48/6-2-55)

>>>>(And if you happen to be SINless at the moment, DocWagon would be just thrilled to accept your payment for whatever level of service you want.)<<<<<

—Gorgon (11:47:40/6-5-55)

DocWagon™ supports six primary response stations in the Denver metropolitan area, one in each sector. Each response station maintains a bare-bones clinic (so to speak) whose available services are largely limited to "first alert" trauma care, along with communications systems, dispatchers, garages/hangars for vehicles, and accommodations for response team personnel.

>>>>(Before someone asks, the security around these response stations is fragging ob-scene, bordering on the pathologically paranoid. I guess DocWagon feels concerned that some "free traders" might be tempted to augment their merchandise by snatching pharmaceuticals or medical equipment.)<<<<<

—Mongoose (12:52:08/5-29-55)

>>>>(Actually, no. Well, I guess that is one rationale, although a very minor one. Mainly, the security is so high because the council has declared that it must be. The council doesn't give a rat's hoop whether DocWagon loses supplies. The council is mostly concerned that a person or persons in unauthorized possession of a DocWagon vehicle will easily be able to cross sector demarcators illegally. And that idea bothers every single council

nation like you wouldn't believe.)<<<<<
—Newton
(14:09:39/5-29-55)

>>>>(Note that the Aztlan Sector response station is much smaller than the other five. Granted, the Azzie sector itself is smaller, but the big A puts the Wagon through some pretty ridiculous bureaucratic hoops to certify personnel to operate on Azzie turf. The Azzie station handles basic, standard-response calls just fine, but things get dicey when it comes to high-threat response situations. For crisis response—like if a bunch of people are on the verge of the big sleep, after a commuter flight crashes—the Azzie station is totally understaffed and underequipped. For big medical problems, they've got to whistle up resources from adjoining sectors, which doesn't thrill the Azzie authorities any. But the Treaty law (and the law of human kindness) say that even Aztlan can't refuse a DocWagon™ Crisis Response Team entry into their territory.)<<<<<

—Castillo (13:03:56/6-1-55)



Another seven response stations lie outside the metropolitan area in the regions of Colorado Springs, Boulder, Palmer Lake, and so on. The equipment and service level at these facilities varies widely, depending on the regions they serve. For example, the urban Boulder station uses land transport almost exclusively, while the rural Palmer Lake station depends almost exclusively on air transport.

Except in the event of a disaster too large for the local station to handle, the sector station handles all calls within that sector.

Exceptions are made in the two non-contiguous sector areas—"secrets" to the locals—in the center of Denver belonging to UCAS and the Sioux Nation. Too small to warrant their own response stations, these areas must somehow still be provided with service. Obviously, DocWagon service must enter these areas from outside. The national governments involved have accepted this fact of life reluctantly and accommodate it, but they insist on maintaining demarcator security at an acceptable high level.

What this means is that any DocWagon response team entering such an area—including support teams entering the Aztlan Sector—must stop at a border-crossing post. Even if someone might bleed to death on the streets of the UCAS secler because of the delay, the Merlin responding to the call must land down at the crossing post nearest its destination, and each member of the team must present his bona fides before proceeding. The border post usually searches the response vehicle as well, to ensure no stowaways have slipped aboard. And the response team must submit to the same rigorous inspection on the way back out of the secler, even if they are transporting a patient in critical condition.

>>>>(As a rule of thumb, don't get hurt in either of the secrets.)<<<<<<
—Rolf (22:49:03/5-28-55)

>>>>(The Azzies put a little twist on this process (naturally). For each support team they allow into their turf—and the sector managers have to be totally convinced the resident DocWagon assets cannot handle the crisis before they let anyone in—the border goons send one of their own troopers along as an "observer." That's right, he sits aboard the DocWagon ambulance, armed and armored like he's going to war, watching over everybody's shoulders to make sure the DocWagon personnel don't do anything "un-mutual.")<<<<<<
—Lois (19:01:09/5-31-55)

>>>>(I know this is going to make me real unpopular, but I can see their point. In the early days of DocWagon coverage, on three separate occasions smugglers or runners used ambulances to cross into the Azzie sector. Obviously, the sector managers decided they didn't need the grief.)<<<<<<
—Inca Spirit (00:44:03/6-1-55)

>>>>(It may have cut down on unauthorized operators, but it didn't stop them, Inca. Just last month a group of runners made

off with a DocWagon Stallion and flew it into the Aztlan Sector, somehow fooling the monitoring system into believing a major crisis requiring massive medical response had occurred. According to SOP, the Azzies put an "observer" aboard the Stallion. The runners geeked the slot as soon as they were in the air and over the demarcator.

And that's why the Azzies just began installing a "scuttling charge" on visiting med vehicles, a charge big enough to gut a land ambulance or blow an Osprey out of the sky. Loaded with anti-tamper circuitry and a locator beacon, the scuttler can be detonated by remote control if the locator beacon shows you've diverged from your stated course. And the observer's armor contains a sign monitor that triggers the scuttling charge if his signs go critical. (I don't know how the monitor reacts if you just cold-cock him or "suppress" him with magic.)<<<<<<
—Wrench (22:36:55/6-7-55)

>>>>(Leave it to the fragging Azzies.)<<<<<<
—Meister (01:38:07/6-8-55)

As with DocWagon service elsewhere in the world, individual patients can arrange for transfers to other hospitals if they desire, for an extra fee, of course.

PUTTING OUT THE FIRE

Fire prevention and control for the FRFZ is handled by Phoenix Fire Management Inc., a Denver subsidiary of the firm that handles fire control in Houston and San Antonio. Phoenix operates fifty-seven fire stations of varying size and capabilities throughout the Front Range Free Zone. Thirty-seven of those stations lie in Denver itself. As with DocWagon response stations, these facilities are sufficient to handle all but the worst crises within the sector they protect. Needed additional resources must first be requested from other stations within the sector. Only after calling on all resources in the sector can the team request support from other sectors. This procedure may be circumvented during extraordinary circumstances.

>>>>(Here's an example of an "extraordinary circumstance." Say a major fire breaks out in the Park Hill area in the CAS Sector, just west of Stapleton. The nearest station is at East 40th and York, nice and close. But if the fire's too big for that station to handle, the next nearest station still within the CAS Sector is in Hoffman Heights. Ignoring demarcators, the nearest fire station is in Commerce City, but that's the UCAS Sector. Obviously, if time is of the essence, the call goes to the UCAS station.)<<<<<<
—Tympanum (05:13:44/5-23-55)

>>>>(It's probably easier for would-be "unofficial immigrants" to hitch a ride with a fire-fighting team than with a DocWagon response team. (For one thing, firefighters don't usually travel armed.) The national governments recognize this and enforce much the same provisions as those controlling DocWagon demarcator crossings.)<<<<<<
—Firelight (20:19:31/5-25-55)

>>>>(In my experience, firefighters get less of a shakedown at crossing points than DocWagon people. I'd guess that's because the sector managers personally will know about a fire large enough to warrant out-of-sector support—something like a "four-alarm fire," to use archaic terminology—and are thus more confident it's not a scam when a fire engine wants to cross a demarcator.)<<<<<<
 —Encarta (00:55:29/5-29-55)

>>>>(They don't seem to understand that some people out there will burn down anything—an old-age home, a hospital, their mother's squat—if it will help them slip the border.)<<<<<<
 —Bongo (02:34:56/5-29-55)

>>>>(Flash: Phoenix has started arming its firefighters. They've had too many cases of pyros setting a fire and then sniping at the firefighters when they arrive.)<<<<<<
 —Probe (17:08:53/6-11-55)

MOVING AROUND

A holding company called Front Range Transit International Incorporated (FRTII) operates the maglev. Initially, each of the five Treaty signatories owned an equal share of FRTII. When the Treaty of Richmond created the Confederated American States and the CAS took a seat at the council table, the UCAS representative tried to argue that the UCAS should just sell the CAS half of its shares in FRTII. However, because FRTII was (and is) a money-losing proposition and any decrease in participation would mean a decreased share of the annual loss, the other signatories quickly shot down that idea. Instead, the FRTII board issued new shares, adjusting the "par value" of all shares in the process, and sold these new shares to the CAS at the adjusted par value. The other signatories split the revenue from the sale (or, more precisely, applied those revenues to their share of that year's debt). Once more the playing field was even.

The signatories actually own FRTII, and the Administrative Branch manages the line and takes responsibility for all management concerns.

>>>>(Spirits help us all.)<<<<<<
 —FlameOn (22:17:10/6-2-55)

>>>>(For the past five years, UCASTrak—the same outfit involved with the Seattle/SanFran maglev—has been maneuvering to buy out FRTII, promising the council as incentive that it will turn the maglev into a profitable enterprise while guaranteeing a high level of maintenance, no decrease in service, and annual fare increases of less than 5 percent. (Sounds like nuyen from nothing, I know, but if you take into account how fragging inefficient everything under the control of the Administrative Branch is, it makes a lot more sense.)

Every rep on the council would love to get rid of the FRTII. But every vote over accepting UCASTrak's offer deadlocks because some faction is always concerned that the deal will give the UCAS government too much influence.)<<<<<<
 —Sistrum (05:07:09/6-6-55)

The maglev track structure incorporates a high-efficiency solar panel array along its entire length to provide power. Any shortfall in power is made up—on a pay-per-joule basis, of course—by the Greenland fusion plant (see below).

>>>>(Like I said earlier, that "shortfall" is something like 95 percent.)<<<<<<
 —Frasier (21:43:19/6-11-55)

KEEPING IT LIT

Electrical power for the entire Front Range Free Zone flows from the fusion plant at Greenland, operated by the Pueblo Corporate Council. Users pay per joule of energy used, currently priced at 0.07 nuyen per megajoule. The Administrative Branch collects these payments.

>>>>(0.07 nuyen per megajoule? Does anybody remember way back when the power companies claimed that widespread use of fusion would produce electricity so cheap it wouldn't be worth the trouble of metering?)<<<<<<
 —Spider (18:17:25/5-25-55)

>>>>(Pueblo—and Pueblo alone—provides all power to the Free Zone? Doesn't that put a whole hell of a lot of power (I mean political power) in the hands of one nation? And isn't that something the Treaty was designed to prevent?)<<<<<<
 —Tomasina (14:32:06/5-27-55)

>>>>(In a word, yes.
 The resolution of the Indian Wars messed up Denver's old sources of power. Fossil-fuel-fired generation was very much frowned on, for example, so something had to be done fast, and Pueblo was the only nation in a position to do so. Neither Aztlan nor the United States was thrilled to see the power supply controlled by Pueblo, but remember, this was the period during which the "tribal bloc" could pass whatever the frag it wanted.

Now that the tribal bloc has gone the way of the elephant, no sector's too happy with Pueblo's hand on the switch. But what can they do? Close the Greenland plant down and freeze come winter? None of the nations has the ready cred to set up alternative sources of power. So they just grit their teeth and maintain the status quo. (Several megacorporations have offered to provide power services, but the council always rejects those offers out of hand. Give the power switch to a fragging megacorp? Better the devil you know.)<<<<<<
 —Cristophe (02:20:41/5-28-55)

STAYING AFLOAT

As in many parts of western North America, the availability of water played a major part in Denver's history, and the onset of the Sixth World did not change this. Denver was founded at the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River, and these two sources originally supplied all the drinking water for Denver's small population. Predictably, the population quickly outstripped these small streams' ability to provide potable water. Dams and increasingly large reservoirs helped matters,

but they didn't solve the water problem in the long run. By the latter decades of the last century, the majority of the city's water came by pipeline from the western slope of the Rockies.

>>>>(Which torqued off a lot of people who lived on the western slope of the Rockies ...)<<<<<<
—Nik (08:09:22/6-2-55)

Back around the turn of the century, Denverites began making an effort to control their water consumption. By 2005, so-called "water friendly" yards were de rigueur, and anybody who laid down square meters of Kentucky bluegrass became a target for social ostracism.

>>>>(Sounds like a perfect environment for Japanese sand and rock gardens—the ultimate "water friendly" yards.)<<<<<<
—Raoul (04:51:01/5-29-55)

The Treaty of Denver marked the reversal of this trend as Denverites began surrounding themselves with things green and growing to show their "envirosensitivity."

>>>>(Many environmentalists mistake "correctness" for logic, and the tribals were no different. "Let's show we're in harmony with Mother Gaia by surrounding ourselves with trees and shrubs and fragging Kentucky bluegrass." So what if most of the species people so busily planted had never been native to the area and—in many cases—needed as much water as a living, breathing (meta)human? So "envirosensitivity" and political correctness suddenly makes the water problem worse. Fragging idiots.)<<<<<<
—Tyler (09:46:55/6-3-55)

Now all water use within the Front Range Free Zone is metered. The main supply continues to flow through the pipeline running down from the western slope, though the council has supported the development of other techniques to make the most efficient use of the available water.

>>>>(Other techniques translates into recycling, mainly. Waste water gets processed and reused through a secondary distribution technique. This reused water—basically stuff from the sewers with the drek bacteria eliminated (mostly)—is what the professor means when she says "non-certified.")<<<<<<
—Lennox (23:58:46/6-7-55)

The Free Zone water system handles two "grades" of water—potable and non-certified (nc). Each grade is metered at a different rate. Potable water typically costs 1 nuyen for 5 liters, though the rate varies according to supply and demand. Non-certified water usually costs 1 nuyen for 12 liters. While the Water Board describes both as "safe to drink," anyone with a choice chooses potable water.

Free Zone Water Board

The Administrative Branch's Free Zone Water Board handles all issues involving water. Legally, the Water Board—as a

representative of the Council of Denver—owns nearly all water rights in the region. The council made the board responsible for maintaining dams, reservoirs, and the all-important pipeline from the western slope. In the latter case, they must track the payment of hefty licensing fees to the Ute Nation, which is one of the reasons water is so expensive in the Front Range Free Zone. Water Board inspectors monitor all water meters electronically and physically to ensure that no one circumvents the metering system.

>>>>(Water Board inspectors are real motherfraggers when it comes to their meters. They consider themselves to be the modern-day "rain gods," and they assume anybody who doesn't give them buckets of respect is probably doing something illegal with or to the water supply. They can and do arrest system abusers. That's right, arrest—the Treaty gives them the right to scoop up anyone they mark as an offender, regardless of what jurisdiction they're in, as long as they can later show probable cause.

Predictably, I suppose, some parts of the Free Zone support a subculture dedicated to jacking with the Water Board as often and as heinously as possible. Some of these people want potable water and can't pay for it. Others don't want to pay for it. Others just want to torque off the rain gods. Over the past year, the conflict has switched into high gear and has almost reached the level of undeclared war. But if you're not part of the Water Board or the waterjackers, you won't even know anything's going on.)<<<<<<

—Nemo (05:01:07/6-2-55)

>>>>(Unless your service gets shut off during the next Water Board crackdown.)<<<<<<
—Sundevil (09:08:13/6-2-55)

>>>>(Oh yeah, guess I gotta say something about shutdowns before I move on. The Water Board has the right to turn off the taps on anyone it finds even mildly irritating. Echo that—the right. Normally, it sticks with threats, fines, or arrests. Sometimes, though, if the rain gods don't know who to arrest or can't find their favorite perpetrator, they just shut off the alleged malefactor's water. And since they can't remotely control the circulation to individual buildings, and because shutting the water off at the source is the only way to make this kind of thing stick, the Water Board sometimes cuts off the entire fragging neighborhood. Pretty fragging draconian, but that's the way it is down here.)<<<<<<

—Sundevil (09:17:11/6-2-55)

>>>>(And that gives you an interesting option if you're after some slag who's holed up somewhere where you can't winkle him out. Go do something nasty to the water-metering equipment. Do it repeatedly, each time doing more damage. Eventually the rain gods are going to cut off water to the neighborhood. Your boy's going to come out sometime—all the cyber in the world won't let him get around the fact that he needs water to drink or he'll croak.)<<<<<<

—Artiste (09:15:21/6-3-55)

>>>>(And if you're the kind of miserable motherfragger who'd deprive a whole neighborhood of water just to get your target, then I hope you burn in hell.)<<<<<
 —Billiam (01:22:52/6-5-55)

THE REST OF IT

To fulfill the remaining basic civic services, the Administrative Branch hired independent contractors, whose operations do not require them to cross sector demarcators.

- Sanitation:** BIF Inc.
- Public Works Maintenance:** Gray & Associates, Inc.
- Public Database and Telecom:** Renraku Computer Systems (Denver)

>>>>(What? The fragging council let fragging Renraku in? And gave 'em control over the telecom system? What were these drekheads thinking?)<<<<<
 —Darknight (20:39:08/6-2-55)

>>>>(I share your concern. I suppose the easy answer is, "They weren't thinking." The more complex answer is that only a megacorporation could handle the job, and that the council picked Renraku as the best of a bad lot.

The Free Zone probably feels a greater desire to avoid megacorporate entanglements than any other place on the planet. With this in mind, it makes sense that the Free Zone represents the greatest consumer, per capita, of data encryption software and scrambling hardware.)<<<<<
 —Oz (12:20:00/6-6-55)

>>>>(Huh? Seattle's gotta be way up there.)<<<<<
 —Puget Deb (00:43:06/6-9-55)

>>>>(Actually, not on a pure per-capita basis. Sure, Deb, you and your friends keep a drekload of cryptoanalysis experts in business. But your typical Ma and Pa Kettle on the streets of the plex don't know drek about data encryption, don't know they don't know, and don't give a flyin' frag.

But in Denver, just about everyone who's got a cel phone or cel-linked telecom uses an encryption chip or runs it through a scrambler rig. For heavy-duty data communication, just about every package sent down an unsecured line is loaded with scramble ice. Paranoia runs high in Denver.)<<<<<
 —Argent (08:38:57/6-10-55)

>>>>(Not that it does any good. Renraku (Denver) dedicates a Cray-Atari X-50 (not state-of-the-industry, but still a supercomputer) to stripping the encryption off any and all messages the suits consider potentially interesting.)<<<<<
 —Roscoe the Head (14:37:02/6-11-55)

>>>>(Fritz it fabber, the Rak spits fits in the e-rail. Try and true hard-box cubes on the Chyldren, slapped back downline. Sweat to null, laugh and dash. New pop tomorrow, repeat.)<<<<<
 —Shot House Flower (00:10:10/6-12-55)

>>>>(Um.)<<<<<
 —Twiddle (03:28:16/6-12-55)

>>>>(Sure, no problem, Twiddle. Rattles my cage sometimes, too. Here's the translation, as best as I understand it—

"Cut the drek you worthless piece of drek, Renraku doesn't do anything except throw fits in the Matrix. They keep trying new progs and IC on the bad boys in the Nexus, but they can't beat them. It's not a problem, the Nexus-boys deal with it and move on. Renraku tries a new version the next day, same result."

Make more sense? And you know, I sort of pity Renraku. Can you imagine trying to run the local public-information service in the decking capital of the world?)<<<<<
 —FastJack (10:17:51/6-12-55)

HEAR YE, HEAR YE

Most of the entertainment and news media in the Front Range Free Zone originate outside the area and feeds into the zone through the Matrix and dedicated leased datalines. As a result, Denverites can pick up an ABS affiliate from Chicago, the Pueblo Infotainment Service from Santa Fe, Spirit Voice from Casper, and hundreds of other channels.

Not without government interference, however. In 2043, the Administrative Branch established a watchdog agency named the Monitoring Office and made it responsible for keeping tabs on these outside feeds and restricting elements that the monitors considered "inappropriate" for presentation in the Free Zone.

>>>>(Huh? What the frag could be considered "inappropriate" in this day and age?)<<<<<
 —Pietr (10:47:56/6-1-65)

>>>>(To wit, anything that ridicules or diminishes the authority of the Administrative Branch. In many parts of North America, the political situation in Denver comes across as something between a farce and an embarrassment, and news coverage and popular entertainment reflects that view. Think back on the sitcoms you've seen recently. How many have introduced a "Cousin Marcia" from the Free Zone (or an equivalent character) when they needed a buff for a particularly nasty joke? Obviously, "Married...With Great-Grandchildren" won't be a big hit with the monitors.)<<<<<
 —Layton (15:37:29/6-2-55)

>>>>(Why bother? If you want to watch something the monitors don't want you to see—even some drek like "Married"—you just slip into the Matrix and establish a private feed from some node outside the monitors' jurisdiction.)<<<<<
 —HiJinx (22:02:48/6-2-55)

>>>>(Oh, come on. The majority of the populace of the Free Zone wouldn't recognize a private feed if it jumped up and bit them on the hoop. It's those people the monitors want to keep in the dark.)<<<<<
 —Dictator (23:56:31/6-2-55)

TRUST NO ONE
EXCEPT US

Nobody Else on the net or off has all the fast-breaking lowdown on

- Assassinations
- Takeovers
- The Man
- Shadowrunning
- The Truth

HERE'S THE DEAL, CHUMMER:
 The Man is onto us.
 Scan the vid for our changing signal.
 Tune in.
 Turn on.
 Slot it and run, chummer!
 The Truth is out there!

KMAAG
INDEPENDENT NEWSNET
FIND US BEFORE THEY FIND YOU

>>>>(They want to keep us all in the dark. They just can't do it, they know it, and they settle for the people whose minds they can control.)<<<<<

—Vaporware (04:22:97/6-3-55)

>>>>(That's a little lurid, isn't it?)<<<<<

—Pietr (11:13:13/6-3-55)

Denver supports a local trideo station, the Free Zone Voice, which broadcasts from the City and Council Building Annex 2 at Cleveland and Colfax. A special division of the Administrative Branch manages the Voice, working hand-in-gauntlet with the Monitoring Office. Though billed as a public-access service, the Voice rarely, if ever, garners public viewership.

>>>>(Would you watch it? It looks like it was produced by a drunk squatter with a half-busted portacam. Nothing entertaining about the entertainment, nothing educational about the education, nothing new about the news. It's the trideo equivalent of watching the paint peel off your walls.)<<<<<

—Sterling (22:00:06/6-6-55)

Denver offers one government-sanctioned datafax service, the *Rocky Mountain Post*, which the Monitoring Office rigorously screens. The *RMP* resulted from the 2014 merger of two news

services, *The Rocky Mountain News* and the *Denver Post*, which had spent most of the preceding century squabbling viciously and noisily with each other for readership and advertising revenues. The merger became a fait accompli when it became public knowledge that both the *News* and the *Post*, though apparently irreconcilable enemies, were subsidiaries of the same conglomerate, though the actual ownership lay buried beneath several layers of shell companies. As soon as word got out that the "competition" was stage-managed to boost subscription and ad rates, the conglomerate collapsed the shell companies and the "enemies" merged.

>>>>(And that's why nobody in their right mind ever believes anything he sees in the RMP. Much better to trust the half-dozen or so pirate netcasters operating in blatant defiance of anything the monitors can do to stop them. Every pirate has its own bias but states those biases loudly and often.)<<<<<

—JJ (10:48:11/6-2-55)

>>>>(Pirates change channels and locations as fast as the monitors track them down and cut off their operations. If you want to learn a little more about how pirates do business—and how they go out of business—check out that scurrilous rag tagged Shadowbeat, somewhere else on Shadowland.)<<<<<

—Hugh M (11:16:50/6-2-55)

THE REAL POWER

<<Are you kidding? When one of the sectors needs a new transit or resident pass, where do you think they get it from? Me! Because I can get it for them by tomorrow. If they went through their own channels, it would take months.>>

—Studs A. Poole (IntraZone Online/REF# 0292:1717)

Greetings, fellow Zoners. For the purposes of this data flow you may call me Youchai, “mailman” in the English tongue. It is what I am, it is what I do—you ask, I deliver. Crystal asked me to do a zesty tap dance on the nature of the shadow world here in the Zone, and I’m happy to oblige. I will be proper and not say what I am receiving in return for my expertise.

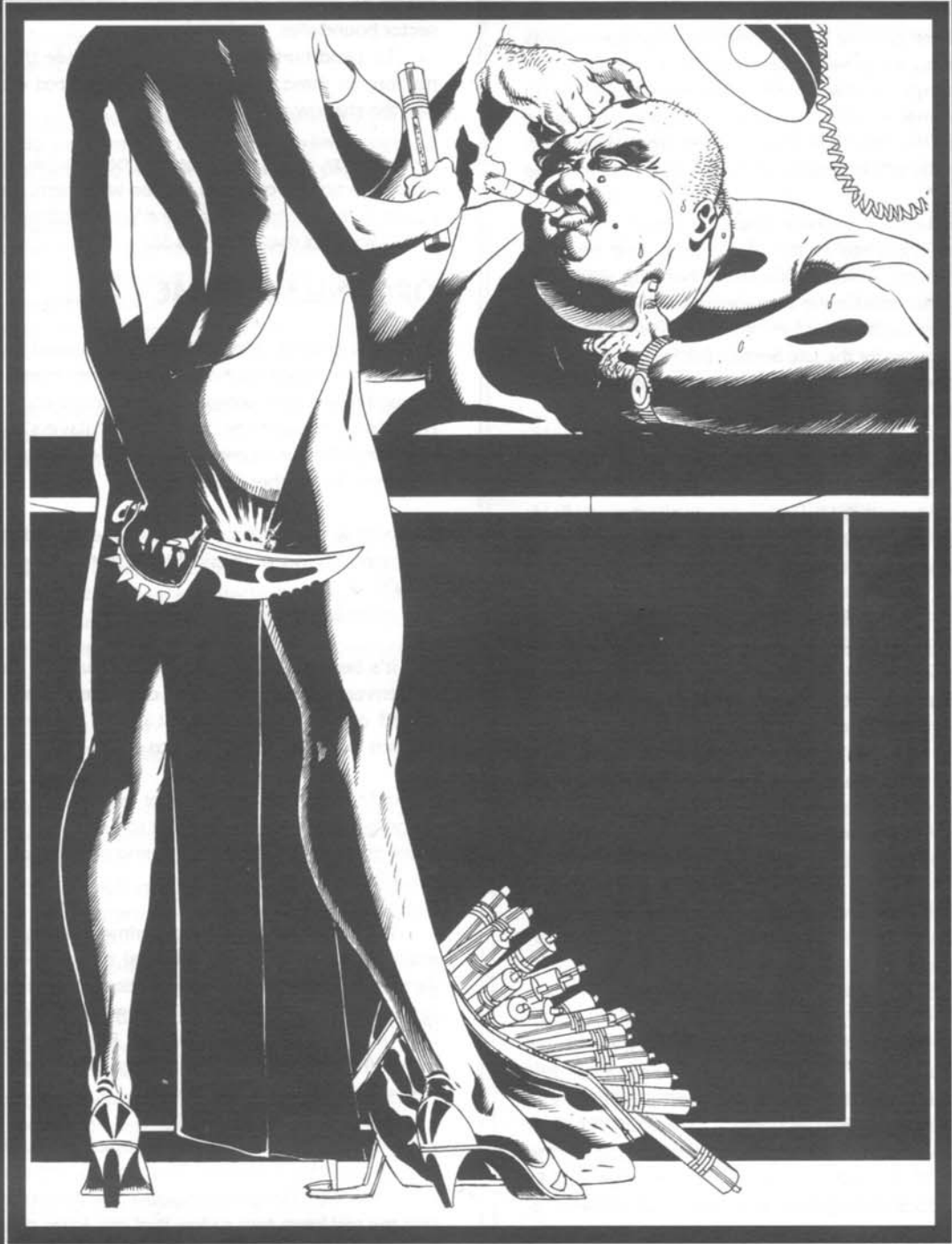
The council is impotent. It tries to impose law on the Zone but cannot. The Zone exists in balance simply because we make it so. Were it not for the continued good will of the lords of the shadow world, Denver would be nothing.

Legitimate intersector trade is all but impossible, the squabbling signatory nations have seen to that. The sectors’ markets are too small to support mass shipments into the city, and trying to create multiple-sector market blocks is a futile exercise. Rules, rules, rules—too many rules. It cannot and will not happen.

▼
▼
▼
The Zone survives only because of the shadow market. You want food? You buy it from a sidewalk vendor. Sims, microtronics, clothing, a good time, spiritual comfort—you buy it from a vendor. They’re everywhere. You can’t miss them. Everything you want, anything you need, it’s all there on the streets, in the back alley, under the counter, at bargain prices.

That is why Denver’s shadow world endures. That is why the council turns its blind eyes. It needs us.

But I was asked to ramble on the nature of things economic. Here we begin. Notice my civil tone? I’m using it just for you.



ZONE ECONOMICS

As you'd guess, the official economy of each sector differs from that of its neighbors, but not as a result of differences in tariffs and duties. Individual nations cannot levy or assess such things, remember? Nor is it a supply and demand issue. The demand everywhere is more or less the same. Everyone wants portable computers, Nicky Saitoh simchips, BTLs, and ammunition. And the supply is always whatever happens to be in friendly Mr. Jammer's t-bird, also more or less the same between sectors. No, the "differences" stem from what each sector includes in its official figures and what items fall into the shadow markets.

Take "California hot" simsense chips. As discussed before, California hots are big illegal in the UCAS Sector and perfectly snazz in the Ute Sector, which means Ute is hopping with chip-mongers bashing out hots for the burgeoning UCAS market. The nuyen generated by the manufacture of these chips shows up in official economy figures for the Ute Sector. But revenue generated by UCAS chipdealers selling the illegal hots won't be reported to the UCAS government.

Assault cannon rounds make another good example. Under Sioux law, assault rounds—and APDS and explosive rounds—are legally available to corporate security forces and their "legal designates." Because anyone with the slightest snazz at decking can temporarily get himself (or a chum) named a legal designate, there's mucho legitimate trade in these nasty dogs. But in Aztlan, assault cannon rounds get the big No vote. Only Aztlan government security forces or Aztechnology security assets may buy, otherwise acquire, or so much as possess a single round legally. All authorized users (government and corp security) receive free rounds from the Aztlan government with no credit changing hands. Sweet.

Strange little discrepancies like these twist the official economies of the different sectors to look quite different. And that's why I'm leaving the explanation of the specific data to the poor SOBs who posted up to talk about those areas.

>>>>(This seems to imply that sectors may legally exclude certain imports, even though it's illegal for a nation or sector to apply tariffs to imports. Is this supposed to make sense?)<<<<<<
—D Based (16:47:09/5-24-55)

>>>>(It's not that irrational, D, considering the origins of these laws. Youchai explains the concept in more depth later, but remember that the Treaty established the tariff prohibitions to prevent individual nations from "gouging" Denver. On the other hand, the Treaty was carefully designed not to infringe on the self-determination of any signatory nation. And isn't the right to declare certain goods as illegal an example of self-determination?)<<<<<<

—Margaret Mary (19:50:32/5-24-55)

The *official* economies provide the base for the numbers the governments publish (Aztlan excepted), based on transactions approved by the Guardians of Public Morals and Marketplace

Propriety. This strange double vision—which views some transactions as "real" and considers others best left off the records—blinds governments to a very real and substantial portion of the economy.

The shadow economy barely acknowledges such minor details as what is and isn't legal, and almost uniformly ignores sector boundaries.

To avoid hurting your brains, I'll divide the shadow economy into its three major sections—organized crime, smuggling, and the shadow market itself.

>>>>(Okay, okay, perhaps too large a percentage of these words are not my own. But I agree with them, they are right. Ten nuyen to the first toad who identifies the original text!)<<<<<<
—Youchai (04:20:18/5-28-55)

ORGANIZED CRIME

Most citizens reflexively think organized crime in response to the term "illegal economy." Organized crime, in all its myriad forms, is alive and prospering in Denver and the Front Range Free Zone, though the traditional "players"—the Mafia, the yaks, and that lot—control a smaller corner of the market here than they do in other places.

>>>>(How could things be otherwise considering the number of talented and enthusiastic "amateurs" infesting the Free Zone?)<<<<<<
—The Blue Parrot (15:18:34/6-3-55)

It's been said, quite accurately, that you can buy *anything* in Denver. In the Free Zone, organized crime has effectively staked out a limited segment of the market that it jealously defends but does not attempt to expand.

>>>>(True, as regards the other players. But any crime organization generally spares no effort to expand its share of that segment at the expense of its org-crime competitors.)<<<<<<
—Iato (05:26:13/6-2-55)

The established organized crime entities concentrate their efforts in the following traditional markets—drugs and chips, gambling, pornography, prostitution, extortion, assassination, large-scale computer fraud, and large-scale racketeering/corruption operations. Not surprisingly, Free Zone organized crime leaves the smuggling, arms dealing, and illegal sector-hopping markets to smaller consortiums.

>>>>(Those last three markets are too saturated to be of any interest to the Families. The vast numbers of freelance providers—t-bird jammers, shadow traders, fences, sector-sliders, and the rest keep fees so low that any large organization would have to do massive volume to make any nuyen at it. There's plenty of room in the biz for another lone-wolf jammer, but a Mafia family would have to take over a significant percentage of the traffic to make any profit.)<<<<<<

—The Blue Parrot (15:19:59/6-3-55)



>>>>(The yaks figured that out and tried to "organize" the t-bird traffic years ago, under their umbrella, of course. The slot behind that hoop-fragged plan didn't know squat about us jammers, *omae*. We bagged those "organizers," and the ones who didn't get geeked in the fracas we dropped off in the middle of fragging nowhere and let 'em walk home—if they could. Nobody's tried to "organize" us since.)<<<<<<

—Road Runner (21:09:37/6-5-55)

The first-tier organizations have most recently focused their efforts to expand to a new market on information brokerage, but this market, too, is saturated with well-established players.

>>>>(No fragging farce. The fossils didn't catch the buzz that intel's the big trade goods of tomorrow, didn't see the fragging gleam till it was too cold. Then when they did, they moved in like dinosaurs—big, lumbering, flat as a tick. Too late. Us sharp operators, we carved out that dirt gigaseconds back.)<<<<<<

—Warez Dood (23:15:02/6-6-55)

>>>>(Is that supposed to be English? ("Whadid he say? Whadid he say?"))<<<<<<

—Kristen (05:43:34/6-7-55)

MAFIA

The Mafia in Denver bears little resemblance to the sprawling octopus familiar to residents of the UCAS' East Coast. Here, instead of putting a tentacle in every little pie, the Families concentrate on a couple of areas that, historically, generate most of their profit: gambling, pornography, and prostitution.

>>>>(Huh? Gambling's legal in the Free Zone.)<<<<<<

—Demeter (11:22:45/6-2-55)

>>>>(True enough. But not every kind of gambling's legal in every sector. Can you imagine a respectable, licensed UCAS bookie placing a legal bet on some Aztlan pit-fight? Not to mention that legal gambling strictly regulates odds making, extending credit, and so on. And people will always want to sidestep those restrictions.)<<<<<<

—Maverick (22:09:31/6-4-55)

The mob keeps almost completely away from chiplegging, and it only dabbles in the illegal pharmaceuticals trade.

>>>>(But you said they're heavily into pornography. How do you distribute pornography except on chips?)<<<<<<

—Curious Yellow (22:34:17/5-25-55)

>>>>(Simsense-based pornography's the biggest seller, sure, but people still distribute flesh shots on paper, Yellow. Really!)<<<<<<

—Feeling Old (23:55:40/5-25-55)

>>>>(Honto? How primitive.)<<<<<<

—Ito (03:28:02/6-26-55)

>>>>(The Families have put a lot of wasted effort into co-opting senior bureaucrats and datapushers in the Administrative Branch. Their limited success apparently results from the strength of the competition in the influence-peddling biz in Denver. The mob has to compete with serious, focused talent like the UCAS Consular Operations and various subbranches of the Aztlan federales. (Hey—everybody wants a piece of the bureaucrac-y.)<<<<<<

—CharBroil (11:12:09/6-6-55)

>>>>(I don't know about that "limited success" drek, CB. If the Mafia keeps getting skunked, how come I hear the recurring rumor that the Families are behind the continued existence of the Warrens, huh? Think about it. Where do you find a lot of Mafia-run gambling ops and whorehouses? The Warrens. What would it do to biz if the area got "harmonized" one bright morning? Now ask the question, "Why hasn't the relocation subcommittee taken out the Warrens once and for all?")<<<<<<

—Morlock (12:23:39/6-6-55)

Don't make the mistake of selling the Mafia short, however. In their chosen areas of expertise, they're highly successful and very touchy about people trying to cut in on their action. The Mafia pumped up the illegal gambling biz in the Free Zone almost solo, and it manages to shut the yaks almost completely out of this major moneymaker.

>>>>(They've maintained their strangle hold on illegal gambling because the Families fight all yak incursions. The "gang problem" in Colorado Springs a few years ago was actually a particularly bloody turf war between the Mafia and the yaks over illegal gambling.)<<<<<<

—Sherman (12:44:00/6-1-55)

YAKUZA

The yakuza currently control approximately half of the Free Zone distribution channels for illegal chips. Various Triads and independent operators control the rest. The yaks also maintain a tight hold on the illegal drug trade, a market they largely developed.

>>>>(The yaks may lose their majority in both holdings before long. The Golden Triangle Triad and the Red Dragon Triad seem to have set aside old animosities in favor of intense cooperation in an effort to cut out the yaks. So far, the conflict's been limited to "standard business practices"—outbidding the usual distribution channels and offering higher margins for middlemen. But you can bet your hoop it's going to get bloody, and soon. The yaks have never accepted others encroaching on their biz, especially "barbarians" like the Triads. Watch this space for the box scores.)<<<<<<

—Kirumi (14:18:30/6-2-55)

>>>>(Let the games begin. Last night a couple of alleged Red Dragon higher-ups got taken down by snipers, and today the home of Kasigi Toda, a very influential local *oyabun*, just hap-



pened to blow up. Toda wasn't there, but his wife and two children now fit in a shoebox apiece.)<<<<<

—Tiramisu (18:09:47/6-6-55)

The yakuza are taking a unique tack to increase their presence in the "information brokerage" biz. They've always been more technologically up-to-date than the Mafia, and they're using this superiority in their approach to this new market. Rather than making the probably futile effort to co-opt local deckers and bit-dealers through conventional means such as extortion, the local yakuza outfits chose to train their own deckers, establish fixers, and supply them both with cutting-edge technology. The idea seems to be that local Denver "assets" will come to *them*, lured by the chance to get the wizzer tech for themselves. The plan has shown few results so far, but the eventual payoff may be interesting—and surprising.

>>>>>(Doubt it. I'd wager the information-brokerage community is too tight. The "code kidz" and "warez doodz" have got it pretty well locked up, and they're as tight as blood. (Hey, maybe that's where otaku go when they're too old to be otaku anymore. See my comments under the Nexus later in the files.)<<<<<

—Arclight (18:59:08/6-2-55)

>>>>>(The yakuza—some of them, anyway—operate as proxies for the government of California Free State, and thus for the Imperial Japanese government. I don't think CalFree has ever been particularly happy about being shut out of Denver, and now it's trying to remedy the situation by using yakuza as intermediaries.)<<<<<

—Nyx (04:19:02/6-7-55)

>>>>>(Interesting. If it's true, it makes me wonder what kind of lever the CalFree government has over the yaks.)<<<<<

—Trey (20:26:38/6-7-55)

The yakuza act as a central "service provider" for extortion, sabotage, and assassination services, hiring out their assets to anyone willing to pay the tab. Shadow traders and t-bird jammers determined to eliminate their competitors frequently use the services of the yaks. Their excellent reputation for successfully discharging such contracts puts them in high demand, but the relatively high costs of their services serve to limit the use of this resource.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Mafia and the yakuza traditionally share the largest part of the organized crime pie in the Front Range Free Zone. Other common players maintain significant presences, but none are as influential as the Big Two.

>>>>>(Does this category include the Seoulpa Rings?)<<<<<

—Jesse (12:43:46/6-10-55)

>>>>>(You gotta be from the West Coast, Jesse.) No Seoulpa Rings in the Free Zone. Period.<<<<<

—Hammer (22:05:17/6-10-55)

Gangs

The Denver area supports a fair share of local and imported gangs. Of the homegrown bully boys, the Fronts and the Godz wield the most influence.

The Fronts operate mainly in the UCAS and CAS sectors, with probably a dozen groups, which they call "sets," scattered throughout the Free Zone. A set averages fifty members—mostly male, mostly human and ork. Some of the sets, like the Trey Eights, which tears up the Warrens area, fall into the just-your-typical-thrill-gangers category, messing up property and people for the pure thrill of it. Others, like the BBs, put their heaviest muscle into business activities. The BBs deal drugs and chips, act as fixers for out-of-sector jammers and smugglers, and often hire themselves out en masse to jammers who feel the need for bodyguards.

>>>>>(Jammers with bodyguards? I thought jammers took such great pride in being so fragging tough.)<<<<<

—Aramis (02:09:54/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Omae, jammers are only tough when they're in their t-birds, buttoned up and hauling hoop with weapons hot and tracking. Get 'em out of their metal wombs and they're meat for the beast. Any jammers out there take offense? Come discuss it with me personally—if you've got the cojones.)<<<<<

—Moraya (12:17:59/6-3-55)

The Godz take a serious interest in the go-gang side of things, tearing up the highways and byways of the Pueblo and Ute sectors. Boulder supports a major battalion (their term), numbering maybe a hundred warm bodies, with smaller battalions scattered throughout the areas west of Intercity 25.

In the Free Zone, most smugglers haul their trade in t-birds and similar vehicles. A small percentage trade physical security for a lower profile. (Face it, anybody who sees a red-balling t-bird *knows* what it's up to.) The Godz depend on this second type of smuggler for their financial well-being. The gangers offer a protection service: they escort smugglers and Zoners across sectors, protecting them mainly from other battalions of the Godz. They also chastise anyone impolite enough to refuse their offered service.

>>>>>(The Godz membership is weighted heavily with elves, interestingly enough. This circumstance has led some journalists and others to suspect the Godz of being an outpost of the Ancients. Nothing indicates that this is true, however.)<<<<<

—Bloodaxe (04:23:00/6-3-55)

Only a few of North America's first-tier gangs operate "franchises" in the Front Range Free Zone. The Hudson Hawks of New York and the Braineaters out of Austin both support small detachments, while rumor credits the Cutters—highly influential on the West Coast—with two safe houses and as many as eighty members in the UCAS Zone. The first two gangs run biz catch-as-catch-can, but the Cutters already have a name for themselves in arms dealing.

>>>>(The Cutters always took a big interest in biz development, bopping only when they saw no other choice. While other outfits, such as the yaks, tried to squeeze into the arms biz by extorting the current operators or driving them out of business, the Cutters took the much more rational and economically sound course of making it in the dealers' best interests to work hand-in-hand with the gang.

This tactic is showing slow but sure results. At a guess, I'd say the Cutters have the biggest slice of the arms biz in the Free Zone, though that slice represents a mere 5 percent of the market.)<<<<<<

—Lone Wolf (14:11:35/6-12-55)

>>>>(Who's got the other 95 percent?)<<<<<<

—Paolo (07:23:56/6-14-55)

>>>>(It's split up among hundreds of private operators.)<<<<<<

—Nash (10:09:08/6-14-55)

The Triads

Traditionally based in China and Hong Kong, these crime organizations have spread across the world and shook things up over the past few years.

>>>>(Out of touch, whoever-you-are. The Triads "diversified" at the end of last century.)<<<<<<

—Time Out (00:16:42/5-23-55)

Three major Triads operate in the Free Zone: the White Lotus, the Golden Triangle, and the Red Dragon. The operations and headquarters of all three are centered around the Chinatown region of the CAS sector (see that file later on), but their influence extends throughout Denver and beyond, apparently crossing sector demarcators as though they didn't exist. All three Triads operate protection and extortion rackets, and deal in drugs and chips to some degree.

>>>>(The chips the Triads push come directly from the big combines in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Apparently, they consider the Ute producers and distributors hopeless amateurs and this attitude—and their increasing market share—doesn't endear the Triads to the Ute chipleppers. From the few squab-

bles that erupted recently, I wouldn't be surprised if some kind of full-scale chip war breaks out before everything gets settled.)<<<<<<

—Hex (15:47:09/6-2-55)

>>>>(Why the frag would anyone buy chips from fragging Hong Kong when they can get nice, safe, dependable product from the Ute factories? You know what HK beetles are like—also likely to fry your fragging brain as light you up.)<<<<<<

—Loree (08:07:26/6-4-55)

>>>>(To give the devil his due, Hong Kong is cleaning up its act. But you're right, I still wouldn't slot an HK beetle, given the choice.)<<<<<<

—Keef (20:05:21/6-4-55)

The Triads are also trying to gain control over certain segments of the shadow markets in the Free Zone. Rather than operating their own t-bird runs, the Triads have put a growing number of jammers "under contract."

>>>>(No jammers worthy of the name, let me tell you. Only the losers and the snuff-bait have anything to gain by climbing into the Triads' back pockets, so those are the only riggers (and I use the word loosely) the slags are getting a lever on.)<<<<<<

—Zak (03:09:46/5-26-55)

The Triads' heavy reliance on magic distinguishes them from other organized crime outfits. While the yaks and the Mafia willingly use magic from time to time, they view it as an adjunct, a sideshow to their main business methods. Not so the Triads. These groups

tend to default to a magical solution first, turning to high technology or muscle only if magic won't do the job.

>>>>(I think that's simplistic. They obviously evaluate each situation individually and use the tool, magic or tech, most appropriate for the specific problem at hand. You're asking for trouble if you assume they have a preference or a blind spot with regard to one or the other.)<<<<<<

—Veda (18:33:25/5-30-55)

THE ACTION TRID OF THE YEAR! CYBER-NINJA IV RETURN OF THE RADMAN



"MARTIAL ARTS MAYHEM!"

—Tom Hastings, *The Rocky Mountain Post*

"FURIOUS FISTS OF FIGHTIN' FUN!"

—Max Hein • Rügen, *Wulf TridVid*

"ZOW! BIFF! BANG! POW!"

—D.E.B., *KMAG Newsnet*

"TWO TONGUES UP!"

—Sickle & Eggbert, *At The Trids*

>>>>(Have you ever talked to a Triad mage or seen one operate? Fragging weird, chummer. What the frag are they, shamans or hermetics? Both? Neither? Gives me the heebie-jeebies big-time.)<<<<<

—Blackstone (02:57:42/6-1-55)

>>>>(Sometimes I think it's a meaningless distinction. Hermetic magic and shamanic magic don't really exist, there's just magic. Shamanic and hermetic, druidic and other traditions—like maybe the one the Triad mages use—are just mental frameworks we use to describe and make sense of something that's too big to grasp otherwise. They're just different ways of looking at the world. And why should someone from a tradition as old and distinctive as China's look at the world the same way we do?)<<<<<

—Tom (09:56:00/6-1-55)

>>>>(Fragging bulldrek. Totems are real, Snake is real.)<<<<<

—Ess Ess Ell (11:01:43/6-1-55)

>>>>(Well, all that aside, the three Triads maintain very strong, very close ties to their parent organizations back in the Far East. The local leaders enjoy enough autonomy to respond quickly to changing conditions, but they must make full reports to their superiors, who respond to even the smallest lapse in discipline in rather brutal ways.)<<<<<

—Niklaus (23:48:36/6-3-55)

>>>>(The local leader of the Red Dragon Triad is an eastern dragon. (Not a great dragon, thank whatever gods there happen to be.) She seems to spend most of her time in human form and goes by the name Choi-Mu.)<<<<<

—Wendy (17:11:52/6-4-55)

>>>>(Choi-Mu is a vassal of the great eastern dragon known as Lung.)<<<<<

—Wong (19:28:22/6-4-55)

>>>>(How the frag would anyone know that?)<<<<<

—Viper (01:19:42/6-5-55)

Brokers

Information brokerage represents the biggest growth industry in the Free Zone. Though getting an accurate handle on any sector of the underground economy proves difficult, responsible guesses class intel brokerage as a multi billion-nuyen per year industry, growing almost 10 percent per year.

>>>>(Bulldrek. It's nowhere near that lucrative.)<<<<<

—Dot (03:34:58/6-2-55)

>>>>(Not my slice of it, that's for sure ...)<<<<<

—Demosthenes (04:40:50/6-6-55)

>>>>(Why's intel brokerage such a hot issue in the Free Zone? Proximity to the Nexus?)<<<<<

—Fnord (21:09:12/6-6-55)

>>>>(Right in one.)<<<<<

—Drew (11:06:29/6-7-55)

>>>>(Before anyone goes any further: just what the frag is "information brokerage" and "intel brokerage?" How does this work?)<<<<<

—Ost (16:47:38/6-7-55)

>>>>(Okay, back to basics. Data is bits and bytes, raw, unprocessed digital information. Intel, on the other hand, is value; intel is money. Intel brokerage is the catchall term for all the different and innovative ways of turning raw data into nuyen—acquiring it, analyzing it, interpreting it, and getting it into the hands of people who'll pay you for it. Or in some cases out of the hands of people, a service for which other people will pay you.

Intel brokerage includes running datasteals, contract encrypt/decrypt work, "hit-and-runs" (dropping viruses/worms into somebody's system), data fraud, data sabotage, freelance security, data extortion, dataline surveillance. And those are the only scams I can think of off the top of my head. Give any decker a minute or two, and he'll come up with his own list.)<<<<<

—Kong (22:18:24/6-7-55)

>>>>(That's what deckers do, neh? So all you're really saying is that there's a real banging decker community in Denver, Honto?)<<<<<

—Ost (17:02:06/6-8-55)

>>>>(It's more than that. Plenty of deckers work in Denver—the Nexus draws them like flies to a drekpile, but they also come because the Free Zone serves as home to so many major computer systems and so many different groups with motives to get into those systems. But there's something more to it, something intangible. It's not like, say, Chi-town or Seattle, where intel brokerage takes place among a loose-knit community of freelance talent. In Denver it feels like a real industry.

Now that you're forcing me to put my perceptions down on chip, I don't know exactly why, or what makes it feel that way. But it's very different. It just is.)<<<<<

—Silicon Tagger (19:56:41/6-9-55)

>>>>(Stronger sense of community, stronger sense of competition, ST.)<<<<<

—Rage (19:58:38/6-9-55)

>>>>(That's true, but it's still more than that. You've just got to feel it to understand what we're bagging on about.)<<<<<

—Silicon Tagger (20:00:07/6-9-55)

The average age of the major participants also distinguishes Denver's intel brokerage industry from that in other cities. Among the A-list players, the average age is seventeen, and some of the most novahot code kidz and warez doodz are as young as fourteen.

>>>>(Who the frag would drop a datajack into a 14-year-old kid?)<<<<<

—Eight Eighty-Eight (02:00:56/5-29-55)

>>>>(Who says they've got datajacks?)<<<<<<
—Neon Warrior (05:19:26/5-29-55)

>>>>(Get real. Nobody builds a nova rep as a tortoise.)<<<<<<
—Tek (11:09:04/5-29-55)

>>>>(Getting back to 888's question, "Who'd drop a datajack into a kid?" The otaku would, chummers, that's who. Those weird slags at the Nexus. Check out the file on the Nexus.)<<<<<<
—Trilobite (16:00:22/5-29-55)

>>>>(That fits, when you think about it. If you think the intel brokerage biz is a tight community, you should check out the young comers, the warez doodz. They're like a gang, and they carry all the trappings: distinctive gear and colors (in their case, it's their icons), social standards different from the norm, a tight sense of solidarity, and a distinctive jargon reinforces their separation from the rest of society. Yeah, it fits the otaku, that's for sure.)<<<<<<
—Drang (21:05:40/5-29-55)

>>>>(Big talk, low bandwidth, null content. Blue it and crash. Twist with the grans. Your deck = doorstep.)<<<<<<
—Warez Dood (Bi:te:it/Ha-Ha-Ha)

>>>>(For many, the net and the biz are their religion.)<<<<<<
—FastJack (08:20:17/5-30-55)

>>>>(You have no idea. Mankind has long wrestled with the question, "Where is god?" Now we know.)<<<<<<
—Acolyte (01:10:18/6-2-55)

>>>>(I have danced with the Divine across the cybernetic landscape. I have felt its breath upon me and seen its brilliance in every neon moment. Perfection exists—I have touched it.)<<<<<<
—Black Isis (00:00:00/6-6-55)

Policlubs

Every sector—and sometimes it feels like every neighborhood—sprouts an assortment of policlubs, ranging from benevolent outfits to militant dorks. The policlub tapestry changes so often and so fast that it's hardly worth the bandwidth to record the current situation. The best guideline to follow is, no matter what you heard and when you heard it, things will be different by the time you get to Denver.

Of all the different polis in the Free Zone—estimates range from twenty to more than a hundred—the only two worthy of mention are the Humanis policlub and an outfit that calls itself Unity.

Nothing much need be said about the Humanis drek-kickers. Everybody knows what Humanis stands for, and the Denver chapter's the same as any other Humanis group. Though the Humanis leadership strenuously denies it, the group's connection to Alamos ZOK is an open secret.

Unity, however, is another matter.

>>>>(For a historical context, review the file Razing the Sprawl in How It Got This Way.)<<<<<<
—Teowynn (10:40:22/6-9-55)

The Unity policlub appeared on the scene soon after the Treaty was signed and shares many characteristics with Humanis. Unity is rabidly anti-metahuman, anti-Amerindian, anti-government, xenophobic, homophobic, magophobic, and generally slotted off that the world isn't inhabited entirely by a pure strain of human heterosexual gun owners of Anglo-Saxon derivation—more or less.

>>>>(Do I detect a hint of intolerance toward those with a different philosophy, Youchai?)<<<<<<
—Soldier of Fortune (21:14:42/06-21-55)

Unity has much in common and actual links with Alamos ZOK. It would, therefore, make sense to expect Unity and Humanis to be fellow travelers, allies, and generally best buds. In fact, the two organizations devote much effort to tearing out each other's throats. Over the past few months, most victims of Humanis violence have been Unity members and vice versa. I offer no hypotheses to explain this antipathy, but as any right-thinker would agree, we say, "Go to it, boys, and don't stop till nobody's left standing."

>>>>(The whole situation's a little strange. If you look for when the Unity/Humanis hatred really came to a head, it was right after Humanis backed off on its terrorist attacks against Chinatown, a couple of years back. According to the buzz on the street, certain Chinatown representatives came to some agreement with Humanis, and the fire bombings and random murders stopped. Immediately after, Unity and Humanis members started geeking each other.

Maybe Unity felt slotted off that Humanis decided to drop their campaign against the "race enemies." Only thing I can think of that makes any sense.)<<<<<<
—Jackie (09:11:52/6-1-55)

SMUGGLING AND T-BIRD RUNS

If anyone with foresight had taken the time to really think it through, it would have been obvious that the Treaty provision against nationally levied tariffs and duties, coupled with the limited market potential of the Free Zone, would have far-reaching consequences. But as they often do, principle and ideology eclipsed logic and reason. And Denver quickly became the largest and most influential free port in the world, eclipsing Port-au-Prince in the Caribbean League and even Jakarta, Indonesia. The reasons for its pre-eminence are obvious: access to six distinct nations and the lack of taxes. Denver, and the entire Front Range Free Zone, quickly became the "crossroads of North America" for shadow traders and others who would rather avoid official entanglements.

>>>>(If access to six nations isn't enough, consider that the Free Zone sits on what the jammers call "the Pipeline" or "the



Autobahn”—the Rocky Mountains. These mountains form the major smuggling route in North America. Both the mountains and the city would be important without the other. Denver would be a key hub even if it were smack dab in the middle of the Great Plains, and the Rockies spine would still be “the Autobahn” even if the nearest city were 300 klicks off-axis. But together? You get the picture.<<<<<

—Gray Ghost (10:54:28/5-29-55)

MARKETS

Understanding any kind of trade first requires a knowledge of the markets. The t-bird runs that pass through the Front Range Free Zone serve two distinct markets requiring distinct considerations: the population and the governments.

The first market comprises the official and unofficial populations of Denver and the Free Zone itself. The official population of the Free Zone stands at 3.5 million and climbing (albeit slowly—very slowly compared to rabbit warrens like Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth, and Seattle). The *true* population puts that number at more than 4 million potential purchasers of wares brought into the area by shadow traders.

>>>>>(That does it. I keep seeing the term “shadow trader,” but nobody defines the fragging thing. Give, somebody.)<<<<<

—Confused in Cincinnati (02:01:02/6-9-55)

>>>>>(In current popular usage, it means “smuggler” or “fence.” It can mean anyone who hauls contraband into the Free Zone or deals with it once it arrives there. So a t-bird jammer, a middleman, and a fixer can all be called shadow traders.

Among the people actually in the trade, shadow trader has a more specific meaning. A smuggler is someone who ships contraband into a particular national sector—“contraband,” of course, defined as drek that the government considers illegal or restricted. Smugglers operate in contravention of the laws of their destination and, in many cases, the laws of nations or sectors they travel through.

In contrast, shadow traders take advantage of the differing—some would say schizophrenic—laws in the different sectors. The goods they carry might be illegal in some sectors and some nations, but the goods are not strictly illegal in the destination sector, and so the trade goods become legal imports. (Of

course, most shadow traders sell at least some of their "legal imports" to sectorites and fixers who specialize in slipping those goods over demarcators into sectors where they aren't legal—and hence much more valuable. But that's beside the point at the moment.) Considering the layout of the Free Zone and the surrounding nations, it's obvious that shadow traders must carry their goods through jurisdictions where the goods are illegal. These jurisdictions consider such traders to be smugglers and treat them as such. But the distinction is important to the shadow traders.

Let's take an example. Joe the Jammer is shipping some of those ever-so-wiz designer drugs up from Aztlan for sale in the burgeoning Sioux Sector market. The mindkillers he's carrying are illegal everywhere (even in Aztlan), so he's a true smuggler.

In contrast, Roberta the Rodder is shipping other pharmaceutical products—human growth hormones, let's say—out of Aztlan. Though most other nations in the world consider these restricted substances—because you can turn them into real ripping mindbenders with a very simple chemical process—Aztlan has no laws against their manufacture, sale, or export. Roberta's contract is to run a shipment of HGH from Hermosillo, Aztlan, to a fixer in the Aztlan Sector. (Who will, of course, turn around and sell it to "drug tailors" in the other sectors, but that's irrelevant for the moment.) Because her pharmaceuticals are legal at her destination, Roberta's not a smuggler, but a shadow trader. (She still has to travel through several jurisdictions where HGH is illegal, however, and if she's caught in one of them, her argument for the distinction between shadow trader and smuggler won't go over worth a drek.)<<<<<

—Misty B (13:11:09/6-10-55)

>>>>(As a side note, since Aztlan and Pueblo are under discussion (and I'm sure it'll come up again), Pueblo takes a very unique view of smuggling and shadow trading in regards to Aztlan. They don't give a flip about anything going into Aztlan. Smuggle all you want. They'll even turn a blind eye when they know the t-bird is carrying something big illegal simply 'cause its going to Aztlan and that makes it their problem. Coming out of Aztlan is another story entirely, of course. Still, enough t-bird jammers make their money on one-way runs to keep cross-border traffic healthy.)<<<<<

—Mainliner (02:29:39/6-12-55)

As with any population, the residents of the Front Range Free Zone create a healthy—or *unhealthy*, depending on who's looking at it—demand for illegal goods such as recreational drugs, BTLs, and mil-spec weaponry. In turn, this demand creates a healthy market for the services of Denver's smugglers and shadow traders. (Okay, that's it: for the sake of convenience, smugglers and shadow traders now appear under the catchall term "smugglers.")

The unique nature of the Free Zone also fuels the smuggling trade. As a market, the Free Zone is drastically underserved by traditional, "legal" distributors and merchants, because the tangle of regulations involved in shipping goods into the Free Zone and between the different sectors makes legal import/export operation economically unfeasible.

As a result, people in the Free Zone *never* enjoy the selection and consistent supplies of goods that people elsewhere on the continent take for granted. Lack of supply jacks up the prices, which encourages entrepreneurs to *meet* market demand. *Voilà*—many of the t-birds roaring into the Free Zone are actually carrying perfectly *legal* cargo—goods that the traditional marketing channels just don't bother to supply to Free Zone residents.

>>>>(Legal cargo? Then how come all jammers I've ever met swagger around like they're on the Most Wanted list of every nation on the continent? Isn't that like a licensed truck driver posing as a desperado?)<<<<<

—Tink (03:57:56/5-31-55)

>>>>(Yes, the market does exist for Super NinjaKid XXVII gamechips and bottled water, but the margin of profit's much higher on beetles and electric lady. So your average jammer's going to fill all those nooks and crannies among her legal trade goods with illegal trade goods like BTLs and restricted drugs. Border guards might yawn over the gamechips and bottled water, but the beetles and mindfraggers? Doubtful.

And the guards sometimes take the time to check legal goods, too. After all, most jurisdictions require that commercial carriers possess appropriate licenses, and your average jammer's not going to waste her valuable time filling out the necessary paperwork.

And they are jamming t-birds, after all—LAVs. Most jurisdictions consider LAVs military vehicles or at least security-class vehicles, with all the restrictions those designations imply. And most jurisdictions require special licensing and restrictions, none of which your typical jammer's going to bother learning about or conforming to.

And don't forget that jammers as a group don't have much enthusiasm for border-crossing formalities. Even if they're running nothing but bottled water, they often choose to bypass legal entry points into nations and sectors. What are the legal authorities going to think if they see a t-bird buzzing over their border? Not that it's carrying bottled water, that's for sure. So off they go in hot pursuit, which the jammer's going to do her best to avoid. "Only the guilty run," the authorities think, and ...

Okay, you get the picture, I think.)<<<<<

—Helen Wheels (12:22:01/5-31-55)

>>>>(Supply isn't the only reason for running legal goods, Youchai. Sector prices typically match the prices in the governing nation. For example, cyberdecks in the Sioux Nation generally cost less than anywhere else. They're also disproportionately cheap in the Sioux Sector. Sometimes the price differential between sectors is so great that it's cheaper to ship what you want from another sector than to buy it locally—even taking into account the markup pocketed by the jammer, fixer, and so on.)<<<<<

—Juko (06:05:18/6-1-55)

The signatory nations themselves form the other major market for smugglers. For example, Ute-based chipmeisters

who want to sell "California hot" simsense chips in the UCAS market will often funnel them through Denver rather than trying to run them directly from the Ute Nation into the UCAS.

>>>>(Ah, a biz close to my cold heart. I handle a good volume of Cal hots. The best production studios in Cheyenne manufacture them, and I receive them legally at my warehouse in the Ute Sector. From there, my squids get them across the demarcator into the UCAS Sector, and then a couple of jammers run them out of the Free Zone to Chicago and points east. (A lot of jammers who ship into Denver end up dead-heading back, and they are willing to take a lower percentage just to fill their empty cargo bays.)

Why does it work that way? Mainly because the pipelines are already in place in the Free Zone. Better and cheaper to use existing channels than to set up new ones. Sure, some of the Cheyenne chip labs still do things the old way, slipping the border direct into UCAS, but most of them are starting to realize my way is cheaper in the long run.)<<<<<

—Toné (19:52:20/5-30-55)

>>>>(There's also a profitable, though limited, trade in cyberdecks out of the Pueblo Sector. The Free Zone exports sometimes.)<<<<<

—Lialla (22:00:18/5-30-55)

>>>>(No drek. Those decks are bashed together by some of the techs at the Denver Data Haven. Some are mega-hot icepicks, others are just ranking drek.)<<<<<

—Rosencrantz (23:59:01/5-30-55)

>>>>(I really doubt any decks made in the Nexus are being transshipped anywhere. Do you really think an assembly line of otaku is sitting around, slamming decks together for export?)<<<<<

—Firelight (04:20:17/6-1-55)

RUNNING THE AUTOBAHN

>>>>(We're the first to admit when we don't have the true intel on the topic of choice, and we don't on this one. So we've invited a chummer of ours—some of you might know him as Rat Tail—to give us his take on this topic.)<<<<<

—Crystal (06:01:52/5-14-55)

So you're interested in running the Autobahn, neh? You want to feel that orgasmic rush as you push the turbines past the red line into the danger zone, you want to feel your control surfaces shifting moment to moment, jinking you around boulders, canyon walls, Azzie listening posts. You want to feel the face screaming with data as you pick up the inbound missiles way out on the edge of your anti-air envelope, feel the rippling concussion as your anti-missiles leap from their racks to blow the vamps out of the sky.

In that case, you'll also want advice on how to make sure it isn't a once-in-a-lifetime experience, if you catch my drift. Advice from me.

As a jammer who's been cycling the Denver runs for fragging near 10 years, this is it: just fragging *forget it*. Running the Bahn is a cast-iron frag of a way to make a living, and it's getting harder every year, even for the old dogs.

Don't let nobody blow smoke up your hoop—the competition is not what's making it tougher. The minor leagues may be getting hairier, but so few people make it from the bushes to the Show that the old gray foxes like me don't even feel the pressure. It's the technology curve, chummers. You get locked into an arms race, and the price of tech rises *exponentially*.

I'll give you an example. Five years back, the ECM suite ate about 10 percent of the cost of a t-bird. Thought we were hot drek, too. We'd run cold and silent, under full EMCON, until we knew the bad guys had a solid lock on us. Then we'd power up the old ECM and spoof the incoming fire or cook the acquisition systems. We were fraggin' gods.

Then, surprise surprise! One day you power up the trusty old ECM and you're drekking in your pants because it's *your* gear that's cooked. It's busy dripping molten platinum onto your t-bird's deck plates, and that flight of vamps keeps screaming in.

What happened? The bad guys—the security forces—got wise on the idea of ECCM—electronic counter-countermeasures. So now we're pumping even more money into our basic ECM suites *and* we've got to slap on ECCCM—electronic counter-counter-countermeasures to defeat the bad guys' ECCM.

And none of this gear comes cheap. In fact, a close chummer of mine just commissioned himself a new t-bird fragging near from scratch. And almost *half* the cost went into counter-measure electronics.

On any kind of technology curve like this, the little guys—us, the independent operators—lose in the end. Think about it—who's got a bigger countermeasures R&D budget, the UCAS or Rat Tail the Rigger?

>>>>(Organize, you slots. Stay independent and you'll always be on the wrong side of the curve. An association of independents can at least pool resources. Stand together or fall separately.)<<<<<

—Toshiro (13:11:20/5-29-55)

>>>>(I hope you're farcing.)<<<<<

—Zak (19:07:49/5-29-55)

>>>>(No, Toshiro's oh so sincere. Hey, Toshiro, say hi to your dad the *oyabun* for me.)<<<<<

—Nguyen (02:05:19/5-30-55)

With margins getting squeezed and the cost for the wizzer tech we need to stay alive and in business shooting off the chart, running the Autobahn has become a real fragging bitch of a biz. The only possible reason to jam for a living is that you can't imagine *not* jamming.

Okay, assume you don't take my first advice and decide to jam anyway. How can you shade the odds in your favor?

Couple of things *should* go without saying, but I'm going to say them anyway. Get the best t-bird you can afford—the fastest, nimblest, most reliable, with the best electronic suite and sensor arrays possible. Go for secondary and point-defense weapons and don't waste nuyen or cubic on primary or stand-off weapons. (If you get into the kind of firefight where you'd have use for a main gun or medium-range missiles, you've fraggged up but *good*. Pull in your fangs and *run*.) If you're going mil-surplus, strip out the main gun if it's still there and use the cubic for drone racks. Eyes are better than fangs, trust me. You're a weasel, not a wolf. Or, better yet, a fragging wraith. Nobody shoots at what they don't see, and wraiths never have to shoot back.

>>>>(Hey, Ratty, you lie like a pig. "Eyes are better than teeth" my big hairy hoop. Last time I looked at your boat, it was sporting a fragging 125mm railgun out of a main battle tank, and all your drones were combat-modified.)<<<<<<

—Kris (21:14:06/5-17-55)

>>>>(What can I say? They were on sale cheap. Ever heard about "multiple-task configuration," Kris? The Screaming Rat Frag sometimes takes on missions beyond cargo transfer, if you know what I mean.)<<<<<<

—Rat Tail (23:24:07/5-17-55)

Once you've got the bird you want and a crew you can trust with your life, you've got to pick your route(s). Yeah, yeah, I know—in the trids, all the jammers improvise, switching to a new route based on rumors of interdiction, on what cargo they're carrying, or on the whims of their latest *wahine* ("Oh, Big John, *please* take me through Deadman's Canyon, it would mean so *much* to me <*pant, pant*>"). Problem is, too many of the bush-league jammers think this is the way it actually works, which sure adds to the high mortality rates on the first five runs.

>>>>(Digression: If you care about odds, check this out. Almost one of every six greenie t-bird jammers dies within his first five runs. For the sixth through fifteenth, the odds drop down to about one in sixteen. Then these newbie "veterans" start getting overconfident and the geek rate shoots back up to one in six for the sixteenth through twenty-second. After that, they drop off right quick. When you've pulled as many runs as Ratty, your odds of death are down to about one in fifty. But don't let that make you overconfident. Over twenty runs, your chances of burning to death—the typical consequence of a frag-up in a t-bird—is one in three. T-bird jobs aren't milk runs. Count on it.)<<<<<<

—Lulu (03:09:26/5-29-43)

If you want to live to be a gray-haired jammer hero, the trick is to plot out your routes beforehand, using geodetic survey maps and navsat data. Before you ever physically visit your route, you should know it better than your tongue knows the inside of your mouth. You should have run it a couple hun-

dred times in simulation, and be so fragging sick of it that you *dream* about it.

Once you've simulated it a couple hundred times, it's time to go out and eyeball it for real. But don't take your t-bird. Borrow or rent a personal GEV and run your route in that. Why? Because navsat and geodetic survey data give you the lay of the land but don't show you the listening posts, guard points, and all that drek. If you blunder into a security zone in a t-bird, you're in drek. But if you cruise in pushing a one-man runabout completely clean, what are the bad guys going to do? They *know* what you're doing there—they're not brainfraggged—but taking your Vacationer out for a cruise in the Rockies is totally legal.

Your goal here is to know your route so well that you can run it totally blind. Because that's what you're *going* to be doing. Forget the trideos, where the hot-drek jammer splits his attention between his forward vision block—showing the terrain lit up by who-knows-how-many lumen-meters of quartz-halogen headlights—and his active radar display. If you're emitting *anything*—radar, light, heat, sound—you're asking to be detected and interdicted. You can't completely eliminate the heat and sound your bird produces, but you *can* run dark—no radar, no headlights, no nothing—and under full EMCON (EMmission CONTROL).

When you're running an established route, you're watching a stopwatch timer, your ground-speed indicator, your gyrocompass, and maybe your GPS (global-positioning system) readout. (But don't trust GPS—it's only accurate to plus-or-minus 5 meters or so. When you're red-balling down a box canyon with 3 meters clearance on either side of your bird, GPS ain't worth squat.) With accurate time, speed, and direction data, you can run a properly mapped route with all radars down and your vision blocks painted black.

Things change, of course. Canyons have landslides, campers park RVs in the damndest places. And various military units sometimes go out to play in the mountains. To avoid unpleasant surprises like these, have one of your crew monitor your bird's thermal sights and somebody else monitor your passive detectors. But *never* go active until you *know* you've been detected and locked in someone's targeting system.

And that's about all I can tell you. The rest you learn from experience or you die.

And one last thing—don't trust annotated routes you've bought from someone else. It's tempting to pay a couple thousand nuyen for a route with all the speed-heading-time data worked out beforehand. But ask yourself why the slot who developed it is selling it. We're all in competition, us jammers. A hot route is a competitive advantage. Would you sell a competitive advantage?

Could be the slag's learned that the CAS boys have set up a missile battery somewhere on the route. Rather than just writing off his investment in developing the route, he sells it to a drek-head like you, and recoups at least some of his costs and eliminates a competitor at the same time.

Or maybe the route has been floated by the CAS boys *themselves*. When you run the route as annotated, you find



yourself slamming into an unmarked obstacle at full speed or cruising right into the acquisition envelope of a missile battery.

>>>>(Ratty neglects to mention there are some "public-domain" routes known to most of the A-list jammers who run through the Free Zone. The Ho Chi Minh Trail, Route Pack One, Route 66, Yellow Brick Road, and M1 are like that.)<<<<<
—Cargo Cult (01:24:06/6-1-55)

>>>>(But those routes are so crowded nobody uses them any more. (Nyuck nyuck nyuck.))<<<<<
—Yogi (20:02:36/6-3-55)

>>>>(Crowded with users, Pueblo military units, and listening posts. It's like trying to sneak down Manhattan's Fifth Avenue in a tank. It ain't gonna happen.)<<<<<
—Bald Weasel (14:27:27/6-4-55)

>>>>(Some fixers out there make their livings dealing military information—locations of listening posts, unit patrol assignments and schedules, drekcetera, drekcetera. They ain't cheap, but they are usually accurate.)<<<<<
—Firelight (02:28:22/6-5-55)

>>>>(How does the opposition work, though? Can anybody tell me?)<<<<<

—Wizzer The Fox (23:29:41/6-5-55)

>>>>(I smell a newbie jammer. Okay, kiddie, here's the drek—layered response.

Sensors, manned posts, and ground and air patrols line a sector's border. A zone of autonomous sensors usually are placed inside the border. Then, along all possible routes you'll find more listening posts and live patrols.

What happens when you get spotted? The second you are detected, the entire defense web starts looking for you. Sensors go active, other patrols are diverted to your area, reserve units come on line, the whole cream, chummer, just for you. The enemy usually deploys airborne units to intercept you because they can cross the open terrain more quickly than ground units, and are generally more effective in combat against LAVs.

The smartest jammers run in "layers" themselves, spacing their penetrations so that maybe, just maybe, the spooks that might come hunting you are off hunting the guys who crossed the border two hours before you.)<<<<<

—Chaim Gun (03:20:27/6-6-55)

BLACK AND SHADOW MARKETS

>>>>(The distinction between the "black market" and the "shadow market" is very fine. Basically, the black market trades in illegal goods, either sector-illegal or stolen. The shadow market trades in goods that are legal in the sector where they're for sale, but were shipped through other nations where they are illegal or are destined for nations where they're prohibited.

All in all, it's a more meaningful distinction than the one between smuggler and shadow trader, but it's still not that important. People outside of the trade don't really distinguish between the two markets.)<<<<<

—Miss T (13:19:42/6-10-55)

The black and shadow markets represent the "consumer end" of the shadow economy, places where the general populace can buy the goods that various illegal distribution channels have acquired and shipped into the Free Zone.

In general, all sectors unswervingly, publicly condemn the black market. They conduct widely publicized sweeps every few months, which usually net large hauls of illegal goods whose street prices are vastly inflated to make the law enforcement agencies involved look earnest in their efforts. In reality, each sector spends a different level of effort pursuing the black market, but all sectors invariably expend *much* less than law-enforcement public relations types will acknowledge. After all, the black market is often the sole aspect of a sector's overall economy that works efficiently. And closing it down would have harsh consequences on the sector's economic stability.

They treat the shadow economy very differently. Though every signatory nation publicly trumpets its firm opposition to

the shadow economy, they also encourage illegal market activities that might weaken or disrupt a neighboring sector's economy.

>>>>(I wouldn't go that far, really. I've never seen any nation actively encourage shadow traders or the shadow market. Turn a blind eye, yes. But "encourage" connotes active participation, doesn't it? The most any nation will do is ignore shadow market activity.)<<<<<

—Sam (14:40:31/5-28-55)

>>>>(Oh? What about the time that detachment of Sioux Wildcats chased a t-bird into Pueblo territory? The Pueblo security forces geeked the Wildcats to a man, protecting the shadow trader's t-bird. I'd call that pretty fragging active.)<<<<<

—Prospero (19:00:34/5-28-55)

>>>>(The Pueblo sec-forces weren't protecting the t-bird. They were "responding appropriately to an illegal incursion into Pueblo sovereign territory by armed foreign invaders." It says so right in the Pueblo report of the incident. The effect might have been to protect the shadow trader, but that wasn't the intent.)<<<<<

—Sam (11:29:37/5-29-55)

>>>>(You're judging intent based on a government report?)<<<<<

—McCarty (20:45:20/5-29-55)

>>>>(How could any sector take action against a shadow trader legally? The goods the trader's carrying aren't illegal in the sector in question. Any "crime" occurred in another jurisdiction and—by definition—isn't considered a crime by the jurisdiction the trader's currently in.

Of course, corporations operating in the sector might not take kindly to a shadow trader competing with them—that's something to keep in mind. And, I suppose, a shadow trader might be in violation of certain local laws not directly related to the goods involved—no appropriate business license or some drek.

But no matter what, the shadow market isn't smuggling.)<<<<<

—Legal Beagle (23:15:37/5-29-55)

>>>>(Back to "encouraging" or "interdicting" the shadow market: the Aztlan Sector does both. Sometimes it provides security for certain shadow traders—through Aztechnology, of course, but everyone knows who's behind it. And sometimes it stages bloody sweeps against gray-marketers. You never know how they're going to react.)<<<<<

—Moore (09:27:18/6-1-55)

>>>>(You can usually make a pretty informed guess, based on who's going to get hurt and who's going to benefit from a particular segment of the gray market. The Azzies do things for their own reasons, but they do have reasons ...)<<<<<

—Chichén (07:57:03/6-3-55)

THE NEXUS

<<It all goes into the Nexus—every bit, every pulse. Can you imagine it? Being in there with all of that? Can you understand what it must be like?>>

—Show Dog (IntraZone/REF# BVDF-2029-202a)



he wire is live.

But where does it lead?

Ask just about anyone on the street of any city in the world—Danzig, Dakar, or Denver itself—if they’ve heard of the Denver Data Haven. You’re almost guaranteed to get nods of recognition. “Sure, chummer, I’ve heard of it. I’m not out of touch.”

Ask the same person what it is. This time you get uncomfortable silence.

Many people know of the Denver Data Haven, but only certain small circles know about it. And that’s just the way the people behind the Nexus like it.



>>>>(Ah yes, the people “behind” the Nexus. And just who are they, pray tell? An interesting and very, very important question.)<<<<<

—Lara (11:26:33/5-19-55)

>>>>(Who’s behind the Nexus? You are, Lara, and everyone you know and everyone you’ll never meet. It’s all here. Everything said. Everything done. Everything heard. Everything wished. All hopes, all fears. All for the understanding. All for the Shaping.)<<<<<

—Chevallier de la Infer (02:10:17/5-20-55)

>>>>(Bright One, calling on the waves.)<<<<<

—Avrotech (10:15:29/5-21-55)



>>>>(Okay, so they exploded out of the woodwork instead of crawling. There's something you gotta understand about alot of the people in the Nexus—they are not right. I know some of them, I've even been down there. A strange sense of something echoes through there. I can't say what it is, but I ain't never going back down below.)<<<<<

—Firelight (21:36:14/5-23-55)

HOW IT CAME ABOUT

The origin of the Nexus can be traced back almost 100 years to the first national and international computer networks. Due to the cost of the hardware and software necessary to establish and maintain a network, the first networks were privately owned and operated by governments or groups of universities. As these costs dropped, public networks began to appear. In the last century, the most important of these open networks—what we now call second-generation nets—was the Internet.

THE INTERNET

The Internet was a loose amalgam of thousands of computers spread all over the world. Unlike the older, centralized, first-generation networks, the Internet revolved around no central hub. Each and every computer connected to the system served as its own hub, equipped with software enabling it to receive and send messages from other computers on the net.

This decentralized architecture quickly turned the Internet into a hotbed of on-line culture. Net discussion groups debated topics ranging from pet care to health issues to new trends in pornography to the latest government foul-ups. The lack of a centralized hub prevented any group from censoring or monitoring these network communications.

Governments have never considered free speech a really good thing. In their vision, they accept the validity of the theory, but are always looking for limits. After all, if speech is truly free, what's to stop someone from publicly criticizing government policy or revealing the truth behind the latest and greatest cover-up or suggesting that a regime is not serving its citizens as well as it can? The Internet enabled people around the world to discuss an infinite number of topics without fear of censorship or consequence.

>>>>(Is this the 20th century we're talking about? The fragging Jurassic Age of computing? Security was so primitive back then that any hacker worthy of the name could slice into the Internet and track down the ident of anyone posting unpleasant comments.)<<<<<

—Pop (20:05:46/5-18-55)

>>>>(Sure, the Internet wasn't the Matrix, but don't sell short the ingenuity of the network pioneers. They devised ways of speaking anonymously. For example, they used blind-distribution nodes to forward messages to the rest of the net, nodes that conveniently "forgot" the user's ID in the process. Not as slick as using false-trace worms and microcode plasmids, but it worked.)<<<<<

—FastJack (00:45:59/5-19-55)

By the mid 1990s, the U.S. government found itself a mite irked at just how free speech was really turning out to be on the Internet. Not only were people saying unpleasant things about government corruption (to take a single example) for anyone to read, but they were *encrypting* messages to each other! Encrypting them using schemes so sophisticated that watchdog agencies like the National Security Agency (NSA) couldn't crack them within the projected life span of the universe. The gov types decided that this was totally unacceptable.

>>>>(A little history for trivia buffs. Back in the '90s, the NSA took to flogging its own encryption algorithm, a little gewgaw called the Data Encryption Standard (DES). The NSA wanted everyone to protect their data by using this "unbreakable" algorithm, despite incontrovertible evidence that the NSA could crack the DES with one cerebral hemisphere tied behind its back, so to speak. Entrepreneurs began marketing alternatives to the DES that nobody could break—not with the state of the cryptanalytic art of the day, at least. And when the government outlawed such products, these entrepreneurs distributed them free over the Internet. The girls and boys at the NSA were not amused.)<<<<<

—FastJack (00:47:43/5-19-55)

As in most countries, United States law lagged decades behind the times even in the 1990s, and it failed to address all the wizzer new developments in electronic communications in a timely fashion. The government attempted to use this situation to its advantage by applying the vague existing laws in a way that would establish electronic communication as somehow inherently different from all other forms of communication. Though the spoken and printed word was protected by the First Amendment, the government argued that protection should *not* extend to electronic communications such as electronic mail.

>>>>(With a frightening degree of success, to its eternal shame.)<<<<<

—FastJack (00:49:51/5-19-55)

Organizations sprang out of the woodwork to fight the new government policy. In the early- to mid-1990s, the Electronic Frontiers Foundation (EFF), an amorphous movement of "cypher-punks," did what little they could. But corporate and government information networks—privately owned, centrally controlled, and layered with the precursors of what today we call IC—proliferated at an astounding rate, and public datanets began to shrink. Under government pressure, organizations that once had maintained important Internet nodes began to close down their portions of the network.

>>>>(The guvmint would approach universities and subtly link continued government support with the "control" of "subversive" datanets like the Internet. Because universities and other node operators had no way to "police" what was going on across the Internet, they saw no way to abide by the government's "suggestions" for eliminating subversive message traffic

other than closing down the Internet node entirely. And that was just what the government wanted in the first place.)<<<<<<
—Finnigan (13:33:50/5-24-55)

As these key nodes shut down, the backbone of the Internet disintegrated. Independent groups, most notably the EFF, kept their own Internet nodes running, challenging in court every attempt by the government to close them down. Unfortunately, the number of active nodes quickly dropped below the critical mass necessary to keep the Internet up and running as a meaningful international network. The volume of traffic quickly choked and overloaded the remaining nodes, and it looked as though the Internet, along with the whole "wired society" and the free-information philosophy it espoused, was dead.

Certain private providers, such as the EFF and a pirate BBS named "Shadowland," refused to accept defeat and kept operating, in outright defiance of several newly promulgated laws. The access numbers for these pirate boards passed only between friends and colleagues. Though the government eventually tracked down some of these ever-changing access channels, the pirates by that time had discovered the wonders of multi-node blind relays, making it impossible for their enemies in government to track their location or operations from these access numbers.

>>>>>(Shadowland came into existence around the turn of the century. Access could only be hacked by penetrating the national communication providers like SprintNet, TeleNet, and such. Like today, the access routing to Shadowland changed regularly, so you had to be in the know to find it again. Tricky days.)<<<<<<
—FastJack (01:10:12/5-19-55)

DAWN OF THE MATRIX

While Internet fought for its life, interesting things evolved in the rest of the datasphere. Government and corporate databases proliferated, grew, and merged, gradually giving birth to the Matrix, a global "dataspace" linked by fiber phone lines, satellite channels, microwave datapipes, and dedicated datalines. Finally, the promise made by the obsolete ISDN concept came true: data, voice, and television transmission became one and the same. Bits were bits, shuttled around the datasphere in a manner totally transparent to the user. Now, once-independent networks served as mere nodes of a greater network.

The Matrix offered the EFF and other pirates a whole realm of new opportunities. Emerging from their self-imposed exile, they reached out and tapped into the datasphere that was the Matrix. Though the early Matrix looks sparse in comparison to today's panoply of datanodes, it still contained far too many nodes—many of them transitory or shielded from casual scrutiny by sophisticated security—for the regulators to keep track of just what Matrix construct was what. Who would notice the appearance of one more icon among thousands, the EFF reasoned. The organization cautiously linked their private network—code-named "the Egg"—to the Matrix as a whole.

Other pirates quickly followed suit. Many went in too boldly and attracted the attention of the government monitors. Among others, the Shadowland BBS attracted the unwanted attention of a roving team of government deckers. The node these deckers had located provided no indication of the physical location of the unauthorized system, and so they tried to slice their way into it. Sophisticated "burners"—contemporary state-of-the-art IC—trashed the attacking deckers' computers instantly. The government tried to bring the weight of the law to bear on the people running Shadowland, but it simply could not identify or locate those people. Two more attempts to hack into the Shadowland node ended the same way—with the smell of cooked chips—and the government backed down. Instead of trying to pursue the sysops and managers of Shadowland and risking a failure that might reveal its own incompetence to the public at large, the United States government did what it could to bury the embarrassing evidence.

The EFF learned of this debacle, of course. As a survival tactic, it concentrated enormous resources on knowing everything the government had going on the electronic communications front. Even before the smoke had cleared from the government computers, the sysops of the Egg were consulting with the people behind Shadowland about increasing both systems' security measures to prevent anyone from ever cracking in.

>>>>>(Buldrek. Those "burners" you're describing sound like gray IC. No fragging way they had IC that far back.)<<<<<<
—Rage (00:03:34/5-19-55)

>>>>>(That's a classic example of tempocentric thinking. (Tempocentric—is that a word? If not, it should be. Same derivation as anthropocentric and the rest.) Anyway, trace-and-burn utilities—granted, much less sophisticated than those we have today—existed as far back as the late 1980s! Believe it.)<<<<<<
—FastJack (01:13:45/5-19-55)

Thus the Egg, Shadowland, and many other bulletin boards—most of them long since defunct—joined the Matrix.

>>>>>(By the way, I've kept this one secret for some time now, but considering this discussion, why not re-post it. I originally found it on Shadowland back in 2011, tucked away on the introduction board where new hackers logged on to introduce themselves. It somehow was lost in all the furor of the dragons' first appearances—that same day, Shadowland purged the intro board of storage memory to free memory for the messages pouring into other areas. (They had, and still have, echoes from many other boards running all the time.) Here it is, exactly as I downloaded it at the time:

MESBASE: 102/a
DATE/TIME: 00:00:01/12-24-11
AUTHOR: >>STRUCTURE ERROR 0208<<
ROUTING: >>ROUTING ERROR B092<<
SUBJECT: <unknown>
MESSAGE:

Good morning world. Welcome back. Play nice.
—Saeletra

That's exactly as it appeared. Now, I could simply be paranoid, but the message seems to indicate an existing knowledge of the Awakening. Sure, I've read the blather about "immortal elves" and such drek, but to this day something about that post still chills my blood.)<<<<<<

—FastJack (01:16:45/5-19-55)

>>>>(I'm a'scared, Mommy!)<<<<<<

—The Big "D" (02:10:19/5-19-55)

>>>>(Hey Jack, you write as if you downloaded that personally—in 2011? How the hell old were you? How the hell old are you?)<<<<<<

—Firelight (10:20:17/5-20-55)

>>>>(I was twelve. I am now considerably older than that. For the record, I downloaded it using an old, sorry-state Mac Firestorm I found in my uncle's basement. That machine's main processor now resides in my deck, though it's doing tertiary sub-level assignment work. Any deck without it feels uncomfortable.)<<<<<<

—FastJack (19:51:29/5-21-55)

>>>>(Sounds like you got yourself a fetish there, Jack.)<<<<<<

—Magister (05:28:39/5-22-55)

>>>>(These days, I'm not the only one.)<<<<<<

—FastJack (22:09:45/5-24-55)

THE CRASH

The bulletin boards joined the Matrix just in time for the Crash of '29. As the global datasphere tottered and collapsed, the U.S. government tried to score political points by claiming that the virus trashing the system originated in some private, illegal BBS.

>>>>(Well frag, maybe it did. Didn't there used to be this tiny, way-out-there private BBS called "Anarchy Now!" that espoused tearing down the infrastructure by whatever means available?)<<<<<<

—Stomper (11:14:32/5-20-55)

>>>>(You think some slag on Anarchy Now! hacked together the Crash virus? Chummer, I'm surprised the people on Anarchy Now! could even log on.)<<<<<<

—Junko (20:16:13/5-21-55)

>>>>(The Crash virus was war code, a "core wars" weapon that got loose (or maybe a Doomsday weapon that got away, it doesn't really matter). Why else its preference for heavily encrypted datastores? If the Crash virus got loose from anywhere, it was from a corporate or government skunk works.)<<<<<<

—Red Wraith (23:07:08/5-21-55)

>>>>(No way. It was somebody's search demon that mutated.)<<<<<<

—Roger Dodger (02:20:09/5-22-55)

>>>>(Hal, my children, I'm cutting this thread right now. If you want to argue the Crash, go to the appropriate SIG. (That SIG's message base is up over 5 terapulses at the moment, with average daily traffic of close to 250 messages.) This has been a public service announcement.)<<<<<<

—Captain Chaos, SysOp (09:53:22/5-22-55)

Even though the Egg and the other pirates were connected to the Matrix, they weren't truly of the Matrix—not yet. They still shunted all access through transitory nodes, or via multi-node relays, to discourage government interference. The "insulation" provided by the relays protected the pirate systems long enough for the sysops to see that nodes more tightly linked with the overall Matrix were getting trashed, and the sysops cut themselves loose from the infected datasphere before the Crash virus actually penetrated their machines.

>>>>(Not in all cases. The Crash virus did put paid to many of the less robust pirates, and even Shadowland was plagued for a couple of years afterward by recurrent, low-level virus-related grief.)<<<<<<

—FastJack (00:55:17/5-19-55)

As the Matrix collapsed, the Egg and the other pirates remained safe, isolated from all possible "vectors" for the virus. When the Echo Mirage team finally eliminated the last traces of viral code from the global datasphere, governments and corporations the world over began to rebuild the Matrix. The early days of the Reconstruction can best be described as wild and lawless. Teams of deckers, sporting spin-off equipment from the Echo Mirage project, had their way with each and every data-store they could lay their electronic mitts on. Governments, typically harder hit by the Crash than megacorporations, reconnected to the new Matrix cautiously. It wasn't only a case of once-burned-twice-shy, although that consideration certainly came into play. Specifically, the U.S. government—soon to become the UCAS government—had watched Echo Mirage-equipped deckers breeze through the toughest known security as though it didn't exist. And the government believed that private individuals—namely, corporate deckers—could hardly wait for the opportunity to use that drek-hot new technology against them.

These conditions created a much looser regulatory environment. The megacorps concentrated on bugging each other blind while the bugging was good; the governments wanted to test the waters before diving in. Nobody was paying much attention to the Egg, Shadowland, and the other pirates, who promptly took advantage of this window of opportunity to link themselves tightly into the reconstructed Matrix, carefully hiding their access paths under layers of security and concealment. By the time the UCAS government put its watchdogs back into the Matrix to look for subversive elements, the Egg was well and truly hidden.

>>>>(Everybody knows why this happened, right? After the Echo Mirage boys did the deed and slammed the Crash virus back to hell, the government boys in black decided to do them the ultimate favor and "remove their vulnerability." Yup, it was

decided that the EM team deserved to be geeked for their trouble. But surprise, the EM team was way ahead of the government and knew exactly what was going down. They disappeared, burning the data and hardware behind them, leaving the government with only the original theoretical files.)<<<<<<

—Turner (02:18:23/5-19-55)

THE NEW INTERNET

The Egg had established several "front doors" that connected it to the Matrix. From the "outside"—that is, from the greater Matrix—the Egg's system looked much like any other system. In reality, it was very different. During the half-decade after the Crash, the Egg became the hub for hundreds of subsidiary systems, all private, all pirates, all using the datapipes of the Matrix for communication, but none part of the Matrix. By 2037, the Egg was just one node (albeit the largest one) of a huge, sprawling datanet that connected to the Matrix proper only through discrete "gateways," several of which were part of the Egg node.

>>>>>(Here's a way to visualize it. It's like the Internet was reborn, a chaotic, shifting, sprawling peer-to-peer network, a web of private computers and fringe technology hacked together into a datasphere so snarled and complex no sane mind could ever understand it. At the heart of this "new Internet" lies the Egg, just one node among hundreds. The Egg (and a couple of other systems) provide a gateway to the Matrix, allowing bi-directional communication. Despite this connection, the two datanets—the Matrix and what the Egg hatched into—remain autonomous. Crash the Matrix, and the Egg keeps going. Crash the Egg, and the Matrix only notices that half a dozen of the tiniest icons have suddenly vanished. That's it.)<<<<<<

—Biv (16:03:19/5-19-55)

One of the first nodes to join the Egg was Shadowland. That name held such power for so many people that they often referred to the entire Eggcentric datanet as Shadowland.

>>>>>(Seattle-based runners will recognize the name Shadowland as the branch of this underground network that extends up into the Puget Sound region. In fact, this branch is the direct descendent, as it were, of the original Shadowland pirate BBS system, founded in Vancouver and moved to Bellevue in 2003.)<<<<<<

—Finnigan (13:47:00/5-24-55)

BIRTH OF THE NEXUS

Beginning with the Reconstruction, Shadowland and a dozen other pirate networks grew right along with the Matrix. But another force was also taking shape. Shadowland and its precursors lived and breathed decentralization, concentrating on spreading their resources so that they couldn't be traced, couldn't be harmed. If someone or something cut off one part, the rest took up the slack. In complete disregard of this theory, the Denver Data Haven began to grow.

Following the Treaty of Denver, the Pueblo Corporate Council found itself in possession of the old United States

Airforce Academy. The council surveyed it, removed everything that seemed useful, then fenced in the entire facility. Periodically, an appointed bureaucrat would stop by and peer through the fence, but the only things these people apparently noticed were the ever-present wrecked and abandoned cars that seemed to gravitate around the front gate. These officials filed reports and made clean-up requests, but nothing ever changed.

At the same time, the Free Zone branch of the Pueblo government was trying to sell off the land. The new government needed income, and marketing potentially useful former U.S. federal land seemed a prime way to generate funds. Unfortunately for the government, no one took the bait. Rather, they had some nibbles, but every offer was withdrawn. Other bids simply got lost in the Pueblo system.

>>>>>(Wait. Things just don't get lost in the Pueblo system. It just don't happen.)<<<<<<

—Twang (02:19:28/5-21-55)

>>>>>(Exactly.)<<<<<<

—Firelight (10:27:30/5-21-55)

Rumors began to circulate that squatters had occupied the base, but the Pueblo government didn't seem to care. It appeared they no longer even knew who was responsible for monitoring the land.

>>>>>(I'll bet.)<<<<<<

—Loober (09:20:18/5-22-55)

Around 2038, certain people began to talk about the Denver Data Haven, a clearing-house for Shadowland and other networks, though people knew little about it beyond its name. A year or so passed before the corps and the governments realized that the Data Haven was echoing files *outbound* on the networks and receiving *inbound* traffic. By unspoken agreement, the Denver Data Haven became the repository of all legitimate and shadow data in North America. As soon as a byte of data crossed one of the shadow networks, it existed in Denver and stayed there. Deckers and others immediately saw a tremendous dead letter opportunity. Files could be sent to Denver with the proviso that if anything happened to the poster, the files would echo outward again. And all the data that went into Denver's storage, called the Heap, remains there to this day. The Data Haven contains terapulses of data that would knock your socks off, data that has *never seen the light of day*.

>>>>>(Wow.)<<<<<<

—Awed in Akron (08:20:18/5-22-55)

>>>>>(No drek.)<<<<<<

—Firelight (20:19:20/5-22-55)

The search was on for the Denver Data Haven. According to the lore of the Nexus, those controlling the Data Haven contacted the Pueblo Corporate Council, told it what was going on,

and struck a deal with the government. To this day, the Data Haven site remains largely unmolested, and the Pueblo Corporate Council keeps strictly out.

>>>>(That makes precisely zero sense. If Pueblo knows that the old Academy site is the home of the fragging Nexus, so does every other government and megacorporation in the fragging world. Why doesn't somebody just go in some dark night and blow the drek out of the place? Not a corp or country in the world would shed a single tear if Shadowland got itself crashed.

I understand that plenty of other nodes would take up the slack, but the loss of the Haven would still be a major blow to the underground datasphere. So why hasn't anybody done it?)<<<<<

—Norris (00:38:29/5-29-55)

>>>>(I'll give you two answers, Norris. One is the popular explanation, the one that the flacks for the Nexus, the megacorps, and the governments trot out whenever anyone presses the issue. It goes like this: "Nobody dares do drek to the Nexus because nobody wants to risk the Data Haven's wrath. One worldwide computer crash is enough for any century." The implication—never stated—is that Shadowland has prepared some kind of retaliation and possesses the ability to execute it. Presumably, the surviving parts of Shadowland would respond to an attack on the Nexus by releasing a Domsday virus into the Matrix. (Whether anybody actually has such a virus or is even contemplating using it, is basically a moot point. The possibility alone is an effective deterrent.)

The second answer, the one I find more plausible, relates to who really runs the Nexus. Who really funds a datasphere that must represent millions of nuyen every year in maintenance alone? A bunch of idealistic deckers and cypher-punks? Not likely. A megacorp makes a lot more sense—possibly Fuchi, but that's just my own bias talking.

Who's really behind the Nexus?)<<<<<

—Lara (11:30:20/5-19-55)

>>>>(That's paranoid.)<<<<<

—Suvanne (12:42:58/5-19-55)

>>>>(The question is, "Is it paranoid enough?")<<<<<

—Toshikazu (12:59:39/5-19-55)

>>>>(Dare I point out a simple fact yet again: the nominative head of the Echo Mirage project is now the CEO of Ares Macrotechnology. Need we get any bigger than that?)<<<<<

—Turner (04:08:29/5-24-55)

>>>>(Here's a thought for y'all—Pueblo knows about the Nexus. Pueblo made some sort of deal with the Nexus. The Pueblo Corporate Council maintains the best government data network in the world, with IC and protocols far beyond those mounted by anybody else. Can we guess why?)<<<<<

—Firelight (20:01:15/5-26-55)

Today, the Nexus-style operations are not limited to the Data Haven. Smaller data havens created along similar lines have appeared throughout the world. The largest of these, second only to the Denver Data Haven itself, is located in Singapore. The third largest is located in The Hague.

>>>>(The Hague's facility is much smaller than Singapore's, which is in turn considerably smaller than the Denver Nexus. All the rest are small even compared to The Hague.

Denver's Nexus is the pre-eminent data haven in the world today. Various boffins in the UK like to babble about creating a haven in Manchester to dwarf the Nexus, but talk's cheap, and so far nothing concrete's come out of all the blather.)<<<<<

—Cray (10:35:36/5-20-55)

>>>>(Don't forget the new one in Beppu, Japan. The buzz I hear hints that it's maybe 15 percent bigger than the Singapore haven. (Still smaller than Denver, of course, but pretty fragging important.)<<<<<

—Rod the Mod (16:03:23/5-22-55)

>>>>(Beppu will be important when—and if—it becomes stable. I'm not going to trust anything, least of all my precious neurons, to a self-styled data haven that crashes once every couple of days on average.)<<<<<

—FastJack (02:24:22/5-23-55)

>>>>(I keep hearing talk about linking all these data havens to a datanet that's totally distinct from the Matrix, kind of an autonomous shadow Matrix. What's the chip-truth on this?)<<<<<

—Barnsley (04:28:05/5-25-55)

>>>>(The truth is that there's no truth to it, Barnsley. Datanets need physical transmission media such as fiber-optic pipes or comsat channels. That's what makes up the Matrix. What are the data havens supposed to do? Pull enough fiber to create their own global commnet? Loft their own comsats? We'll always be dependent on the Matrix because it's the only game in town.)<<<<<

—Cray (09:5:51/5-25-55)



MATRIX LOCATION

The computer systems that make up the core of the Denver Data Haven—the Nexus—are located about 15 clicks north of Colorado Springs, far below ground at the north end of what used to be the U.S. Air Force Academy. In the years since the Data Haven’s creation, however, the computing resources that constitute the Nexus have been distributed to other geographic locations, largely for security reasons.

>>>>(I thought nobody dared slot with the Nexus?)<<<<<
—Penny Wise (02:01:38/5-23-55)

>>>>(There’s different kinds of security, Penny. Sure, there’s “What do we do if Pueblo comes knocking?” But there’s also other concerns. Putting all your eggs in one basket leaves you vulnerable to natural disasters, the consequences of war or armed insurrection, long-term interruption of power, EMP, that kind of drek. Better to spread things out a bit.)<<<<<
—Brainiac (09:56:07/5-25-55)

The Nexus site houses several very large, very powerful computers that form part of Shadowland’s “backbone,” but none of these is truly essential. All datastores have been duplicated and distributed elsewhere. The Nexus and Shadowland would survive the total physical obliteration of the Denver site.

>>>>(True, but the loss of the site would be a serious blow. The Nexus is called the Nexus for a reason. The network architecture is such that the systems physically located within the Data Haven are the perfect “switching center” for data anywhere on the Shadowland datasphere. The whole underground data highway is a peer-to-peer network, strictly speaking, but that doesn’t prevent certain peer nodes from being privileged, simply because of the way they hook into the datasphere. The Denver Data Haven itself is one of those privileged nodes. Every pulse of data available directly from the Data Haven can be accessed from any node of the Shadowland datanet eventually, but the key word is “eventually.” Accessing data from the Nexus itself might take a couple of clock-ticks, while accessing the same info from a remote node, say the Seattle Shadowland hub, might take hours or days—simply because you’ve got to wander through so many intermediary nodes. Sure, the Nexus isn’t indispensable, but it is valuable to the underground data highway as a whole and to individual datasphere surfers like me.)<<<<<
—FastJack (01:00:15/5-19-55)

Its computer resources represent the heart of the Denver Data Haven. Everything else is window-dressing, as irrelevant to the real Nexus as a disposable chip is to the data stored on it.

And the Nexus has *lots* of computer resources. As of the last unofficial survey, the Denver Data Haven directly controls an amount of processing horsepower equivalent to five Cray-Atari X-52 supercomputers. (Don’t expect to find five X-52s steaming in cryotanks, of course. The bit-bashing power is split up among a couple dozen smaller, but still very beefy, machines. We’re

just using the analogy to get across the point that the Nexus is powerful.) System memory is in the terapulses (that’s real; virtual memory is a million times that figure). And mass storage is in the billions of megapulses. You’ll recognize this incredible power and capacity the moment you deck into the Nexus system itself. The resolution of the “consensual hallucination” that is cyberspace is orders of magnitude better than anything you could possibly be used to (unless you make a habit of hacking military “black” systems, of course).

The Nexus site is also important as the home of several key sysops and system managers, who groom and maintain the underground datasphere. In a well-designed distributed network, knowledgeable sysops can be more valuable and more indispensable than the nodes they manage. The Denver Data Haven could survive the destruction of the physical site better than it could the murder of the most influential system managers. Several of these key individuals choose to live within the Haven to take advantage of its inherent security.

>>>>(The real reason these slots live on-site is that they can’t bear to give up even the slightest degree of control over what they consider their network. If they lived off-site, that would mean—gasp!—leaving the Nexus in the hands of underlings, however temporarily.)<<<<<
—Jaron (01:11:38/5-23-55)

>>>>(Another reason exists for keeping key sysops safe beyond “What would we do if they got killed?” Consider, “What could they tell Fuchi if they were kidnapped and interrogated?” It goes without saying that all access codes, encryption keys, and the rest would be changed the instant one of the key people went missing. But they could still reveal to their interrogator things that couldn’t be changed that fast, like system architecture, choke points, even policy regarding access to other data havens.)<<<<<
—Crix (11:05:43/5-23-55)

ENTERING THE NEXUS

For obvious reasons, the Nexus does not have a SAN that allows direct access from the greater Matrix. (It *does* have several “dial-out only” SANs, but that’s a different story.) Would-be visitors to the Nexus can only approach it from other nodes of the Shadowland data highway, some of which have SANs connecting them to the Matrix.

Let’s follow a hypothetical route—hypothetical, because by the time you read this, the network routing will almost certainly have changed. A decker in Lake Geneva, UCAS, wants to connect to the Denver Data Haven. She doesn’t know if Milwaukee supports a Shadowland hub, but she *does* know Chicago has one. She has the LTG number, and so into the Matrix she goes, surfing the datalines to the Chicago hub’s SAN. She provides the correct passcodes and easily enters the Chicago hub of the Matrix. Then she transits to another SAN connected not to the Matrix, but to the Shadowland datasphere.

She pops out of that Shadowland SAN and finds herself in another cyberspace. It has the same types of constructs and works in basically the same way as the Matrix. but its architec-

ture is much sparser than in the "real" Matrix, and the constructs are generally much smaller and more whimsical. Our decker scans these unfamiliar electron horizons, looking for a SAN to the Nexus itself, but without luck. She does a little digging and finds the current routing to the Nexus is through the Seattle hub, which provides a direct-connect to a Denver subnode. That subnode alone provides access to the SAN that will give her access to the Denver Data Haven, if she can get through its security.

>>>>(If you're used to operating in an environment where icons and constructs get the jaggies when system load increases, the Nexus is going to blow your little minds. When system load is low, the cyberspace environment and the constructs in it are almost hyper-real—the level of detail is disorienting, even slightly painful. As system load increases, the resolution loses its edge, as if there's the faintest trace of dust in the air. That's it.)<<<<<<

—Raiko (09:04:27/5-21-55)

>>>>(Cyberspace in the Nexus is full-sensorium, too, just like simsense—except that it's bi-directional, fully interactive communication.)<<<<<<

—Knob (17:26:28/5-23-55)

Because the Nexus's cyberspace is designed and rendered by the same people who spend their days and nights tweaking its architecture, it should come as no surprise that the imagery used in the peripheral nodes and constructs changes on a daily basis. But the Nexus's central image always remains the same.

Imagine a solar system revolving around a black hole, a black hole surrounded by planets and gas and space-shrapnel whirling around at high speed, barely glimpsed before they've sped out of view.

The "planets" and "rocks" and the rest are constructs that represent the nodes of the Denver Data Haven system, while the "black hole" at the center represents all the data controlled, managed, and accessed by the Nexus. It's an incredibly powerful image close to overwhelming. Various nodes designated as "private offices" and "meeting rooms" offer "windows" looking out over the spectacle, and anyone who's visited these nodes can confirm that the view seems almost designed to distract you from the business at hand.

>>>>(Which is just what Shiva and the rest had in mind when they set things up that way. Count on it.)<<<<<<

—Tril (09:24:48/5-23-55)

>>>>(The "black hole of data" is apocalyptic in its intensity, but still disturbingly beautiful. Everything happens so fast—constructs careening through space, the sheet-lightning discharges of high-volume data transfers—that it's impossible to keep track of everything going on.

But if you don't look at the black hole directly, if you kind of look out of the corner of your eye, you can see a kind of pattern in the apparent chaos.)<<<<<<

—Din (06:16:07/5-25-55)

>>>>(Okay, doesn't look like anyone's going to tell me what I want to know without me asking. So, just what kind of data can I get via the Nexus?)<<<<<<

—Bobbi J (19:58:29/6-3-55)

>>>>(What do you want?)

Anything that's in any of the nodes that makes up the Shadowland datasphere, you can get at—or at least get to—through the Nexus. That includes everything on the Seattle Shadowland hub, the Chicago hub, the Miami hub, and all the rest.

The best way to access that information is to observe the code of conduct that exists between the Nexus and other data havens, such as Singapore, The Hague, Danzig, and (maybe) Beppu. Any data request coming through Denver receives preferential treatment at any other data haven in the world, and vice versa. That means net surfers get the paydata they're after a lot faster if they "legitimize" themselves by routing through the Nexus.

Routing through the Nexus also offers access to other, less obvious and well-known opportunities. For example, certain Shadowland hubs occasionally tap into other databases that are usually beyond the average runner's reach. Case in point: back in January of 2053, a Cleveland decker by the handle of Tapeworm decked so deep into a Monobe Corporation subsystem that he was able to establish a mirroring utility linked to his local Shadowland hub. Every data write and every read request issued to the Monobe subsystem was "mirrored" on Shadowland. The datatap lasted only a day and a half before a Monobe decker noticed it and blew it away, but a lot of people learned a whole frag of a lot more about how the corporation worked than the suits at Monobe would have liked.

Translation: Once you're into the Nexus, you're 90 percent of the way to any bit of data you're looking for.)<<<<<<

—Rebecca (18:34:09/6-4-55)

>>>>(But wait, it's more than just the volume of data. The Nexus stretches the relationship between volume of data and value of data beyond the linear correlation generally seen. Double the amount of accessible data and you more than double the value of that data. (Personally, I'd call it an exponential relationship: double the amount of data, quadruple the value; triple the amount, increase the value by nine times.) The value increases because the volume lets you examine the correlation between individual data. It goes like this. Datum A is interesting and valuable. Datum B is also interesting and valuable. But knowing how datum A and datum B relate is even more interesting and valuable.

I look at the Nexus as this great big correlation machine. That's what's so wiz about it. Next time you're decked into the Denver Data Haven, look at the "black hole" Crystal described. The complexity is a consequence of the correlation between all the data flashing through the Nexus.

I love this place.)<<<<<<

—Silver Surfer (06:01:17/6-5-55)

NEXUS SECURITY

The Nexus boasts some of the best security in existence, designed to shut out governments and megacorporations. But

even the toughest IC can be cut if sufficient resources are brought to bear. The Nexus's constantly changing routing makes it more difficult for would-be intruders to even *find* the SAN they have to crack and offers at least some forewarning of a hostile run. For example, if the Seattle hub finds its security under attack by some novahot military-style icepick, a logical assumption is that somebody *tough* is making a run on the Nexus. The Seattle sysop warns the Denver Data Haven, and combat deckers take ambush positions, ready to meet the unwelcome visitor.

>>>>(The Egg put this kind of scheme in place before the Crash. So to get to the Egg during the Crash, the virus had to make its way through a couple of intermediary systems—infecting them in the process and attracting attention—which gave the sysops of the central nodes time to cut themselves loose from the datasphere before they got the bug themselves.)<<<<<

—Red Wraith (23:43:54/5-21-55)

The Denver Data Haven's security is *tight*, probably the only black, Ultra system in private hands.

>>>>(If the Denver Data Haven actually is in private hands.)<<<<<

—Lara (11:33:40/5-19-55)

Nexus access SANs typically benchmark in the high single digit Reds and contain layers of white and gray IC. These gateway SANs require multiple redundant passcodes.

>>>>(Lies! Gateway SANs clock in at double digits at the very least and quite probably much higher. (I once sent an analytical probe frame in at one of the gateway SANs just to see how tough it really was. The probe was calibrated to read anything measurable. Its capacity was fragging overloaded in the nanosecond before the SAN ice ripped it apart.)

Gateway SANs are fragging glaciers, chummer, all ice top to bottom. And the fine people of the Nexus don't stint on black IC, either.)<<<<<

—Crackerbox (14:14:03/5-25-55)

>>>>(You jammed a probe into a Nexus gateway? Frag, chummer, do you always go out of your way to slot off dangerous people?)<<<<<

—Rage (02:02:46/5-26-55)

>>>>(I understand that nearly all of the Nexus is custom designed. And they constantly modify everything—the hardware, the firmware, the software, and especially the IC.)<<<<<

—Firelight (20:19:12/5-27-55)

For obvious reasons, we won't be providing you with a system map of the Denver Data Haven (Bash and the boys would kill us if we did). It wouldn't really help you that much anyway, if truth be told. Much of the Nexus uses the "adaptive architecture" so prevalent in the Pueblo Net. Datapaths mutate depending on system requirements and alert status, and so most of any

map would be dotted lines anyway. Further, the Nexus is managed by a bunch of people who view computers as both objects and subjects of art, not just tools. At any given time, probably half a dozen "artists" are decking away at the system, changing its configuration and architecture.

>>>>(Note: Bash can't bitch if other people pass on what they know about the Nexus, so go to it.)<<<<<

—Crystal (06:25:32/5-14-55)

>>>>(I bitch about what I want, Crystal. Remember that. I will, as a matter of course, delete anything inappropriate from this board.)<<<<<

—Bash (??:??:??/??-??-??)

>>>>(Let's talk gateway SANs for a minute (and don't try to censor me, Bash—neither of us wants what that would initiate). Some of the routes into the Nexus use a kind of double gateway. The first SAN, the one connected to the Shadowland datasphere, rates at nothing more threatening than Orange-5. Only one dataline leads out of that SAN, straight to an SPU just writhing with black IC. This is dormant black ice, however, and only an activation command from deeper in the system can trigger it. (I call these SPUs the killing jars.) Another single dataline leads from the killing jar to another SAN, and this one is as black as Bash's own heart—Red-8-plus and a glacier. This is the real gateway into the Nexus.

To enter the Nexus, you just hang in the killing jar while a combat decker from the system proper comes and scans you. If you've got the right passcodes, the right icon, and an acceptable reason for being there, the decker escorts you through the SAN into the Nexus. If you don't have a good enough justification for being there but don't look like you pose a threat, you'll be allowed to go on your way unmolested. If you look crooked in any way, the combat decker activates the killing jar's black IC.

Then he just sits back and watches.)<<<<<

—FastJack (01:00:15/5-19-55)

>>>>(Crystal's right about the Nexus architecture changing like dreams. But the sysops seem to always return to a few identifiable chaps, mainly because they work. One is to load a lot of the ice into DLJs, rather than on CPUs and SPUs. Ice on a dataline junction remains dormant until it's triggered, and while dormant it imposes no load on the processors. Come an active alert, and every choke-point DLJ is a killing-ground for an intruder.)<<<<<

—St. Michael (02:39:37/5-20-55)

>>>>(They go the other way, too, configuring some choke-point DLJs with a very low security rating. Intruders have to "squeeze" their decks—cut way back on their load ratings—to squeak through these DLJs without overloading the node.)<<<<<

—Wong (04:57:48/5-20-55)

>>>>(Well look, let's face it. The people "tuning" the Nexus are among the best in the biz. They've had years to hone their skills

and nothing but time to play with different hypothetical situations. Don't depend on them having made a foolish error anywhere in the architecture. And remember that if you ever go up against the Nexus, you'll be improvising solutions to set-piece defenses that have been tuned and optimized over years. I've tried the Nexus myself, on occasion, and

««««___@@&&&&^^^)<<<<<<
 —FastJack (00:19:44/5-21-55)

>>>>>(Drek, Bash, I warned you, didn't I? Have you really got the cojones for this?)<<<<<<
 —FastJack (17:49:35/5-21-55)

>>>>>(Uh-oh. Everyone out of the pool.)<<<<<<
 —Chipmaster (17:53:54/5-21-55)

>>>>>(As you wish.
 If you really want to deck into the Nexus, you can get around those nasty, nasty gateway SANs and killing jars in a number of ways. Within the physical facilities of the Denver Data Haven, there are many I/O ports with ««««___@@&&&&^^^ and I/O ports with much lower levels of ««««___@@&&&&^^^ , Frag. Back in one.)<<<<<<
 —FastJack (17:54:41/5-21-55)

>>>>>(*.....*)<<<<<<
 —Bash (??:??:??/??-??-??)

>>>>>(*.....*)<<<<<<
 —Bash (??:??:??/??-??-??)

>>>>>(**)<<<<<<
 —Bash (??:??:??/??-??-??)

>>>>>(As I was saying, there are many I/O ports with low levels of security. If you are physically inside the facility, you can deck in through these ports and bypass the worst of the ice.

Most deckers think exclusively in terms of photons and electrons, of virtual presence and security. They neglect the physical side of the equation. I'd hazard a guess that it's easier to get you and your deck physically into the Nexus than it is to icepick your way through the gateways.

Which ties in ever so nicely with Crystal's next section. (I love it when I segue.)<<<<<<
 —FastJack (18:02:32/5-21-55)

>>>>>(Children, don't make me stop this board.)<<<<<<
 —Crystal (22:01:32/5-21-55)

DENVER DATA HAVEN

The old Academy site consists of a handful of old hangars, storage sheds, and support buildings. Much of the Data Haven is housed in an underground bunker built during the early years of the Cold War. (This was the U.S. Air Force Academy, after all.)

Today, the buildings look very much the worse for wear, but this appearance is deceptive. The buildings look dilapidated,

but they are structurally sound. Ongoing renovations to the interiors make them fairly defensible against any type of assault.

>>>>>(The buildings look the worse for wear inside as well. Do techno-wonks make good housekeepers? How about a whole community of techno-wonks? <shudder>

Don't get me wrong, I don't mind untidy—anyone who's visited me knows that. What I do mind is dirty, not to mention unsafe. The place would have rats if the vermin didn't regularly electrocute themselves on all the bare wires strewn around the place.)<<<<<<
 —Alice (04:38:00/5-29-55)

>>>>>(It's not that bad.
 But lord knows it ain't good.)<<<<<<
 —Lorax (10:01:55/5-29-55)

>>>>>(It makes sense, doesn't it? Everyone involved with the Nexus is focused on the intangible world of the datasphere. They eat, breathe, and sleep it. Any material task—such as cleaning up after themselves—is an unwelcome distraction from their True and Holy Purpose.)<<<<<<
 —Garvey (22:29:38/6-1-55)

DATA HAVEN SECURITY

It is a rare and noteworthy event when someone tries to enter the Denver Data Haven's physical plant. Why would anyone bother? If you know the switching routes and access codes—in other words, if you're entitled to get into the Nexus in the first place—why make the pilgrimage to the Front Range Free Zone when you can ramble over to the nearest LTG port and get what you need? Moving physically is so much slower and more tiring, and you don't have the option of jacking out to escape trouble.

Still, some people make the pilgrimage to the site and try to get inside. For any would-be pilgrims out there, here's roughly how it's laid out.

The Fence

A rusting, bent, and twisted fence surrounds the Nexus physical plant. Apparently no one bothered maintaining the fence after the Academy folded, and though razor wire still lines its top, the razors look dull and bent.

But looks deceive. This fence is probably stronger than the shiny-and-clean fences surrounding corp enclaves and tough enough to stop a ramming car. Predictably, the fence bristles with sensors, but no security personnel patrol the area; people only set patrols on areas that matter, and one of the Nexus's best defenses remains the popular belief that nothing on the site matters. But any attempt to go over, under, or through the fence will certainly attract attention from people inside.

Rusted-out husks of cars and trucks dot the deserted, barren area inside the fence. These wrecks actually shelter a staggering array of sensors—vid-cameras, thermal imaging systems, you name it.

>>>>>(And a couple of heavy machine-gun emplacements controlled by rigger-gunners inside the site itself.)<<<<<<
 —Dark (09:03:52/5-26-55)



The cleared areas of the short, deserted runways provide unobstructed killing grounds, should that become necessary.

>>>>(Spellworms take note: astral protection is next to nothing here. You can cruise in on the astral plane without saying boo.

But then what would you do? You can't affect the physical plane from the astral plane—not unless you can hit the astral projection of a fetish or a spell or something and ground it into the physical. You can watch people moving about, but you can't "eavesdrop" on the electronic communication. All you'd pick up is the emotional content of the message traffic—in other words, precisely nothing.

So, no astral security, because it's not really needed.)<<<<<
—Waller (21:55:45/5-25-55)

>>>>(Don't neglect to mention the ivy that's climbing all over the outside of the "abandoned" buildings. (A new addition, and a slick one.)

That's right, ivy. A nice, thick covering of ivy, engineered to grow nice and fast under the ambient conditions. Thick

enough to block your physical and astral view. After all, ivy's a living thing, and you can't see through living things, which makes it a great screen against would-be astral spectators. And because the ivy's physical, an astral mage can't push it aside.)<<<<<

—Spook (03:04:56/5-26-55)

The Gate

A single gate at the south end of the site opens on to a dirt road leading north from Woodmen Road. The gate is smashed open and rusted into a solid, twisted mass. Beyond the gate stretches row after row of hundreds of rusted-out vehicles, extending 50 meters or more on either side of the gate and forming a maze of metal 30 meters thick.

>>>>(It looks like a random pile of junk, but the rows of dead cars make a much better blockade than any gate. A t-bird could smash through the gate, but even an MBT would find the hundreds of gutted cars tough going. For dismantled infantry, the maze of metal would be hell on earth, nothing but a place

to die. A half-dozen defenders with pistols could slaughter a security squad.)<<<<<<

—Rico (16:11:15/5-28-55)

>>>>>(Don't overestimate the defensive potential here. A squad of sec-guards or a shadowrunner team might "water the desert with their blood" and all that drek. But fence and cars and everything else wouldn't be anything more than a momentary nuisance for a military assault force.)<<<<<<

—Hangfire (19:56:13/5-28-55)

The cars shelter an array of cameras, sensors, and high-intensity spotlights powerful enough to overload even flare-compensated cybereyes. Armed sentries hidden among the cars guard the approach to the gate around the clock.

>>>>>(Those sentries usually don't pack anything heavier than SMGs, but then, they don't have to. They're supported by the same type of remote-controlled heavy-machine-gun emplacements placed elsewhere around the site.)<<<<<<

—Hammer (09:06:40/5-26-55)

Visitors must wait at the gate for confirmation of their identities and permission to enter before proceeding. The sentries do *not* allow anyone into the area that they were not advised to expect. Communications setups allow the sentries to check with their superiors inside the Nexus proper for instructions regarding unexpected visitors, but only under very rare and very extenuating circumstances will an unscheduled guest receive any hospitality whatsoever.

>>>>>(Expected guests don't get much hospitality either, Crystal. Don't know about you, but getting dragged around in a humvee blindfolded doesn't make me feel at home.)<<<<<<

—Priest (19:32:52/6-1-55)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Perhaps 100 permanent residents call the Denver Data Haven home. Of these, a dozen or so function as the systems analysts and sysops—the architects of the Nexus. Another 24 provide maintenance and support. The rest are *otaku*, "citizens" of the "electronic nation" that is the Nexus.

>>>>>(What the frag are otaku? I'm sure I've heard the word somewhere, but I can't place it.)<<<<<<

—Byrne (06:34:42/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Check the section below.)<<<<<<

—HoloByte (12:24:18/6-1-55)

THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE

Of the dozen or so sysops/system managers, four must be considered the key players. The others are, relatively speaking, also-rans—and we stress "relatively speaking." This is the Nexus, after all, and someone who's an also-ran here might well be considered a novastar anywhere else. The company in the

Denver Data Haven is just that much more skilled, inspired by that indescribable something others simply lack.

The four key movers-and-shakers are Shiva, Bash, Cap'n Kluge, and Spirit. To help you show the proper respect, we'll give you what information we have on these four individuals and encourage you to share anything you know.

Shiva

If you've seen a tall, slender, black-clad male figure with perfect features and short, fine hair, then you've seen the icon



of the master sysop who operates under the handle Shiva. As with everything in the core of the Nexus, Shiva's icon is rendered so perfectly that it looks *hyper-real*. Anywhere else, that degree of resolution would be counterproductive, because the clock cycles necessary to render the icon so precisely would take cycles away from something meaningful. But that's just the way of things in the heart of the Denver Data Haven.

Nobody knows Shiva's true identity; or if they do, they're not talking. He's been a major part of the Nexus for more than a decade. His background offers as much mystery as his identity, but his expertise makes it obvious that he'd had many years of experience in high-capacity network operations before joining the Nexus.

Of the four key figures in the Nexus, most people name Shiva as the most knowledgeable and most dangerous if provoked. Though his personality appears generally calm, aloof, almost withdrawn, his anger is like a force of nature once aroused. Shiva and Bash have an ongoing rivalry, the origin and parameters of which only the two of them know. Neither sysops seems inclined to resolve it.

>>>>>(You really don't know who Shiva is? Or are you just sheltering him? His name's Gennedy Polemov, and he came to Denver from the Soviet (Dis)Union. He was one of the major movers in the Glasnet data network before the government decided it was time to re-exert a little control over that irritating idea of free speech.)<<<<<<

—Droud (13:50:46/5-24-55)

>>>>>(Buldrek. Polemov was executed in 2048.)<<<<<<

—Glenngary (17:41:29/5-24-55)

>>>>>(Close, but no cigar. He'll be pleased to know his efforts at confusion paid off so well.)<<<<<<

—Priest (20:10:28/5-29-55)

Bash

Bash uses an icon of an unnaturally tall, cadaverous-looking figure with grave-white skin, slightly pointed teeth, and eyes that gleam red. The icon "wears" an old-style morning coat.



>>>>(Imagine a Victorian-era undertaker from a nightmare. That's Bash.)<<<<

—Droud (13:51:57/5-24-55)

Bash arrived at the Nexus at about the same time as Shiva, and though most observers believe he's decades younger than Shiva, Bash appears equally knowledgeable in the ways of the Matrix.

>>>>(A chummer who had the bad judgment to mix it up with Bash claims the sysop lacks Shiva's elegance and precision but makes up for it with a healthy dose of killer instinct.)<<<<

—Quenton (23:43:30/5-26-55)

>>>>(Bash is not a nice individual.)<<<<

—Hermes (07:00:56/5-27-55)

While angering Shiva is difficult and exceptionally unwise, Bash seems to exist in a permanent state of barely suppressed rage. Some people believe his attitude to be a result of some trauma in his early life. Others suspect he's just a wicked fragger by nature.

Cap'n Kluge (Tom Kwan)

The Cap'n uses a bouncing rubber ball icon that sometimes sprouts big goggle eyes, flat feet, or little stubby hands. Depending on Kwan's mood at the moment, the icon moves through the Matrix by rolling, by bouncing frenetically off everything and everybody in its path, or by waddling along on stumpy legs. All of the Cap'n's utilities rely on similarly "cartoon-y" imagery.

Since the disappearance of the decker known as Lachesis, Cap'n Kluge has the hottest rep for using the resources of the Nexus to dig up paydata that anyone in their right mind would accept as totally inaccessible.

Tom Kwan comes across as young and brash, full of the arrogance and overblown ego that seems to be characteristic of top deckers. Actually, this seems to be at least partially a front he maintains to prevent people getting too close. He's a very private person and has few friends (though many acquaintances). Kwan was a child prodigy, graduating from MIT&M in computer science at the age of 14 and immediately snapped up by Fuchi. He carved out a major rep for himself in Fuchi-New



York, but his association with Fuchi ended 7 years ago, for reasons nobody seems willing to discuss.

>>>>(I'll discuss them. Cap'n Kluge made the unforgivable error of continuing his investigation into a hostile penetration of the Fuchi datacore after his supervisors told him to drop the matter. He discovered that one division of Fuchi was making a run on another division and then mentioned it to the wrong people. Another manifestation of the Villiers-Yamana feud, for those of you keeping score at home. He vacated the Fuchi enclave half a step ahead of a corporate assassin.)<<<<

—Droud (13:57:13/5-24-55)

Kwan ran the shadows for 2 years under the handle Cap'n Kluge and came to the Denver Data Haven 5 years ago.

>>>>(Shiva recruited him and is keeping the Cap'n under his wing, so to speak. Shiva expects great things from Tom Kwan.)<<<<

—Riley (04:15:44/5-26-55)

Spirit (Nahid Mostafavi)

Spirit's icon is one of the most striking you'll ever see. It resembles a very sheer silk scarf rippling in a wind. As it moves, its color shifts subtly, almost hypnotically. The icon makes no pretense to anthropomorphism and its design seems to place aesthetics above practicality. Still, Spirit in the Matrix is a breathtaking sight. All her utilities are based on colors and shifting fields of light.

Mostafavi is Iranian by descent, but she was born and raised in France. She began her career with the Paris-based division of Siemens AG, but quickly struck out on her own as a network consultant and freelance sysop. According to the records, she came to Denver in 2047 to fulfill a short-term contract, but she stayed and quickly became one of the key personalities in the Denver Data Haven.





Of the four major players, Spirit seems most driven by the philosophical aesthetics of the Matrix, rather than by practicalities. This doesn't make her some kind of fuzzy-headed dreamer, however. When necessary, she can be as brutally pragmatic as Bash. While others generally see the Nexus as a means to an end, Mostafavi seems to consider it worthy of existing in its own right, even if it had no wider use.

>>>>(Nahid's in her mid-forties, I'd guess, but she's got the clear-eyed sense of wonder of an eight year old. (An eight year old who happens to be a super-genius.))<<<<<

—Riley (04:18:19/5-26-55)

>>>>(Okay, Shiva, Bash, Cap'n Kluge, and Spirit. What about Mitch? I've heard people talking about somebody called Mitch being in the Nexus. They talk about him like he's important, but nobody seems to know who he is. Who's Mitch?)<<<<<

—Jose (14:37:51/6-6-55)

>>>>(Echo that question. Last time I was in the Nexus, I heard Shiva make some kind of joke to Spirit about Mitch watching over them. Who is he? Another sysop?)<<<<<

—Tarquin (18:50:26/6-6-55)

>>>>(The way I understand it, Mitch was one of the original founders of the EFF, the outfit that set up the Egg and eventually the Nexus. He died some time back, but everyone views him as kind of the patron saint of everything the Nexus represents and considers themselves his spiritual descendants. That buzz about "Mitch watching over us" is kind of like a physicist saying, "Einstein was guiding my hand when I wrote that equa-

tion." It's semi-mystical jujuspeak that nobody really believes.)<<<<<

—Sopwith (21:23:14/6-6-55)

>>>>(It's more than that, Sopyy, and I think you know it. Someone or something is cruising around the Nexus, and it isn't Bash and the boys. Sometimes when I'm wandering around the Nexus, I feel like I'm being watched, but nobody's ever there.)<<<<<

—Crown (22:58:50/6-6-55)

>>>>(Paranoia.)<<<<<

—Flash (01:26:17/6-7-55)

>>>>(Not true. "Mitch" is the name Shiva and the others gave to the AI they created in the Nexus. (You know those data correlations Silver Surfer was bagging on about? Who—or what—do you think manages all those cross-correlations, huh?))<<<<<

—Scrip (01:57:23/6-7-55)

>>>>(Close, but no tamale. "Mitch" is the personality of the original Mitch, that EFF founder Sopyy was talking about. The original Mitch uploaded himself into the Nexus when his meat body cacked.)<<<<<

—Buck (02:09:46/6-7-55)

>>>>(Are we all talking about the same fragging Mitch, here?)<<<<<

—Disjoint (04:26:34/6-7-55)

THE OTAKU

The term *otaku* originally derives from the Japanese term *otaku-zoku*, an incredibly formal way of saying "you." Something like, "O honored Sir," but more so. That's the etymology. The relevance here is that *otaku* was first used to describe an identifiable group of people sixty-some years ago when social wags applied the word to a group of Japanese computer "nerds"—technologically brilliant but equally socially inept individuals who spent most of their lives shut in their darkened apartments, communicating with others only through the primitive computer networks in use at the time. Asocial and actively *antisocial*, the original *otaku* represented a considerable sociological problem for Japanese society before the turn of the century.

>>>>(And other countries as well. The phenomenon spread quickly.)<<<<<

—Arclight (09:06:55/5-26-55)

>>>>(You're talking as though the *otaku* as originally defined died out as a societal phenomenon. Granted, people rarely talk about it anymore, but what differentiates present-day "electronic tribes" of deckers and net-surfers from the original *otaku*? Remember, we're seeing people who are clinically addicted to the Matrix, and untold numbers of others who consider any time they're not jacked in as "waiting.")<<<<<

—Holly (15:19:21/5-26-55)

We're not sure precisely who resurrected the term otaku to describe a particular class of people living in the Denver Data Haven, but it definitely caught on.

The otaku are a "tribe" of about sixty children ranging in age from perhaps five to their early teens living at the Academy site. They consider themselves a distinct social group, owing allegiance and obedience to no one outside their own tribe, but consider Shiva their mentor and spiritual guide. Not a parent figure, it's important to point out—more like a deity, with all that implies.

>>>>(Shiva is not the deity, though he does not admit it.)<<<<<
Trans-fad (11:11:11/11:11:11)

Many of the otaku have datajacks, voluntarily going under the laser when they're ten or even younger. This surgery is performed by several surgeon-technicians who belong to the Denver Data Haven community. The Haven does not charge the otaku for the surgery or the hardware, but they are expected to pay for it in trade by putting in time monitoring the Nexus, running data searches, and performing basic file maintenance. Older otaku train their younger "tribe-mates" in running the Matrix, using cyberdecks that the children consider communal property. Long before an otaku goes under the laser, however, he's more technologically literate than most adults in the outside world. As soon as a new otaku enters the Haven, the older otaku begin teaching the newcomer how to use the many data terminals scattered around the site. Though, strictly speaking, these neophytes are "turtles," some of the "pre-jack" otaku are almost as fast as a jacked decker.

>>>>(Not too surprising. Catch a kid young enough and he can adapt to alien environments and new sets of physical laws faster by orders of magnitude than an adult. Get a kid on to a terminal at age five and running the Matrix via datajack at age ten, and by the time he's twenty he'll be the hottest fragging netrunner in the entire fragging world.)<<<<<
—Knowbot (03:31:56/5-26-55)

>>>>(And that's probably what Shiva and the rest are doing with the whole otaku subculture: creating a generation of super-deckers.)<<<<<
—Arclight (09:08:33/5-26-55)

>>>>(This is ritual child abuse—separating a child from his or her parents at a tender age, withdrawing all love and tenderness and parental support, and replacing it with a gang mentality. (Calling it a "tribe" in an attempt to ennoble it is semantic misdirection.) Redirecting healthy human curiosity about self and others into the sterile, dehumanizing environment of the Matrix, performing neurosurgery on children too young to understand the consequences—how can a civilized society permit this to continue?)<<<<<
—Catherine (12:48:43/5-28-55)

>>>>(Civilized society? Denver?)<<<<<
—Duggles (17:03:22/5-28-55)

>>>>(I'm not sure I agree or disagree with you, Catherine, but for the sake of argument, let me play devil's advocate here. I sure as frag wouldn't want to exchange my own childhood for life as an otaku. But most of these kids come from slums like the Warrens and worse. They don't know their parents, and their only guardians before they came to Haven were their gang-mates. They grew up scratching out a living from dumpsters, staying one step ahead of older kids who'd kill them for whatever scraps of food they managed to scavenge. They spent their lives avoiding adult predators who'd exploit them in all kinds of unpleasant ways. They had no chance of education other than the kind the street provides. They had no chance of becoming anything other than a better gutter rat.

At the Nexus, they've got good food, a protected environment, clothes, companionship, and education. Is that bad? I don't know.)<<<<<
—Travis (23:42:38/5-28-55)

>>>>(Who "recruits" otaku? Shiva?)<<<<<
—Anson (04:20:07/5-29-55)

>>>>(The older otaku. They go back to the streets where they grew up and recruit new members based on criteria known only to them. It's a self-sustaining society at the moment.

And it's a society quite distinct from the other residents of the Denver Data Haven. The otaku depend on the others for what you might call "support services"—food, maintaining the physical environment, performing cyberdeck maintenance beyond the older otaku's abilities (though not much lies beyond their abilities). In turn, the otaku perform basic maintenance, data searches, and the other scut work Crystal mentioned above. In that sense, the otaku and the adults work together.

But they're very separate cultures. The otaku speak their own language among themselves and seem to look at the world from a totally different angle than any non-otaku. It's weird, it's disturbing, it's scary to walk through the Nexus (I'm talking my meat body here) and see the kids watching me silently from the shadows. Something about their eyes sets them apart from normal kids; you don't have to see the glint of a datajack to know who they are. It's like facing by aliens.)<<<<<
—Arclight (10:00:36/5-29-55)

>>>>(What happens to otaku when they grow up? Or haven't otaku been around long enough for that to happen?)<<<<<
—Anson (14:52:22/5-29-55)

>>>>(When they get "too old" (the otaku's idea of "too old" doesn't seem to be tied to chronological age), people simply are no longer otaku. They're removed from the group in a process that resembles a hybrid between honored retirement and expulsion. Most ex-otaku join the maintenance/support personnel or the sysop team, depending on their skills and interests. Some just disappear, probably back to the streets they came from, and sometimes resurface as novahot freelance deckers.

To my knowledge, two of the sysops are ex-otaku, while three other ex-otaku work in the microtronics labs, building some of the most killer icepick cyberdecks imaginable.)<<<<<

—Arclight (19:42:56/5-29-55)

>>>>(Buldrek, chummers. There ain't no old otaku because the others fragging geek them when they get too old to keep up. Not physically, like in normal gangs—mentally. When they can't adapt to change as fast, when they start wanting to "settle down," when they start accepting that sometimes a status quo ain't all that bad.)<<<<<

—Doomster (11:04:49/5-30-55)

>>>>(I'm not even going to comment on Doomster's drivel.

Let's talk cyberdecks. You might expect that the otaku only play with obsolete pieces of drek like old Radio Schlock PCD-45s and such.

Not so, girls and boys, not at all. The cases might say PCD-45, but everything else is cutting edge or slightly ahead of cutting edge. Many of the techs in the Denver Data Haven juice decks as a hobby, pushing the performance envelope beyond what should be possible. If a new prototype doesn't meet their stupefyingly high expectations, they simply lose interest in it and hand it off to the otaku. If the new model is actually better than the tech's current model, the tech'll keep it and give his old, obsolete unit—which, of course, is still going to be nova-fragging-hot—to the otaku. And many of the otaku themselves have a knack for juicing decks.

It's weird, strolling through the Denver Data Haven and seeing kids—12, 13 years old—surfing the Matrix using these drek-kicked decks whose insides are actually sweeter icepicks than anything I could ever dream of affording myself.)<<<<<

—Karilee (12:58:09/6-2-55)

Never expect to see an otaku outside the Haven. They never leave because they see no reason to. They've got the world at their datajacks or on the screens of their terminals, and they believe dealing with any of it via meat body rather than neurons and photons is a massive waste of time.

>>>>(Never make the mistake of considering otaku to be "just kids." They've got a totally different world view from anyone else in the fragging world. Consider them kids, expect them to behave and think like normal kids, and you're making a big mistake. If you have to deal with them, take Arclight's earlier comment to heart: they're aliens, chummer. Aliens.)<<<<<

—Fleming (13:11:09/6-4-55)

>>>>(It's like I posted in the section on intel brokerage awhile back. The warez doodz are the old otaku. Who the frag else could they be?)<<<<<

—Trilobite (17:20:25/6-5-55)

>>>>(Slash, bernard. Flat folk don't grip it, push as they may. Dinosaurs, blue it and clear our lines.)<<<<<

—Tid (?:?:?:?:?:?:?)

>>>>(Huh?)<<<<<

—Anson (14:01:42/6-6-55)

>>>>(Should I talk about it?)<<<<<

—Perri (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(It's up to you. I'll make sure the data stays intact.)<<<<<

—FastJack (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(I don't want them getting mad at me.)<<<<<

—Perri (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(They're already mad, aren't they?)<<<<<

—FastJack (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(True.)<<<<<

—Perri (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Well?)<<<<<

—FastJack (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Could you mention it first?)<<<<<

—Perri (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(No, it's not my place.)<<<<<

—FastJack (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Sigh> I kinda figured you'd think that way.)<<<<<

—Perri (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(You're a quick student.)<<<<<

—FastJack (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Thanks. Okay, give me a couple of fics.)<<<<<

—Perri (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Don't do it.)<<<<<

—Bash (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Shut up.)<<<<<

—FastJack (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(She has no right. It's too early.)<<<<<

—Bash (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Too early? For what, Bash? How do you measure an appropriate time for something inexplicable?)<<<<<

—Shiva (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(It's too early.)<<<<<

—Bash (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(I agree.)<<<<<

—Spirit (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(Well, I'll be damned.)<<<<<

—Bash (**:?:?:*/**:-**)

>>>>(We can arrange that, Bash. Perri?)<<<<<
 —FastJack (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(I'm here. It suddenly got crowded, though. You know there are at least a half-dozen other lurkers?)<<<<<
 —Perri (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(I know.)<<<<<
 —FastJack (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Don't be stupid, girl.)<<<<<
 —Bash (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Including Anthony and Edge?)<<<<<
 —Perri (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(I know. Wait.
 <break> CODE <resume>
 There, you're isolated, they can't touch you now.)<<<<<
 —FastJack (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(BASTARD!)<<<<<
 —Bash (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Very impressive, Jack. I didn't know you could do that.)<<<<<
 —Shiva (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(BASTARD!)<<<<<
 —Bash (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Wonder-face)<<<<<
 —Bitter Edge (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Go ahead, Perri.)<<<<<
 —FastJack (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Some of the otaku don't need a deck. I'm not talking about program carriers either, those things that were all the rage four or five years ago until we all realized the cellular damage being done.
 No, I mean they don't need a deck. They jack using a sim- sense translator modified with a simple digital impulse convert- er. That's it—no headware memory, no active memory, no storage memory, no progs, no MPCP, no persona, nothing. They just do it.
 And the Matrix does what they want.)<<<<<
 —Perri (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(We have found the Truth, the Deep Resonance. The electrons follow the Complex Forms, and we have the Channels to command them. So we have been taught.)<<<<<
 —Bitter Edge (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Buldrek.)<<<<<
 —Cap'n Kluge (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(I'll ask again—who taught you?)<<<<<
 —Shiva (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(There exist Great Spirits of Man, the Air, the Forest, the Mountains. Why do you think there are no Spirits of the Machine?)<<<<<
 —Anthony ANSI (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Unsound. Discontinuous.)<<<<<
 —Cap'n Kluge (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(I'll ask again—who taught you?)<<<<<
 —Shiva (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(We are the true shamans of the Awakening. We are the Synthesis, the Great Work of the Mental Machine, the Virtual Intellect. We are the techno-shamans, the heralds of the WorldMind.)<<<<<
 —Bitter Edge (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(I'll ask nicely one more time—who taught you the chan- nels?)<<<<<
 —Shiva (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(We needed not to be taught, only shown the truth and all was made clear.)<<<<<
 —Anthony ANSI (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Can you show me?)<<<<<
 —Shiva (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(Ask he who showed us to show you. He is among us now.)<<<<<
 —Bitter Edge (**:**/**-**-**)

>>>>(WHAT!?!)<<<<<
 —Bash (**:**/**-**-**)
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>>KEY INTEGRITY FAILURE (RM239 Sequence)
 >>KEY INTEGRITY FAILURE (RM240 Sequence)
 >>KEY INTEGRITY FAILURE (RM241 Sequence)
 >>KEY INTEGRITY FAILURE (RM242 Sequence)
 >>FAILURE SOURCE— Denver (DVMI-OpHazard)
 >>FAILURE SOURCE— Denver (DVMI-OpHazard II)
 >>FAILURE SOURCE— Denver (DVMI-OpHazard III)
 >>FAILURE SOURCE— Denver (DVMI-OpHazard IV)
 >>TERMINAL FILE CORRUPTION
 >>CONNECTION LOST
 >>FILE MAINTENANCE VERIFIED (aa920)
 >>>>REMAINDER OF FILE IS VERIFIED
 >>>>CONTINUE? (Y/N)?

AZTLAN SECTOR

<<Why does everyone think we cut out the hearts of our enemies every day? We save that for special occasions.>>

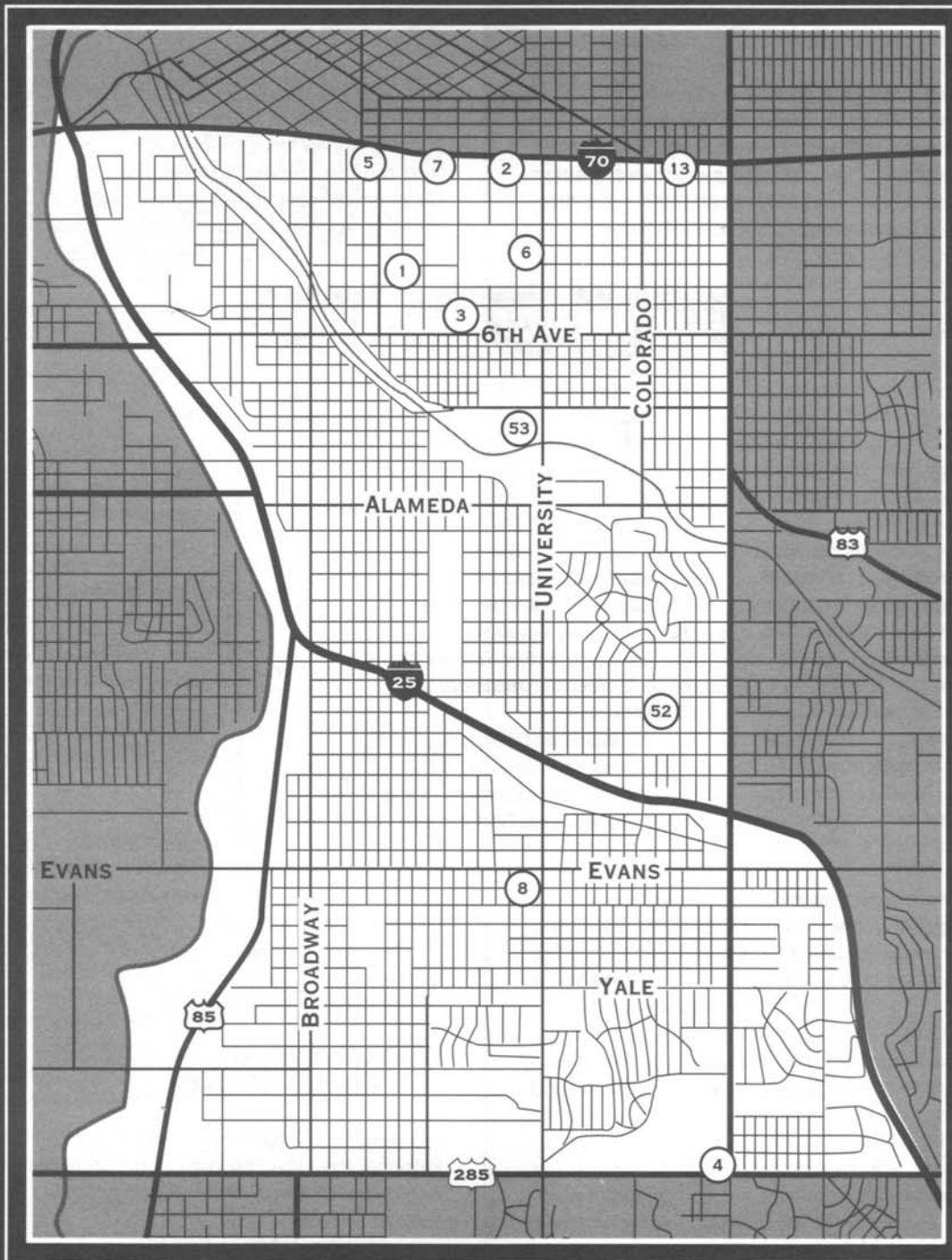
—Carlos Ensanada (IntraZone Online/REF# 02938-bb83)

The smallest of the national sectors, the Aztlan Sector covers nearly 65 square kilometers. But of all the sectors in Denver, Azzietown has the greatest population density.

>>>>(No drek! The Azzie Sector went for pure high-rise, with no low-density neighborhoods and no rural area. That's why the Azzies settled for such a small slice of the pie. Small in size it may be, but it's highly influential. Read on, and take note of how many important locales stand on Azzie turf.)<<<<<

—Lock'n'Load (15:22:42/6-1-55)

▼
▼
▼
The sector's boundaries are East Colfax Avenue on the north (with a little jog to include the Civic Center), Intercity 25 and the South Platte River on the west, South Colorado Boulevard and the Intercity on the east (the Intercity curves; see the digital map), and Route 285 (known to locals as either East Jefferson or East Hampden, depending on where you are).



AZTLAN ▼ SECTOR



Not a real user-friendly place, Azzietown. Despite the fact that Aztlan was one of the last national interests to set up its sector, it wasted no time or cred making it fragging near impregnable. A 10-meter-high fence or wall protects every square foot of its side of the demarcation line, said structure laced with hyperalert sensors able to pinpoint the lightest touch. (And no, they don't set off alarms every time the wind blows. Be more useful for border-jumpers if they did...easier to slip through if there's a chance the guards will ignore you 'cause they're tired of jumping every time a bell goes off. No such luck with these babies. The systems controlling these sensors incorporate pattern-recognition algorithms sophisticated enough to distinguish a penetration attempt from a leaf blowing up against the fence.)

>>>>(Those control systems make the best target point if you want to defeat the system. Don't try to spoof the sensors—take out the software controlling them.)<<<<<

—Rage (15:03:22/5-30-55)

Aztechnology security forces patrol both sides of the fence or wall in those areas they consider "high-risk"—lots of 'em strolling up and down accompanied by nice, lethal paracritters. Watchers and other spirits also monitor the demarcation line along most of its length.

>>>>(Anytime a high-risk area isn't covered by a patrol, anti-personnel radar constantly sweeps the fence line. If the radar picks up anything larger than a small dog, up pops a microturret—one of those slightly convex metal circles set up every 30 meters or so in no man's land—and an autonomously targeted gun system hoses down the area. And don't even bother to say "go after the software controlling the guns." The AP radar and auto-gun systems are not linked to the Matrix.)<<<<<

—Trasher (19:12:28/6-2-55)

>>>>(Beware of the sentry guns. They are just fragging lethal.)<<<<<

—API (23:49:11/6-3-55)

WHO LIVES HERE

>>>>(So let's take a look at these cold, dry figures, and see what they're telling us, 'kay? First, the population figure—excuse me, official population figure—is way the frag off. The Azzie Sector has closer to 600K people than 400K. This little factoid tells me that the Azzies are putting up with, or maybe creating, a large SINless underclass. Naturally, they don't want the official figures to reflect that reality.

Notice that the per capita income, poverty level, and active-traders figures are higher by far than anywhere else in the Free Zone? Wonder how come? Check out megacorporate affiliation (read: "Aztechnology affiliation," of course). Ninety fragging percent. Here's the translation, cobbbers: anybody who isn't an Aztech employee either gets driven out of the sector or stripped of his SIN.

What other fascinating facts can we learn? Here's one—compare the racial demographics to the figures for the Free Zone as a whole. A few more elves and dwarfs, way fewer orks, no trolls. And six times the percentage of "others." (Just what the frag are the "others"? Make's me queasy to think about it.) Government-sanctioned racism, perhaps? Oh, surely not ... ! What do you bet that a disproportionately high percentage of the SINless masses are orks and trolls?

Welcome to Azzieville, cobbber. It's a fragging scary place.)<<<<<

—Donjon (16:08:32/5-24-55)

>>>>(Racism, evil megacorps, conspiracies ... sounds like the same old same old. Let's set your wild-eyed guesses about the number of SINless aside, because you have no hard evidence. As for the rest of the figures, try this translation: the income, poverty, and education figures are better than anyone else's because the Aztlan Sector has fewer trolls and orks. That might also explain the unemployment rate of less than 10 percent (how else can you interpret the 90 percent corporate affiliation figure?). If that figure represented only people affiliated with Aztechnology, I might grant it as a mildly disturbing aberration—but is there any hard evidence to back up that assumption, apart from

Donjon's panicked assertions? Not that I know of.

Perhaps the Aztlan Sector is not the purgatory of Donjon's paranoia, but an enlightened society.)<<<<<

—Nikkel (21:42:32/5-26-55)

>>>>(Who's this Nikkel slot?)<<<<<

—Rage (03:14:52/5-27-55)

>>>>(Humanis bigot and/or Aztlan apologist, that's my guess. Probably the latter; he didn't cag on about the 6 percent of non-human "others," and a Humanis slot wouldn't have missed that gig.)<<<<<

—Hammer (10:32:56/5-27-55)

>>>>(Did it ever occur to you that not only humans dislike certain metatypes? Nikkel might belong to that 6 percent you mentioned.)<<<<<

—Mentor (23:45:00/5-27-55)

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Population: 393,000

Human: 69%

Elf: 16%

Dwarf: 6%

Ork: 8%

Troll: 0%

Other: 6%

SINless Population: 1,086

Per Capita Income: 36,500 ¥

Below Poverty Level: 9%

On Fortune's Active Traders List: 4%

Megacorporate Affiliation: 90%

Education:

High School Equivalency: 25%

College Equivalency: 42%

Advanced Studies Certificate: 15%

Regional Telecom Grid Access: NA/AZ-NO

LIFE IN THE MERRY OLD LAND OF AZ

by Señor Spud

Okay, maybe I should have said "merry old *sector* of Az" to satisfy the literal-minded. God alone knows how many of you slags reading this will get the joke, anyway. If you want to know what life's like in the Az sector, wrap your mind around one idea: it's corp, corp, and more corp. The Aztlan Sector feels way different from the Aztlan Nation, for those who've been south of the UCAS border. People looking for local color in the form of what the tourist junksheets call the "Central Amerind atmosphere" of Aztlan won't find much of it in the Aztlan Sector. This place feels more like a corporate enclave, reeking with the influence of Aztechnology Corporation.

>>>>(No drek, Dagwood. You're only going to find that "Central Amerind atmosphere" in the countryside, and there ain't no countryside in the Azzie Sector.)<<<<<<
—Jolly Jumper (02:03:24/6-2-55)

>>>>(JJ's over-generalizing, but there's truth in what he says. The Aztlan Sector feels very much like certain "executive sectors" of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City). Of course, elements of Central Amerind society do turn up in the artwork displayed both inside and outside of residential and business buildings. The clothing, jewelry, and accessories carried by many residents strongly echoes the Aztec, the Maya, and even the Inca tribes that inhabited Central America centuries ago.)<<<<<<
—Teri (18:38:33/6-6-55)

>>>>(Note the words "elements" and "echo." The Amerind culture in Azzietown comes in little bits and bytes. You won't see any tribals in the Aztlan Sector—nobody dressed in traditional Mayan regalia, for example. The "back-to-the-land" movement among tribal groups throughout North America is pretty muted in the Aztlan Sector.)<<<<<<
—Vlad (02:03:28/6-7-55)

You might almost call the Az Sector an Aztechnology "company town," even though other megacorps and smaller businesses operate in the area. People act according to corp etiquette, even under purely social circumstances. Folks out for dinner and a bar crawl, for example—not a power meal, just people meeting new friends-of-friends—will beam their business-card information between their pocket secretaries.

>>>>(Fragging bizarre. Things don't work that way in Aztlan.)<<<<<<
—Cyn (04:56:07/6-6-55)

>>>>(Not in general, no, but it happens sometimes.)<<<<<<
—Teri (18:39:52/6-6-55)

Another thing about the Aztlan Sector that gives some folks a jolt is the number of sentient paranormals openly walking

the streets. If you've ever longed to see a gaggle of feathered serpents jandering down the sidewalk, come to Az and take a look. Other, more unusual paraspecies also call this sector home, as does the odd free spirit or three. (Not that you can tell a free spirit just by looking, of course.) The reason for this population explosion is that Aztlan law grants the same rights and freedoms to spirits and other astral denizens that it gives to (meta)humans.

>>>>(Which is "not fragging many" (this is Aztlan, remember?). The Azzies obviously took a page from the old Brit government: no rights for citizens, just a whole bunch of "privileges"—that the government can rescind without warning.)<<<<<<
—Carlyle (20:25:32/6-2-55)

>>>>(True, but the point is that those privileges extend equally to animas—which is something you can't say about UCAS rights and freedoms. The upshot? You can never be completely sure whether that great-looking hunk you're ogling from across the street is a human being or just the physical manifestation of an astral consciousness that existed when your ancestors were still braining antelopes with shinbones.)<<<<<<
—Cyn (04:57:09/6-6-55)

MONEY

I know that this is the stuff folks really want to scan—how does the money work and what do things cost? Aztlan currency is based on the peso, with 500 pesos equaling 1 nuyen. Just like with nuyen, most peso transactions take place electronically, with hard currency used only for the most casual buying and selling (like picking up a cup of coffee and a soysweet roll). Hard currency comes in 100-peso denominations, up to 10,000 pesos in coins, and into the millions for plasti-weave bills.

And don't try to buy anything with the wad of 1-nuyen bills stuffed in your pocket; conducting transactions in any currency other than pesos within the Aztlan Sector can buy you jail time or a huge fine.

>>>>(No fraggin' kidding. It's also illegal to convert the peso to anything else, like the nuyen, dollar, or whatever. Drek, it's that way in Azzieland itself, too. Right fraggin' insane, if you ask me.)<<<<<<
—Sabado Sam (02:18:34/6-1-55)

>>>>(Not really. By outlawing unrestricted trading and conversion of the peso, Aztlan keeps tight control of their economy. For those into jargon, the Aztlan peso is non-convertible. There is a convertible peso, which can be legally traded and exchanged, but you can only get that through the Aztlan government or Aztechnology. That means the Azzies have complete control over who deals in their country.)<<<<<<
—Firelight (20:17:19/6-2-55)

>>>>(Yeah, and it also means there's a black-market peso trade.)<<<<<<
—Ernie (08:28:12/6-3-55)

COST OF LIVING

In keeping with the tradition established on other nodes of Shadowland, I've nosed out and posted cost-of-living figures based on Seattle prices. Here again, Az is different from other sectors; Azzietown is the only sector of Denver where the cost of living doesn't seem to relate to prices in its governing nation. Those of you who've been to Aztlan, or know something about its economy, shouldn't judge prices in Aztlan's piece of Denver by prices south of the border.

>>>>(Wait one tick here. I've been scanning ahead in the files, and the differences in prices are all over the fragging map from sector to sector. You cross a demarcation line and the price of ammunition jumps by 25 percent. Why? I could understand it if it came from some kind of tariff/duty frag-up, but that drek's illegal according to the Treaty, neh? Is there something deep and dark going on that I'm just not scanning?)<<<<<

—Lori (09:13:34/6-2-55)

>>>>(No deep darks, Lori, just economics. Price differences between nations never did depend entirely on trade barriers like tariffs, exchange rates, or whatever. They also depend on which companies will ship what goods into the nation in question and what they plan to charge. Here's an example—I know this is going back a long way, but we haven't had major nations trading without trade barriers for quite a while (sigh). Remember NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement? NAFTA knocked down trade barriers (tariffs and such) between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. But even then, price differences for the same goods were different in each nation. Comparable goods tended to cost more in Canada than in the U.S., for example. Let me list just a few of the reasons. For starters, barriers to entry into a new market (government approval, licensing, and so on) kept certain companies out of the other NAFTA countries. Canadian companies didn't always bother to enter the Mexican market, American companies didn't consider the Canadian market worth the effort, that kind of drek. The folks who chose to take advantage of NAFTA passed on their extra costs to the consumers, and the differences in those costs created the difference in prices. Get the picture?

Oh, and you'll also see a much smaller selection of products—fewer kinds of pistols, for example—in the Free Zone than in any of the governing nations.)<<<<<

—Sutcliffe (10:35:41/6-3-55)

Take *all* these figures with the proverbial grain of salt. I did my best to post the latest flash, but things change fast in the Front Range Free Zone (prices especially). Also note that these are the legitimate market prices unless otherwise marked (say, for security vehicles and such). Black-market and shadow-market prices for all these items can vary from day to day by as much as 20 percent, depending on who just blew into town carrying what in her t-bird. For convenience, I added in Azzietown's customary 10 percent VAT.

AZTLAN SECTOR COST OF LIVING

ITEM	COST
Weapons and Armor	(% of Seattle prices)
Ammunition	105 ¹
Armor ²	120
Explosives ³	110
Firearm Accessories ⁴	95
Firearms	95
Melee Weapons	105
Projectile Weapons	100
Throwing Weapons	100
Surveillance and Security	
Communications	95
Security Devices	90
Surveillance Countermeasures ⁵	—
Surveillance Equipment	105
Survival Gear	110
Vision Enhancers	90
Lifestyle	
Lifestyle	120
Cybertech and Electronics	
Biotech ⁶	150
Bodyware	150
Cyberdecks	—
Electronic Equipment	98
Headware	150
Internals	150
Programs	—
Magical Equipment	
Hermetic Library	90
Magical Supplies	90
Magical Weapons ⁷	—
Power Foci	100
Ritual Sorcery Materials	200
Spell Foci	90
Vehicles	
Aircraft	150
Boats	250
Ground Vehicles	150
Military Vehicles	— ⁸

Cost of Living Notes

¹The Azzies have always been tight-hooped about civilians owning any of the more interesting ordnance—APDS, explosive, even belt-fed ammo. As for big-time bang-bangs like assault cannon rounds, forget it. Only megacorporate security forces (*Aztechnology* security forces) get to use the really good stuff.

²Light and medium body armor are legal, though frowned on in finer restaurants and stores. Heavy armor makes the Azzies nervous (and you wouldn't like them when they're nervous). Most sec-guards in Azzietown assume their opponents are wearing medium armor, and they pack gear appropriate to that level of defense.

³Want demolition-type explosives? Get licensed by the government as a contractor (or something close). Personal explosives are even more restricted than assault cannon rounds.

⁴No real restrictions on firearm accessories exist in the Azzie Sector. You can buy smartgun links or anything else you want. Just don't forget that the security forces already own all the toys you can get your mitts on and more.

⁵Security countermeasures may not be sold (legally) in the Aztlan Sector. Period. In fact, the Azzie sec-forces get theirs shipped in from Mexico City. Prices on the shadow market run anywhere from 110 percent to 250 percent what you'd pay in Seattle, depending on supply and demand.

⁶Ditto on cybertech, except for prosthetic replacements for damaged or excised tissue. And these replacements may not contain any enhancements (no strength or speed increase, no thermal imaging or flare compensation, and so on). Shadow-market prices for enhanced gear run 300 percent of Seattle costs and keep going up-up-up. And good luck finding a shadow cutter to install the toys once you've got them. Cyberdecks cannot be sold legally, either. Want to buy a deck? Check out the shadows and bring *lots* of cred.

⁷Another illegal item, sold on the shadow market only. On the off-chance that you stumble over any, expect to pay 300 percent of Seattle prices.

⁸Get actual.

WE'RE FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU

by Mother Jonah

Law enforcement and government—my, what a pair of dirty subjects, and nowhere dirtier than in the Aztlan Sector. The only positive comment anyone can make about the way the powers-that-be run Azzietown is that at least they're honest about being in Aztechnology's pocket. Unlike certain other sectors, Azzietown doesn't try to pretend that it has any kind of civilian government. Instead, the top dog on the heap is the sector manager, in charge of the Aztechnology security forces that police this godforsaken place. And because the Azzies firmly believe that every aspect of life in the sector can be classified under law and law enforcement, that's it. The manager runs the sec-guards and nothing else. The sector manager (currently, Francisco Valdez) is openly and proudly an Aztechnology employee.

>>>>(Francisco Valdez, nicknamed Paco, is one of the nastiest slags anywhere in the Free Zone. The wonders of cosmetic surgery and magical modification give him the appearance of a man in his early 40s, but he's actually closer to 70. As far as I could scan, he came out of the Medellin cocaine cartel, the lovely bunch of folks best known for helping found Aztechnology.)<<<<<

—Scourge (20:11:39/6-4-55)

>>>>(Nonsense. Valdez was and still is a respectable businessman.)<<<<<

—Talbot (05:16:08/6-5-55)

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The division of Aztechnology Corporate Security (ACS) devoted to sector-wide law enforcement patrols the region on foot, in ground vehicles, and in rotorcraft. The ACS also handles computer and magical law enforcement, for which it is extremely well equipped. Just as Aztechnology pays for top-grade guns and armor, it also hires top decking and magical talent. If you try something illegal in either venue and fail, you're in deep dreck. If you succeed, chances are you're in deeper dreck; the sec-boys probably let you get away with it. (And you don't want to know why.)

>>>>(By the by, ACS deckers don't operate from within the sector, so there's no point trying to get a handle on them physically. Most of them hang in Aztlan proper and dial in their services when necessary.)<<<<<

—Gabbo (15:33:04/6-2-55)

Law-enforcement personnel may use lethal force "as and when required." The definition of "required," of course, tends to be broader than the proverbial side of a barn. Think your local cops are bully boys overly prone to shoot first and interrogate the corpse? Consider yourself lucky, friend. Azzietown's polleece make the worst Lone Star knee-breaker look like mama's golden-haired boy.

As almost its first act, sector management declared the sector subject only to Aztechnology corporate law. The laughably misnamed justice system consists of Aztechnology's own "judiciary councils," highly touted as the very model of enlightened judgment and decency. (Anyone who takes that last statement at face value may be interested in several hundred square feet of prime retail space on Zurich-Orbital that I'm looking to unload.)

>>>>(They don't make even the slightest effort to pretend that the locals had any say in creating or approving the laws. Corporate managers create the laws, and they can change them whenever they deem change is necessary (or whenever else they want). It also means you have no recourse if you object to your treatment by law enforcers or the justice system. You can appeal a decision to a higher level of the corporation, but the chances of seeing any decision overturned are very slight indeed. The scariest thing about corporate law is that the corporation/sector doesn't have to worry about whether the people it governs agree with its laws and justice system. The opinion of the people simply doesn't matter.)<<<<<

—Grimtooth (13:20:55/6-3-55)

>>>>(The Aztlan Sector is very well and very thoroughly patrolled. To my knowledge, every neighborhood enjoys more law enforcement presence than it can possibly use.)<<<<<

—Bronco (01:14:55/6-6-55)

MEGACORPORATE PRESENCE

Other than Aztechnology, only a few megacorporations operate in the Aztlan Sector. Their operations don't amount to much—no production or research sites, only field offices from

which corp representatives coordinate the very limited import and export of goods and services. The Azzie suitboys have seen free-market capitalism in action, and they don't much care for it. In their opinion, too many other people stand to make money under such a system. Therefore, government policy forbids corp rivals to research or produce anything on Aztlan soil, which includes the Azzie Sector of Denver. End of story.

>>>>(The foreign-corp offices in the Azzie Sector exist mainly as centers for megacorporate espionage, both in the sector and in Aztlan itself. Travel into Aztlan is slightly easier via the FRFZ and the Azzie Sector than through any other point of entry.)<<<<<<
—Firelight (03:28:18/5-27-55)

IMMIGRATION LAWS

Immigration laws in Azzietown represent a bureaucratic tour de force. Why anyone would want to pull up stakes from anywhere else in the relatively free world and come to live in the jolly Aztlan Sector, I cannot imagine—but would-be immigrants to the sector should know that they face a serious uphill battle. Before a single Aztech/government flunky will even eyeball a piece of paper or slot a single chip, a prospective immigrant must prove that a job awaits him or her with a government-recognized corporation. (And how many of these do you suppose there are, hmmm? Guess one, and you've got it.)

>>>>("Government-recognized" means you can't get your cousin Bob to commit to employing you. Though they avoid saying so outright, Aztechnology has to have a job waiting for you (and you all know just how likely that is).)<<<<<<
—Marg (23:21:00/5-30-55)

***Of course we have strict
immigration laws. If we let one
foreigner in, they'll all want to come.
—Fifth Junior Minister for Data
Processing, Aztlan Relocation Office***

Assuming the requisite job is waiting, the immigration procedure works as follows. First, the corporation intending to employ a would-be immigrant must perform the necessary data-work and forward its formal commitment to the appropriate government official in Aztlan proper. Next, the applicant must submit a complete listing of all important events in his or her life, from birth to the present day. This insanely comprehensive and time-consuming piece of work goes way beyond the standard job résumé, folks. It includes (but is not limited to) details about the applicant's family background, credit, medical history, travel history, and so on and so forth. Before the Azzies let you set foot in their sector, they want to know all there is to know about your life. And the Aztlan authorities will check every single, niggling detail. They'll e-mail your alma mater to confirm that you graduated when you said you did. They'll contact your parents, if

they're still living—and if you said they died, the bureaucrats will check the databases to make sure that's true. They'll call your doctor, your bank, your travel agent, maybe even your plumber. And here's the kicker—after all this song-and-dance, the Aztlan national government can reject an applicant at any point in the process *without explaining why*. No legal recourse for the banned, my children. Regulations allow you to reapply for immigration after one year, but I know of no one who's ever been accepted after rejection, no matter how many times they reapply. And believe you me, I've gone looking.

If the applicant is fortunate (?) enough to pass the background check, he or she takes a little jander down to the Sector Management Building, once upon a time known as the Centennial Building, at Lincoln and East 13th. Within these hallowed walls, the poor sap submits to a personal interview with government officials. A successful interview awards the applicant the coveted prize: resident alien status, with the right to work in the Aztlan Sector. Only citizens or resident aliens may work legally within the Aztlan Sector. Working without the appropriate legal status constitutes a felony.

>>>>(Hiring someone without the appropriate legal status is also a felony.)<<<<<<
—Bridge (22:15:04/6-1-55)

>>>>(Making it through the immigration process only nets you a work visa. The Azzies call it "resident alien status," but the only legal status it gives you is the privilege of working legally in the sector. You're not an Aztlan citizen; the Azzies have no procedure for becoming an Aztlan citizen. So if you were thinking about suffering through this whole pile of drek to get the "advantages" of citizenship, forget it.)<<<<<<
—Kerry (10:10:39/6-1-55)

Travel Passes

The Aztlan Sector grudgingly issues temporary travel passes only after extracting from such applicants an amount of personal information that any self-respecting shadowrunner would die before revealing. If you *must* do biz in Azzietown, my children, do your homework and fake your records to be watertight. (Even then, they'll probably catch you, but at least you'll improve your odds. Say from less-than-zero to about 8 percent.) The actual pass, once you get it, consists of data downloaded to your personal credstick—which requires you to *have* a personal credstick and admit to owning it. But wait, it gets better. Part of the download process involves looking up your SIN—so you have to have one of those as well, and it must match the rest of the drek on your stick. Needless to say, these passes remain valid only for a brief time (the actual limit depending on the reasons you gave the immigration goons for entering the sector in the first place).

>>>>(These limits are always impossibly tight. Somewhere else, you might say, "My biz will take me twelve hours," and they give you a 24-hour pass to cover any hitches in your schedule. In the Azzie Sector, you say twelve hours, they give you twelve hours. Or maybe just ten.)<<<<<<
—Groucho (00:49:10/6-6-55)

She looked suspicious.
—Aztechnology security officer,
explaining his arrest of the up-and-
coming simsense star (and sector
manager's squeeze) Honey Belle Reve

Aztechnology security slots frequently stop people on the street for no apparent reason and ask them to slot their stick in the sec-guard's pocket computer. (I use the term "ask" loosely.) If this happens to you, pray that your stick reads like it has a citizenship code, a resident alien certification, or a current travel pass. Even if it really does, pray. Otherwise, prepare to meet your gods.

>>>>(The pocket computers aren't that smart—easier to spoof than the systems used at border-crossing points. But if the sec-goons are having a bad-hair day or decides there's something about you she doesn't like, she'll initiate a wireless linkup between her pocket 'puter and a larger system. Takes less than thirty seconds, and the bigger system's sure to spot anything sneaky about your idem unless it's a novahot forgery.)<<<<<<
 —Lobo (02:50:32/6-2-55)

WEAPONS

Visitors to the Aztlan Sector invariably express amazement at the apparent laxity of its weapons laws. How little they know, eh, children? It's true, sector security guards don't bother to look twice at someone jandering down the street with an SMG bulging under her coat—but only because they're better-armed and armored than anyone on the streets just about anywhere else in the world. Standard issue for sec-guards includes the heaviest of heavy armor and specially upgraded mil-spec gear, including all the oh-so-very-latest wizzer electronic tech. Where real coppers carry pistols, Azzietown's official thugs pack high-rate-of-fire SMGs as their personal sidearms. And assault rifles and heavier ordnance frequently materialize in their hot little hands. Oh, and one last teensy thing to keep in mind: the sec-goons load all their pretty toys with AP or explosive rounds designed to chew medium-weight body armor into shrapnel. (They make such intriguing red patterns on the skin...).

>>>>(And those slags willingly use the heat they're packing, even in crowds. If they cause "collateral casualties" when firing at you (as the transgressor), the law considers you to have pulled the trigger. If a sec-guard fires at you and misses, capping a little kiddy in the headbone, it's you—not him—who goes up for murder.)<<<<<<
 —Scrag'em All (02:08:29/5-24-55)

>>>>(Only if the sec-guard can prove he had just cause to fire on you in the first place, Scrag.)<<<<<<
 —First Date (11:04:38/5-24-55)

**YOU ONLY GO OUT ONCE IN LIFE—
 MAKE IT THE BEST IT CAN BE!**

Do you want your loved ones making hurried decisions about your funeral when they are in mourning?



**Won't they have enough on their minds?
 Will they give you the funeral you want?
 Will you even have any loved ones by then?**

PRE—PLAN YOUR FUNERAL!

MORGAN FUNERAL HOMES

3325 S.COLORADO BLVD.



**CREMATION
 BURIAL
 ENTOMBMENT**

NOW OPEN

Tower of Silence
 Your final communion with nature

Become one with the birds as your bones are left open to the sky to be picked cleaned by raptors

WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

[ALL FINES LISTED IN THOUSANDS OF PESOS]

Weapon Type	Offense and Fine/Imprisonment			
	Possession (1)	Transport (2)	Threat (3)	Use (4)
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	—	—	5,000/6 months	12,500/1 year
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	—	2,500/3 months	10,000/1 year	20,000/5 years
(C) Blunt Weapon	—	—	5,000/6 months	12,500/1 year
(D) Projectile Weapon	2,500/3 months	5,000/6 months	10,000/1 year	20,000/5 years
(E) Pistol*	—	—	10,000/1 year	20,000/5 years
(F) Rifle	5,000/6 months	5,000/6 months	20,000/3 years	32,500/10 years
(G) Automatic Weapons	12,500/2 years	12,500/2 years	25,000/4 years	**
(H) Heavy Weapon	20 years	**	**	**
(I) Explosives	12,500/2 years	12,500/2 years	25,000/4 years	32,500/10 years
(J) Military Weapons	**	**	**	**
(K) Military Armor	3 years***	3 years***	—	—
(L) Military Ammunition	7,500/1 year	7,500/1 year	—	4 years
(BA) Class A Bioware	100,000	—	—	—
(BB) Class B Bioware	2 years	—	—	—
(BC) Class C Bioware	10 years	—	—	—
(CA) Class A Cyberware	2 years	—	—	—
(CB) Class B Cyberware	4 years	—	—	—
(CC) Class C Cyberware	**	—	—	—
(EA) Class A Equipment	10,500	—	—	—
(EB) Class B Equipment	2 years	—	—	—
(EC) Class C Equipment	10 years	—	—	—
(MA) Class A Controlled	1,500	10 years	—	—
(MB) Class B Controlled	10 years	—	—	—
(MC) Class C Controlled	**	—	—	Death penalty

Notes

*Within the Aztlan Sector only, this class of weapons includes SMGs.

**People convicted of these offenses tend to vanish.

***Heavy combat armor only.

councils handle various infractions. In the Az Sector, the punishment need not fit the crime; it can be whatever the council feels like inflicting at the time. Makes for considerable uncertainty, neh? Add in the fact that the judiciary council has no legal obligation to publicize this information, and you've got the makings of an absolutely unpredictable fragging mess.

Intent

UCAS residents will note the absence of a distinction between "Intent" and "Use" on the above chart. Unlike the UCAS, Aztlan does not make this drek-headed distinction. (That's about the only admirable aspect of the entire Aztlan justice system.)

Cyberware

Like the Tir and certain other nations, Aztlan requires that you register all cyberware with sector management when you enter the sector, or when you have the work done if you have your mods installed inside the sector. Those wishing to have

bodmods installed at a licensed clinic must receive the appropriate license *before* going under the laser. Predictably, sector management has no obligation to grant any requests for licenses (and will tend to refuse requests for a built-in SMG).

>>>>(A couple of reasonably reputable shadow clinics float around the sector. If you've got your ear to the buzz, you can find them when you need them.)<<<<<

—Doc Ock (22:31:49/6-2-55)

Cyberdecks

Cyberdecks are not legally available for purchase in the Az Sector, and anyone trying to bring one in must offer a reason that the Azzies will accept. Assuming you manage to persuade them you need one (no mean feat), make sure it uses a non-stealth chipset that writes all the right signatures to the Matrix audit trail. Use anything else and you'd better be able to run awfully fragging fast.

CRIMINAL OFFENSES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

(ALL FINES LISTED IN THOUSANDS OF PEJOS)

Offense	Sentence
Arson	25,000/1 yr
Assault	5,000
Battery	5,000
Extortion	2-5 yrs
Forcible Confinement	2-10 yrs
Fraud	2-5 yrs
Illegal Entry	3 yrs
Kidnapping	5-10 yrs
Larceny (petty)	6 mo- 2 yr5
Larceny (grand)	2-10 yrs
Murder 1	30 yrs-life or death
Murder 2	20 yrs-life
Murder 3	1-5 yrs
Negligence	1-5 yrs
Rape	2-5 yrs
Rape (statutory)	2-10 yrs
Reckless Endangerment	25,000/1 yr
Solicitation	10,000
Trafficking	10 yrs-life or death
Treason	10 yrs-life or death
Vandalism	5,000
Accessory	50 percent normal
Conspiracy	75 percent normal

>>>>(Illegal possession of a deck with a non-stealth chipset will get you locked away from the light of day for a long, long time...possibly forever. Get caught using one with a stealth chipset and you will disappear.)<<<<<

—Rage (02:42:49/6-1-55)

Addictives

Addictives are defined as "hot" simsense chips, BTLs, and drugs. As I mentioned earlier, possessing addictives for personal use constitutes only a minor misdemeanor unless you're slotting *really* bad drek like 2XS chips. Dealing addictives will get you very dead, very fast unless you belong to Aztechnology's big, happy, megacorporate family. Chipleggers and drug dealers tend to vanish, and even the bodies rarely resurface.

PLACES OF INTEREST

by Roving I

For those of you in the sector on biz who want (or need) to play tourist, a few chummerinos and I did you the favor of hunting up some places to flop, feed, guzzle, and hang. Don't feel shy about adding comments.

HOTELS

Burnsley Hotel

Luxury Hotel Archetype (10 floors)/1000 Grant Street/Ernesto Conger, Manager/Slight Bias against Orks and Trolls/LTG# 1303 (23-3915)/Map Location 1

Located a couple of blocks south of the Civic Center, this establishment dates back well into the past century. It offers elegant salon and one-bedroom suites (no standard hotel "boxes"), and a flashy combination lounge/restaurant.

>>>>(The name may date back, but the building owners gutted it and rebuilt the interior in the '20s. The restaurant is a cool, quiet place filled with private booths—a fine place for a meet. The hotel management recently acknowledged the source of its popularity and installed white-noise generators at each table.)<<<<<

—Doric (11:14:36/5-25-55)

>>>>(Strictly for show, because the white-noise generators don't work worth a frag. Ever-so-helpful hotel management records all "business meetings" and passes them on unedited to Aztechnology security.)<<<<<

—Morlock (03:21:34/5-27-55)

>>>>(Makes sense. Ernesto Conger is in tight with the Big A.)<<<<<

—Luke (19:29:29/5-28-55)

Days Inn Capitol Hill

Average Hotel Archetype (4 floors)/1150 E. Colfax Avenue/Monica Perséval, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 8303 (31-7700)/Map Location 2

A simple, no-frills establishment on the fringe of downtown, this place sometimes feels like an Aztechnology residential complex because of the sheer number of Big A employees, contractors, and assorted hangers-on who pass through its doors. Our best efforts have failed to prove any direct connection between Perséval or her management company and Aztechnology. As far as we can tell, the Azzie contingent keeps coming back for the convenience, low prices, and dependable service.

>>>>(That, and the fact that it's one of the few hotels anywhere in the Aztlan Sector.)<<<<<

—Morlock (03:22:20/5-27-55)

>>>>(You wouldn't catch me dosing at the Days Inn. Considering my relationship with the Big A, you might as well call it the Days End.)<<<<<

—Monkey-Man (18:41:00/5-30-55)

>>>>(That shows a grave lack of imagination, Monkey-Man. What better place to avoid Aztechnology security than in the midst of a bunch of Azzie wageslaves? Hide in plain sight, or some such drek.)<<<<<

—Ginko (13:24:09/5-31-55)



RESTAURANTS AND BARS

Chinampas

Mid-Size Restaurant Archetype/1313 E. 6th Avenue/David Maceualtin, Owner/Slight Bias against Non-Corp Customers/LTG# 8303 (39-1414)/Map Location 3

This tastelessly overdone place is packed to the gunwales with Aztec-related bric-a-brac and (bad) copies of objets d'art. (I find it rather oppressive to have five stone faces, a *chacmool*, and a carving of Quetzalcoatl staring at me over my companion's shoulder while I eat.) The food is a weird mixture of Spanish-Mexican and *something else* ... presumably the owner's concept of "traditional" Aztec food.

>>>>(The food's not bad, if you like unidentifiable chopped vegetables wrapped in stone-ground, corn-flour tortillas.)<<<<<<
—Gopher P. (01:24:25/5-23-55)

>>>>(It's a pretty formal place. About the only people not wearing power suits and high-tone corp ware are the statues. Chinampas caters largely to Aztechnology suits, and the staff will let you know you don't quite belong if you come from some other socioeconomic stratum. If you're planning to do biz with

an Aztechnology Johnson, however, Chinampas is a good place to meet. Maceualtin keeps a couple of private back rooms open for that kind of thing.)<<<<<<

—Ptolomy (21:34:36/5-26-55)

>>>>(If you're coming here to talk biz with an Aztechnology Johnson, you might well end up talking to Maceualtin. He's a fixer with tight links to the Big A.)<<<<<<

—Ric (06:29:54/5-28-55)

The Serpent's Feather

Mid-Sized Restaurant Archetype/3333 S. Colorado Blvd./Ricardo Valdez, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 7303 (59-3333)/Map Location 4

Though the Serpent's Feather is laid out like a restaurant and serves excellent food, its main claim to fame is as a bar. It's a comfortable, somewhat upscale place, but it's still got the kind of subliminal energy that gives any bar its spark. The sound system's always pumping out the latest shag and cyberrock smashes, but the acoustics make it possible to have a private conversation in the booths. Few shadowrunners seem to frequent "the Snake," but it's long been a favorite hangout for locals and various flavors of fixers.

>>>>(The local shadowrunners know about it but stay away because of who they'll be rubbing shoulders with.)<<<<<

—Carla (17:08:09/6-2-55)

>>>>(Fixers cut deals with other fixers in this place. If that's what you're into, go for it.)<<<<<

—Eight Eighty-Eight (03:07:33/6-3-55)

>>>>(Note that Ricardo Valdez is listed as "manager." That's because the owner is a feathered serpent that goes by the name Coyolxauhqui (don't ask me how to pronounce it). I looked it up on-line; turns out it's the name of a moon goddess who Aztec myth says was murdered by her brother the sun god.)<<<<<

—Sport (16:36:23/6-5-55)

>>>>(Interesting, considering that Coyolxauhqui seems to have a major ax to grind with Aztechnology and the Aztlan government in general. Sibling rivalry between feathered serpents?)<<<<<

—Hammer (09:26:32/6-7-55)

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Council Hall (Map Location 5)

Council Hall, once upon a time known as the Denver City and Council Building, was renamed after the signing of the Treaty of Denver in 2018. The Hall itself is a remodeled monolith, a classic example of ugly 20-teens architecture, located at the western end of the Civic Center on East Colfax and Broadway. Because the Council Hall officially stands in the Aztlan Sector, reps from other sectors must cross demarcation lines to attend council meetings. Strangely enough, while the Denver government's Administrative Branch has spread out to absorb the Civic Center annexes and various other buildings, the Council of Denver, supposedly the city of Denver's most important governing body, must make do with this single structure.

The Council Room within the Hall is smaller than many corporate ballrooms, but ritz. The council table is a sizable oval of real mahogany, unadulterated by such technical add-ins as data ports and terminals, and the walls are covered in teak paneling. All council meetings are private; the chamber offers no place for spectators or more than a handful of invited guests.

Next door to the Council Room is the press room, an auditorium wired with trideo pickups and feeds. The council uses the press room to announce to the Free Zone population any decisions that they reach (that they happen to feel like sharing).

The rest of the building contains a suite of offices for each council member, which he or she usually fills with as many personal staff members and aides as possible. (Councilors don't actually need a personal staff, mind you, but everyone else has one. How *is* a poor councilor to maintain image and status without a gaggle of aides?)

>>>>(Most of the time, border formalities amount to a couple of seconds of rubber-stamping. If the Aztlan government feels

particularly hostile toward a rival on the council, however, the demarcation line provides a perfect opportunity for a little justifiable harassment.)<<<<<

—Phiber Optik (10:00:35/6-2-55)

>>>>(There's more to it than that, Phiber. Because the Council Hall is on Azzie turf, the Azzies are responsible for the facilities. The Aztlan Sector manager could conceivably close down Council Hall for the duration of a "civil emergency," claiming high risk to the councilors. Hasn't happened, but it could.)<<<<<

—Tron (19:07:08/6-2-55)

Council Hall maintains high security inside and out, provided by an autonomous security force called the Council Guard. The Guard is nominally under the direct control of the Council of Denver.

>>>>(So where do the members of the Council Guard come from? From the security forces of the signatory nations...so the Council Guard is made up of staunch Aztlan, CAS, Pueblo, Sioux, UCAS, and Ute sec-guards, all perfectly willing and able to set aside long-standing differences and work shoulder to shoulder to protect the council from outside threats. Uh-huh. And my mother owns Renraku lock, stock, and barrel.)<<<<<

—Ross (19:26:42/5-23-55)

>>>>(Considering the quantity and quality of those "long-standing differences," it's surprising the Guard works anywhere near as well as it does. Even if the cooperation is more about what they don't do than shining examples of working together. For example, I've never heard of any cases of the Sioux ex-Wildcats in the Guard geeking the CAS ex-Rangers. Fragging good thing that the civilian security forces operating in Denver have military training and a military outlook. Only soldiers have the discipline to keep from committing some unpleasantry whenever the opportunity presents itself.)<<<<<

—Toshikazu (00:30:07/5-26-55)

>>>>(Why have a Council Guard, anyway? Who'd want to geek a buncha figureheads?)<<<<<

—Colin (09:57:29/5-26-55)

>>>>(Quite a few people, actually. Figureheads are symbols, and plenty of wackos see a point to offing the symbol of whatever they don't like. Then there's the policlubs, terrorists, and other protesters who might decide on splattering the council as a way of making a Grand Statement. (That kind of protest has two advantages: it attracts a lot of media attention, but it avoids causing the kind of real disruption to the Free Zone that might spark a backlash against the protesters.))<<<<<

—Petey (02:49:48/5-27-55)

>>>>(Just think of the fun if someone could goad the different Council Guard factions into losing it some bright morning.)<<<<<

—Alamo (10:50:14/5-29-55)

>>>>(You've got the Council Guard—supplemented by Aztechnology Corporate Security forces. Aztlan claims they are simply taking the appropriate level of responsibility for ensuring the safety of the councilors on their turf, but in reality, the Aztlan government is giving itself a nice little psychological edge over the council by placing a whole bunch of Aztechnology corporate commandos in an "outer perimeter" around the Council Guard.)<<<<<

—Chip Doctor (18:27:38/6-2-55)

State Capitol Building (Map Location 7)

This new State Capitol Building replaced the old one, a wonderful piece of Denver's architectural heritage. The Administrative Branch of the Council of Denver ordered the old Capitol demolished in 2048 and put up the current monstrosity, built according to the "Early Blockhouse" school of architecture. Many native Denverites view this building as a symbol of how far out of control the Administrative Branch has spun.

>>>>(The old Capitol Building was a work of art. Historically, gold built Colorado's fortunes, and so the old city fathers decided to cover the State Capitol Building dome in gold. That's right, chummers, real gold. When the gold wore away around 1950, they replaced it with a new layer. Miners donated the original gold, and the replacement came from the citizens of the state. We lost a lot of history when they demolished the dome.)<<<<<

—Lennox (09:18:52/6-1-55)

>>>>(Frag history. What happened to the gold?)<<<<<

—Trip (23:10:11/6-1-55)

>>>>(The basement of the new building contains most of the Administrative Branch's computer resources. Security is as tight as a fragging drum.)<<<<<

—Margeson (05:19:23/6-4-55)

MISCELLANEOUS SIGHTS

Cheesman Park Conservatory (Map Location 6)

Once called the Boetcher Memorial Conservatory, this remodeled structure now serves as one of the Aztlan Sector's major landmarks. The Azzies dug out all the existing plants and replaced them with vegetation from the Aztlan region. At night, the geodesic transplast dome glows with a cool, green light.

>>>>(Some of the plants in the Conservatory have pharmaceutical value. If you know what you're doing, you can extract some real mind-ripping narcotics from a couple of plants, and a natural poison almost as lethal as Fugu-5 from another. Certain mages and shamans of my acquaintance claim that a few of the plants have uses in various magical processes.)<<<<<

—Miller (01:17:09/5-29-55)

>>>>(So that's why they upgraded Conservatory security recently.)<<<<<

—Calligula (16:48:09/6-3-55)

Anáhuac University (Map Location 8)

Once the University of Denver, the Aztlan government claimed and renamed this place in 2027. Today, it serves more or less as an Aztechnology training camp, devoted almost exclusively to educating the college-age children of Big A managers and executives.

>>>>(Because of the high fences around the facility, many locals call it "Stalag Aztechnology.")<<<<<

—Lennox (09:20:27/6-1-55)

>>>>(Aztec Teocalli (Map Location 52)

Interesting that the two most notable fixtures (though hardly tourist spots) of the Azzie Sector (in my opinion) got left off the list. The first is the local Aztec Temple (teocalli), built on the old St. Thomas Seminary grounds near the spot where Intercity 25 crosses the CAS Sector border. It's large—at least 25 stories tall with more floors below ground. To enter, all supplicants must climb the outer steps to the temple's flattened top, unprotected from the elements, and then descend into the building's bowels.

I don't claim to understand Aztec religious practices; I'll leave that explanation to some brave soul daring enough to babble about it. I do, however, understand that this temple is different from most because it is dedicated to multiple Aztec deities rather than the one. Of course, I could be wrong. A friend of mine (who shall remain nameless) tried an astral flyby of the site. He veered off almost immediately, claiming that the place gave off so much mojo that it was painful to look at.

Aztechnology Building (Map Location 53)

Here's the other odd gap. The Aztechnology building is located on the grounds of the old Denver Country Club near the intersection of University and Speer. Though only 50 or 60 stories tall, it sprawls outward, extending west almost all the way to Cherry Creek. Where the Aztec Temple is purely sandstone and brickwork, the Aztechnology building features a sandstone base and framework filled in by huge windows and panels of copper and gold glass. The roof offers at least four helipads, one LAV-capable with an interior hanger. Powerful spotlights keep the place (and the surrounding buildings) lit up like daylight.

As one might expect from the Azzies, the building boasts the security of a fortress. Despite its formidable protection, however, a number of apparent terrorist attacks have successfully hit the site in the past several months. The most serious, presumably launched by one or more of the various Mexican freedom groups, involved a heavy high-explosive missile that struck the 32nd floor and tore away a huge chunk of it.

I understand that as of last week, the Azzies installed a series of short-range laser systems on the roof as anti-missile point-defense. To my knowledge, no one has tested them yet. Another friend of mine pointed out that the anti-missile mountings easily could be lowered enough to engage ground targets from Aztech's roof. Fun stuff.)<<<<<

—Firelight (02:29:19/6-6-55)

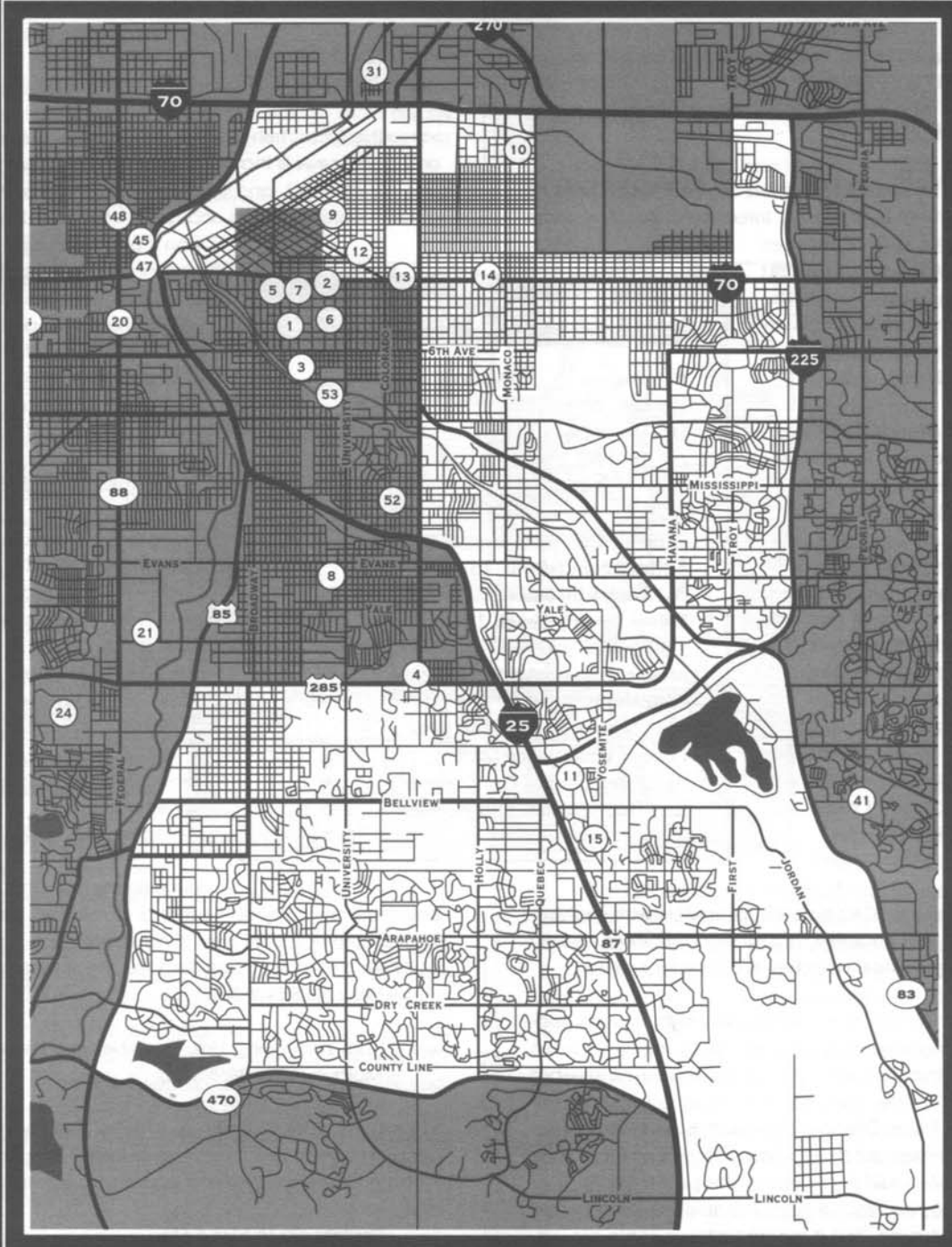
CAS SECTOR

<<This ain't no place for you pansy-hooped shadow-jerks with one hand on somebody else's credstick and your thumb up your nose. Take your trash and road-trip it, if you know what's good for you.>>

—Peter Trilanka, CAS Office of Industrial Security (IntraZone Online/REF# REM3-2as45)

In 2034, in a blatantly political move, the UCAS Sector voluntarily ceded a portion of its territory to CAS, creating a sixth Treaty nation. The CAS Sector's borders in Denver proper follow Highway 70 eastward from the intersection with Intercity 25, jog south past Stapleton, then run along Route 225 south to the intersection with Highway 83. The demarcation line follows Highway 83 south out of the city. South of the Aztlan Sector, the eastern border jogs cross-country until it hits Highway 24 at Peyton, and then follows the highway southwest into Colorado Springs.

The border follows Highway 24 around Colorado Springs, then swings north to follow Intercity 25 all the way up to Highway 470, where it turns west. At Route 85, the demarcation line turns north again until it hits Highway 228 (E. Jefferson Avenue), where it turns back east. It then follows Intercity 25 north again, merges into S. Colorado Blvd., hangs east at Colfax, and then does an unholy jog around the downtown area, from which it proceeds back along Intercity 25 north and then east toward Stapleton again along Highway 70.



CAS ▼ SECTOR

>>>>(What's with that funky little shuffle around the downtown area? Spirits, who drew that border? The demarcation lines run due north-south and east-west, regardless of the fact that the streets in the area run northwest-southeast and northeast-southwest.)<<<<<

—Trajan (09:19:36/6-1-55)

>>>>(Committees, chummer. Fragging committees.)<<<<<

—Lennox (09:17:00/6-2-55)

BORDER SECURITY

Like most of the sectors of Denver, the CAS Sector lines its borders with 10-meter-high fences, interrupted in a few spots by walls. Along the stretch between the CAS and UCAS sectors that swings roughly south between Denver and Colorado Springs and passes through Elbert and Peyton, the fence drops to 5 meters high or less.

>>>>(They can't defend that long a perimeter anyway, so why waste money on a bigger fence?)<<<<<

—Trajan (09:21:01/6-1-55)

In most of the places they patrol, CAS Sector security forces take a hands-on approach, walking their side of the line in three-man fire teams, often accompanied by attack dogs.

>>>>(In my personal experience, CAS doesn't go in for paranimals. Not that an attack-trained rottweiler with a really bad attitude can't make your life miserable enough ...)<<<<<

—Boskone (13:04:05/5-28-55)

Unlike other sectors, CAS protects its borders with sophisticated sensor array only in a few, highly sensitive areas, usually concentrated along the rural stretches of the sector border.

>>>>(Not universally true. They installed all kinds of wizzer sensors, thermal imaging systems and the like along the CAS-Pueblo border—the one that follows I-25 and the maglev lines—both along the CAS-UCAS line, they opted for a simpler approach. Land mines, lots of them. Cheaper than sensors and more effective. And you chummers out there who figure on coming in over the fence in a LAV should know about the neat toy they've picked up from the fine folks at Ares. This little device is buried shallow like a land mine, but it incorporates a sonic pickup. When it "hears" something that its little processor tells it to worry about—say the sonic footprint of a t-bird—a small charge launches a half-meter-long SAM straight out of the ground. Once airborne, the SAM locks onto and tracks its target. It doesn't pack much of a warhead, but they'll probably send more

than one after you. And remember, they're coming up from underneath your t-bird where the armor is nice and thin and your sensors might not even detect a missile until the fragging thing blows you across the clouds. We fondly call these UAMs—Underground-to-Air Missiles.)<<<<<

—Daryl (16:45:06/5-21-55)

>>>>(Ouch! You're farcing ... I hope.)<<<<<

—Trisha (18:23:34/5-21-55)

>>>>(No farce, Trish (as any pro jammer would assure you). The only good news is that these puppies are slow in the air (as missiles go, at least), and even slower to launch. With the help of good countermeasures and a little blind luck, the sonic detector

won't pick you up until you're fragging near on top of the launch system. That way, you'll scorch past it before the missile gets in the air, and then it chases you from the stern. The UAM is small, so it can't pack enough propellant to pursue you for long. It should drop out of the sky before it reaches you.)<<<<<

—Zak (08:24:57/5-23-55)

>>>>(Look, jokers, here's the trick. Just get the official CAS transponder code—the IFF code that stops the UAM from firing at friendlies—and blast it out across the width of the band. No UAM's going to so much as "look" at you.)<<<<<

—Pal (07:23:27/6-1-55)

>>>>(Much easier said than done.)<<<<<

—Urquart (18:32:49/6-1-55)

>>>>(In my opinion, CAS doesn't use anywhere near enough astral and magical defenses to adequately protect its border. Only rarely does one encounter a watcher or other spirit patrolling the fence lines.)<<<<<

—Link (14:08:59/6-3-55)

>>>>(That's changing, Link. Don't bet your life on it.)<<<<<

—Moraya (18:22:30/6-3-55)

>>>>(Why does everybody assume that magicians come a penny a nuyen like mundane guards? You can't have elite forces guarding everywhere, and magic assets always qualify as elite.)<<<<<

—Firelight (20:18:51/6-5-55)

WHO LIVES IN CAS

>>>>(Soon after the Treaty of Richmond created the Confederated American States and the UCAS split its sector in

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Population: 732,000

Human: 69%

Elf: 10%

Dwarf: 6%

Ork: 14%

Troll: 1%

Other: 0%

SINless Population: 162,900

Per Capita Income: 20,500 ¥

Below Poverty Level: 28%

On Fortune's Active Traders List: 1%

Megacorporate Affiliation: 28%

Education:

High School Equivalency: 52%

College Equivalency: 22%

Advanced Studies Certificate: 6%

Regional Telecom Grid Access: NA/CAS-TX

two, large numbers of orks and elves emigrated from the CAS Sector. Anybody tell me why?)<<<<<<

—Ryker (09:41:24/5-25-55)

>>>>>(Pretty fragging obvious, isn't it? Southern good ol' boys don't like frogs and dandelion eaters.)<<<<<<

—Damn Yankee (15:45:35/5-27-55)

>>>>>(Way too simplistic, you slot, and pretty damn bigoted. If it's just anti-metahuman bias, how come there are more dwarfs and exactly the same percentage of trolls? Interesting. I'm going to have to look into this.)<<<<<<

—People Watcher (16:54:04/5-28-55)

LIVIN' FREE IN CAS-VILLE

by Bobby E.

Well, well, well. Little Bobby E's gon' tell all you folks all about life in CAS-ville. Mi CAS, su CAS, and all that jetwash. Looking for a little Southern comfort? A few down-home meals of fried ham and grits, with a pretty lady to while away the time? You might find that, if you know where to look. Or howzabout a little re-lax-ation, enjoying Southern hospitality in all its easy grace and charm? You might find that, too. Just remember one thing: what you see ain't always what you get. This place's got its troubles, just like anywheres else. We just handle it a little different.

>>>>>(Here's an example. In most other places, people compete with rivals by spending money to get stuff—you know, rampant consumerism. They keep up with the Joneses by buying a wizzer new car or otherwise splashing money around. In the CAS Sector, you look successful if you've got more free time to kick back and relax. So people keep up with the Joneses by fragging near killing themselves trying to "relax better." Can't you just see it? Two Type-A personalities trying to "out-relax" each other. Idiots.)<<<<<<

—Socio Pat (12:01:09/5-27-55)

Oh, and for those of you lookin' to do biz—legit or otherwise—get to know some people before you start flappin' your lips. Who you know counts, boy, more in the CAS Sector than in any other place. Even fixers do most of their biz with their buddies; more'n a few have taken a pass on business propositions from folks who look better on paper.

They'd rather work with a chumboy they've drunk beer with than some stranger.

>>>>>(The moral of this story is, don't rely on your bragsheet. Get to know people; get out and schmooze, build bridges with people you think might send work your way. Sitting back and waiting for the biz to come sniffing after your rep doesn't work near as good here as it does in places like Seattle.)<<<<<<

—Norris (10:52:06/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Sounds like Portland.)<<<<<<

—Shoehorn (07:47:38/6-3-55)

Past couple years or so, folks have been fallin' all over each other to act more "down-home" than the next guy, especially in what they eat, what swill they guzzle, and how they get their yuks. Opera's O-U-T—stock-car racing's in. Elf fancy-food's out—pan-fried steaks with onions are in. 'Course, people only act this good-ol'-boy in the Free Zone. Nobody buys into this in CAS proper.

>>>>>(Yeah, sure. Trends in the CAS Sector are like the weather. Don't like what's going on at the moment? Wait five minutes. It'll change.)<<<<<<

—Voyageur (13:51:48/5-24-55)



WHAT TO BUY FOR HOW MUCH

I've put together a few little figures on buying and selling necessities in CAS-ville (only for those doing biz in my little homey-town; tourists, skip this page!). Prices take their cue from Seattle costs, but could go way the frag up and down, depending on who just jammed a t-bird full of what into town. Best guess, folks. Best I can do.

All you outtatown newbies, remember that CAS flipped a little bird to the international nuyen standard. Behind the curve as usual, we-all still cling to the traditional dollar. (And a fat lot of fraggin' good it's done us, too.) Officially, only CAS dollars are legal tender in the sector; unofficially, just about everyone 'ceptin' a government agency would *much* rather get paid in nuyen. At the moment, the official exchange rate is ridin' up near 1¥ = \$4.75. This rate changes from day to day, and it often has nothing whatsoever to do with what a nuyen will buy you on the street. Caveat emptor, chumboys and girls. To make all our sorry lives a tad easier, though, I converted all the prices I dug up into nuyen.

CAS SECTOR COST OF LIVING

ITEM	COST (% of Seattle prices)
Weapons and Armor	
Ammunition ¹	75
Armor ²	165
Explosives ³	110
Firearm Accessories	85
Firearms	90
Melee Weapons	85
Projectile Weapons	90
Throwing Weapons	85
Surveillance and Security	
Communications	220
Security Devices	330
Surveillance Countermeasures	330
Surveillance Equipment	225
Survival Gear	135
Vision Enhancers	110
Lifestyle	
Lifestyle	85
Cybertech and Electronics	
Biotech	110
Bodyware	335
Cyberdecks	450
Electronic Equipment	220
Headware	350
Internals	225
Programs	275
Magical Equipment	
Hermetic Library	200
Magical Supplies	275
Magical Weapons	200
Power Foci	235
Ritual Sorcery Materials	275
Spell Foci	225
Vehicles	
Aircraft	225
Boats	85
Ground Vehicles	85
Military Vehicles ⁴	150

Cost of Living Notes

¹Anything except plain-vanilla ball ammunition is illegal. Course, our very healthy black market will gladly peddle you any type rounds your mercenary little heart desires.

²Light armor only ... legally, that is. Of course, your friendly neighborhood black-marketer would be glad to kit you out with anything you're drooling after.

³Can you say o-fishul guvmint license? Sure, I knew you could. Law says you gotta have one to buy any kind of explosive. But lucky us; a one-legged rat could forge one of these things.

⁴Black market only. You expected anything else?

>>>>(Yikes! I'd pay 450K nuyen for a Sony CTY-360? Why?)<<<<<<

—Dooley (13:05:33/5-26-55)

>>>>(Because the distributors supplying cyberdecks are based in CAS proper, Dooley. And you know the effect of a technologically depressed economy on prices.)<<<<<<

—Rhodes (23:12:31/5-28-55)

GOVERNMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

by Prof

Time for the five-minute lecture on government and sector law, folks (paying particular attention to those areas of law most interesting to us of the shady persuasion, of course). Politically, the CAS Sector manager runs the show. Our current benevolent dictator is Bianca Cuthbertson, an experienced politico who used to serve as controller for the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex. Unexpectedly, so far she's done more good than bad. Though on the job in the Free Zone for less than a year, her decisions have already begun to make a difference. In a gesture that most regular folks appreciated, fair Bianca challenged the city security forces, a special division of Knight Errant (KE-FRFZ). Time was, KE's bully-boys enjoyed quite the rep for use of force bordering on brutality.

>>>>(Also a rep for serious corruption.)<<<<<<

—API (13:27:05/5-26-55)

Then our Bianca did a little housecleaning, kicking several particularly loathsome members of KE-FRFZ's upper management out of the sector and into the sewer. Within months, the security forces transformed from Kneebreakers, Inc., to a professional, disciplined, and (possibly) incorruptible organization.

>>>>(Gotta give Bianca credit. The way I hear it, she got into a staring contest with fragging Damien Knight and got the old bastard to back down.)<<<<<<

—Duo (14:21:01/5-23-55)

>>>>(Yeah, well, pretty Bianca's always been hot on the law-and-order thing. Now if somebody could convince her to take on the fragging economy.)<<<<<<

—Hammer (03:26:04/5-29-55)

>>>>(What happened to the cherished CAS idea of representative democracy? By law, doesn't there have to be one congresscritter per 150,000 citizens? By that standard, the sector should have four of the buggers.)<<<<<<

—Gator (16:09:24/6-1-55)

>>>>(Too much trouble to implement. Not that the CAS government will say so. No, it calls the current appointed-manager style of government a "transitional condition." Funny how the sector's been "in transition" for twenty years.)<<<<<<

—Wango (13:52:12/6-2-55)

GETTING INTO THE SECTOR

All right, class. Listen to Prof if you want to know how to finesse the laws for legal entry into the CAS sector. Three ways to do it, folks: Immigration, work visas, or temporary travel passes.

Immigration

The only way to immigrate permanently into the CAS Sector is through CAS proper. You want to relocate to CASville, first apply to the Department of Immigration and Naturalization (DIN) in Atlanta and jump through all the necessary hoops to enter the "contiguous states" of the nation. Once you've got your immigration datawork and entered the nation of CAS, then you can legally relocate to the CAS Sector. And surprise, said relocation does not require any additional datawork—at this point, anyway.

>>>>(Why the frag do they do it this way?)<<<<<<
—Freeflight (08:12:25/6-2-55)

>>>>(Why do you think? First, under this system the CAS government doesn't need a full-fledged DIN office in Denver, which saves money and hassles. Second, it probably discourages a certain number of "immigrants of convenience," shall we say, who see the CAS Sector as ripe pickings. To get in legally, you have to deal with the DIN scragheads in Atlanta and move to CAS, then move to Denver. Makes trouble for the immigrant, and that really lights up your typical bureaucrat's deck.)<<<<<<
—Rage (13:49:54/6-6-55)

>>>>(All this tells me is that it must be easier getting in illegally (which is what I fragging had in mind in the first place.)<<<<<<
—Twilight (19:38:01/6-8-55)

Work Visas

Officially, only CAS citizens or landowning immigrants can work legally in the CAS Sector. Only through direct dealings with Atlanta can a person attain either legal status. A minor loophole called the work visa, however, provides opportunity, means, and permission for many a shady hind end. This magical piece of datafluff originates in the sector management offices, located at E. 31st Avenue and Wilson Court. Expect the usual bureaucratic hoops, including proving your Idee and convincing the CAS' trained government poodles that you have no outstanding arrest warrants, major felony convictions, or anything else they might find embarrassing. Oh, and also that you have a job waiting for you in the sector.

>>>>(You'll be grilled by a couple of DINners who left their senses of humor in their other pants, but nobody will tramp through your memory like over at the Azzie sector.)<<<<<<
—Mongoose (02:56:24/5-25-55)

Work visas remain valid for exactly as long as you stay gainfully employed. The second you're laid off or fired, or you quit, your visa expires. Get your hoop aboard the next out-bound plane, kids.

Travel Passes

Any border-crossing post can issue a travel pass, but yours must be pre-authorized by sector management (oh, joy). You can apply for a pass electronically from any public or private phone, or by paying the sector management office a virtual visit via the Matrix. The datawork is relatively painless and short (shock!), but don't expect the rubber-stamp process. Applications get bounced for the flimsiest of reasons.

As in most sectors, CAS Sector authorities record your citizenship data, landed immigrant status, work visas, or travel passes on your personal credstick. You must present your stick on request to any Knight Errant sec-guard who takes an interest in you.

>>>>(If you don't have the appropriate datawork, you won't disappear (as often happens on Azzie turf), but you'll wish you'd covered your hoop a little better. The best that'll happen is you'll get chucked out of the sector, more often than not into the jurisdiction you least want to visit. The DIN people seem to have picked up this nasty little habit from the Tir.)<<<<<<
—Birdman (14:31:09/5-29-55)

WEAPONS

The CAS has a long-standing love affair with "personal defense" weapons. Provided your credstick shows the appropriate license datawork, you can pack anything up to and including a heavy pistol. Another kind of license allows you to own, transport, and use semiautomatic long arms, and even certain kinds of autofire assault-style weapons. Of course, such weapons are licensed strictly for hunting. (Sure. Right. Natch. Uh-huh.)

***Aln't nothin' gits between me
and my silvergum.
—Joe-Bob Billyboy***

>>>>(These licenses are easy to acquire legally. Just ask for one and present your SIN (though that does present a problem for some). They're a cast-iron bitch to forge, though.)<<<<<<
—Hammer (04:25:41/5-23-55)

Everyone who's ever tried it agrees that importing any kind of bang-bang brings more trouble than it's worth. In theory, you can get the necessary import licenses, but the datawork and bureaucratic hoops and crosschecks (and on and on) make the whole experience about as pleasant as gargling cyberspurs. You might as well come in empty-handed and buy what you need in-sector. (Which is just what the CAS-based gun companies have in mind, I'm sure.)

CHIPS, DRUGS, AND ALCOHOL

The CAS Sector shares the "Bible Belt mentality" common in some parts of CAS proper. Sale and distribution of legal pharmies and alcohol, except for beer and wine peddled in grocery stores, is stringently controlled by the government.

WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Weapon Type	Offense and Fine/Imprisonment			
	Possession (1)	Transport (2)	Threat (3)	Use (4)
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	—	—	\$2,500	\$12,000/1 yr
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	—	—	\$5,000	\$40,000/1 yr
(C) Blunt Weapon	—	—	\$2,500/3 mo	\$12,000/1 yr
(D) Projectile Weapon	—	—	\$5,000/3 mo	\$25,000/1 yr
(E) Pistol	—	—	\$15,000/1 yr	\$75,000/3 yrs
(F) Rifle	—	—	\$25,000/1 yr	\$120,000/3 yrs
(G) Automatic Weapons	\$5,000	\$25,000/1 mo	\$40,000/1 yr	\$40,000/4 yrs
(H) Heavy Weapon	\$75,000/3 yrs	\$120,000/4 yrs	5 yrs	15 yrs
(I) Explosives	\$8,000	\$25,000/1 yr	4 yrs	20 yrs
(J) Military Weapons	\$250,000/2 yrs	\$500,000/2 yrs	5 yrs	10 yrs
(K) Military Armor	\$50,000	—	—	—
(L) Military Ammunition	\$2,500	—	—	—
(BA) Class A Bioware	\$10,000	—	—	—
(BB) Class B Bioware	\$40,000	—	—	—
(BC) Class C Bioware	\$100,000	—	—	—
(CA) Class A Cyberware	—	—	—	—
(CB) Class B Cyberware	\$12,000	—	—	—
(CC) Class C Cyberware	\$50,000	—	—	—
(CD) Matrix Tech	\$25,000	\$75,000/6 mo	—	—
(EA) Class A Equipment	\$2,000	—	—	—
(EB) Class B Equipment	\$10,000/6 mo	—	—	—
(EC) Class C Equipment	\$40,000/2 yr	—	—	—
(MA) Class A Controlled	\$3,500	\$10,000/6 mo	—	—
(MB) Class B Controlled	\$10,000/1 yr	\$50,000/2 yrs	—	—
(MC) Class C Controlled	\$200,000/5 yrs	—	—	Life

>>>>(The CAS Sector is the Land of Cheap Beer. A six-pack of Lone Star horse-whistle runs 3 ¥. Yee-hahl)<<<<<
—Party Animal (13:24:08/5-28-55)

Chiphawkers peddle legal simsense chips everywhere, but sector management strictly enforces strict laws against illegal chips. Chipheads, take note (assuming you're not too jazzed-out to scan this screed): certain chips labeled legal in the UCAS are verboten in CAS because the modulation is too high to meet CAS law. The government also cracks down hard on the illegal pharmie trade; they'd like nothing better than to stamp it out once and for all. (Predictably, all this activity only decreases the supply and increases the demand among those in need of a crutch to cope. That translates into plenty of cred for the chip-leggers.)

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Knight Errant Front Range Free Zone, a.k.a. KE-FRFZ, enforces the law in the CAS sector. Like every other arm of KE in existence, this division has personnel assigned to command, data collection and analysis, investigation, and Matrix and paranormal/astral security.

>>>>(Which makes it very effective, as anyone who's ever gone up against KE anywhere knows.)<<<<<
—Dark (18:57:46/5-24-55)

What sets this division apart is the background of its personnel. All senior management hail from KE's executive ranks; about half of middle management and a quarter of "street enforcement assets" also belong to the KE fold. The rest consist of officers and troops officially demobilized and discharged from the CAS Armed Forces (must abide by the strictures of the Treaty, mustn't we?). The fact that they continue to use the same gear they had while on active duty does not change their "civilian" status (surprise, surprise).

>>>>(How the frag did they get to keep their mil-spec gear?)<<<<<
—Ost (22:18:49/5-21-55)

>>>>(KE purchased it legally from the CAS military, then issued it to its newly hired "civilian security personnel.")<<<<<
—Varilight (04:50:39/5-22-55)

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

The justice system in the CAS Sector exactly mimics that of the CAS proper, including provision for trial before a jury of one's peers. In general, however, the wheels of justice tend to turn quite a bit faster in the sector than in the contiguous states. The following table is your old Professor's small way of making a few salient facts about crime and punishment easily available in a single bite-sized byte. Note that fines are listed in CAS dollars.

Intent

As is usual among those boasting at least marginal intelligence, the CAS government makes no distinction between intent and use. If you did it, you meant to do it.

Cyberware

CAS law requires everyone, even CAS citizens, to register all Class A and Class C cyberware with the government when entering the sector. Possession of Class A or C cyberware also constitutes a valid reason for rejecting an application for a work visa or travel pass. Bodyshops and cyberclinics may legally install only Class A cyberware.

Cyberdecks

All cyberdecks and programs must be licensed with the government, either upon purchase or when brought into the sector. This simple requirement makes it oh-so-easy for the KE Matrix cops to make sure your deck has the appropriate ID-trace chipset installed. If an inspector finds a stealth chipset, he confiscates your deck *right now* and charges you with a felony.

>>>>(KE Matrix cops are past masters at setting up trace-and-report "data roadblocks" to locate and nail people using stealth decks.)<<<<<

—Knight Lightning (13:05:34/5-21-55)

Addictives

CAS-ville defines possession of controlled substances as having an illegal mindbender on hand for personal consumption. Transport means minor dealing, say, less than fifteen standard chem doses or fifteen chips. Sixteen or more says you're dealing big-time, and you take the high jump if they catch you. If convicted, you will go to jail for a good long time, even first-time offenders. And extenuating circumstances don't even exist, as far as they're concerned.

OVER THE WALL INTO CHINATOWN

>>>>(This next little chunk of text may seem out of place, but we figured a piece on Chinatown might be of interest for a couple of reasons. First, it's a completely different neighborhood than any other in the sector. Second, plenty of biz goes down among those slanty roofs and paper dragons. So if you want to do biz there, you gotta know a little background about the place.

CRIMINAL OFFENSES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE	
Offense	Sentence
Arson	\$5,000/1 yr
Assault	\$2,500/6 mo
Battery	\$2,500/6 mo
Extortion	2-3 yrs
Forcible Confinement	2-5 yrs
Fraud	2-5 yrs
Illegal Entry	1-5 yrs
Kidnapping	5-10 yrs
Larceny (petty)	2-5 yrs
Larceny (grand)	2-10 yrs
Murder 1	30 yrs-life or death penalty
Murder 2	10 yrs-life
Murder 3	2-5 yrs
Negligence	1-5 yrs
Rape	2-5 yrs
Rape (statutory)	2-10 yrs
Reckless Endangerment	\$15,000/1 yr
Solicitation	\$250
Trafficking	\$150,000/5- 20 yrs
Treason	10 yrs-life
Vandalism	\$5,000
Accessory	20 percent normal
Conspiracy	50 percent normal

Unfortunately, the only place I could find any info was in this SMV sociology professor's paper I scammed off the university BB. I cut as much of the academic bull-drek as I could; try to read it anyway. It may be the only way you'll get any info at all. The locals are the most tight-lipped crowd I've ever come across. Add comments at will, people—somebody's got to lighten up this drek.)<<<<<

—Captain Chaos (20:30:42/6-8-55)

Chinatown lies in the Englewood district in southeast Denver. Its history dates back to the last years of the 20th century, when political upheaval and continually worsening economic conditions caused many native Chinese to seek a better life outside the Chinese mainland. To help alleviate its chronic overpopulation problem, the normally restrictive Chinese government allowed limited emigration.

>>>>(Bull-drek! "Emigration," my hoop! They were all spies sent over to steal American tech and know-how for their motherfragging homeland. Chinamen don't give a drek about anybody but their own.)<<<<<

—Ralphie (05:55:10/6-18-55)

>>>>(Slots like you wandering around would make any nationality xenophobic.)<<<<<

—Gopher P. (08:31:42/6-20-55)

>>>>(Ralphie could stand a few lessons on proper bulletin board etiquette, but there's some truth to what he's screaming. Evidence exists to support the proposition that excessive amounts of information still are being sent via the Matrix to mainland China by many expatriates. Maybe they're just concerned about their families back home...but that seems like nearly overwhelming concern.)<<<<<
 —Holly (21:12:32/6-22-55)

Most of the immigrants came from Hong Kong and Taiwan, territories more or less recently "acquired" by the Chinese government. Many southern cities of the United States, Denver among them, experienced economic booms during these same years, which naturally attracted these immigrants. The flood of immigration continued until about 2015, then all but stopped in the face of the political upheavals that led to the formation of the Native American Nations. A few years later, in 2018, the Treaty of Denver effectively prohibited immigration into the city. Fortunately for the Chinese living in Denver's Englewood District, the initial division of the city assigned them to the U.S.-controlled area rather than any of the NAN territories. Undoubtedly, the NAN would have expelled them along with all the other non-Amerind residents.

The businesses and residences of Chinatown continued to thrive through the formation of the Confederate American States, officially recognized by the signing of the Treaty of Richmond in 2034. As part of the deal, CAS took over the section of Denver containing Chinatown. In the wake of their successful, rampant nationalism, it came as no surprise that CAS frowned on a group of its citizens having (apparently) stronger ties to mother China than to their new home. But because no proposed action seemed likely to produce a useful result, the CAS took no official action against the Chinese-Americans. By this time, Chinatown had grown into a community numbering more than 20,000 souls, among whom rumor placed more than a few powerful mages. Certain Chinese businessmen had also developed strong ties to various megacorporations, a fact that further discouraged any official action against the Chinese enclave. For the next decade and more, Chinatown residents continued to live peacefully and prosper.

>>>>(I heard that the CAS did try to eliminate the Chinese bosses, but that all their assault teams got seriously fragged. Some of the survivors couldn't eat solid food for years, and their minds are shaky to this day.)<<<<<
 —Styles (20:35:14/06-10-55)

>>>>(Your information is somewhat exaggerated, Styles. Any confrontations between the CAS government and my people were certainly limited to minor misunderstandings. There was no planned assault.)<<<<<
 —Li Chen (21:14:08/06-10-55)

>>>>(Drek, Li Chen!! But then, you wouldn't tell the truth to save your dying mother, you double-crossing rattlesnake!!! Guess who's back in town?)<<<<<
 —Tex (21:15:32/06-10-55)

>>>>(I am ready to settle all disagreements man to man. Meet me at the traditional place and time.)<<<<<
 —Li Chen (22:30:15/06-10-55)

>>>>(You guys sound like a bad Old West trid. Would you keep the macho posturing off the BBS?)<<<<<
 —Rhonda (00:15:48/06-11-55)

The relative calm ended in 2048 with the first Humanis policlub riots in the district. Over the next several years, Humanis members repeatedly looted and vandalized Chinatown establishments. In the summer of 2052, the raids ceased as if someone had thrown a switch, and all Humanis activity in Denver came to an abrupt halt. Other politicians and business leaders could only conclude that the patient Chinese had finally worked out their differences with the policlub leaders and come to an understanding.

>>>>(Those Humanis raids really upset my meal plans. They blew up my favorite noodle house when I was enjoying some won ton.)<<<<<
 —Gopher P. (08:40:42/6-20-55)

>>>>(Can anyone explain just how any minority group "works out differences" with the Humanis skags?)<<<<<
 —Reefer (15:45:31/6-21-55)

>>>>(Cut off their fingers one by one and make them eat them until they agree with you. An ancient Oriental custom.)<<<<<
 —Cain (18:12:56/6-21-55)

>>>>(Unfortunate comments like the one above give our community a bad name. I assure you that no one among us even contemplates such vile acts any longer. For those interested in discovering the truth for themselves, leave a message at LTG# 5303 (87-9342) and I'll gladly arrange a tour of Chinatown and provide you with accurate, interesting information about my people's rich history and culture.)<<<<<
 —Travel Guy (23:45:01/6-23-55)

Current residents of Chinatown represent mostly second or third generation citizens, but they interact with those outside their community little more than their parents and grandparents did. Insular and clannish by nature, they have become more so as a result of years of political turmoil.

The Chinese have a curious attitude toward metahumans. Save for elves, the residents of Chinatown treat the metahumans living on the fringe of their community as second-class citizens. However, most Chinese will trust an ork of Chinese descent more quickly than a human of another racial background. Chinese-ethnic humans and elves seem to view dwarfs, orks, and trolls as unfortunate, inferior souls for whom they must take responsibility. Strangely enough, the latter group seems to accept this position without demur—they are brewing no imminent rebellion.



>>>>(Accept it?! You'd accept it too, if the fragging Chinamen put you under their mind control. They're testing it out on their own people, and if someone doesn't stop them, they'll control fragging everybody pretty soon.)<<<<<<
 —Ralphie (05:20:42/06-18-55)

>>>>(Ralphie, will you quit with the racist comments? I've got friends from Chinatown, and they've saved my fur on many a run. Not to mention that the Chinese make the best food in the world—check out Szechwan Beef.)<<<<<<
 —Gopher P. (08:45:03/06-20-55)

>>>>(The truth of the matter is that the so-called inferiors understand their function in our community. Their separation makes life more comfortable for all concerned. Unlike western people in general, every Chinese human and metafhuman understands how he or she best fits into the community.)<<<<<<
 —Li Chen (17:12:32/06-21-55)

>>>>(Say, Li Chen. What happened between you and Tex, anyway?)<<<<<<
 —Rhonda (18:04:42/06-21-55)

>>>>(I would love to tell you, but I do not want to offend you with my macho posturing.)<<<<<<
 —Li Chen (18:07:56/06-21-55)

Aside from the political chaos surrounding Denver, the one factor that has changed the lives of the residents of Chinatown is the return of their ancient magic. Regaining their ancestral powers prompted many Chinese to turn away from technology. Others attempt to combine the knowledge of the past with the technology of the present in a synthesis of unimaginable potential. These divergent schools of thought represent something of a rift in the community.

Recently, I witnessed a marriage ceremony where the tensions caused by the dichotomy between these two ways of thinking made themselves sharply evident. The bride and groom poured tea for their parents and grandparents in an age-old ceremony, followed by a reception where traditional Chinese music competed with the latest simsense rock from Hong Kong. Petty squabbling between the traditional musicians and the rockers threatened to break into violence, until the bride's grandfather rose into the air and <<**BLOCK DELETE: 6 MP**>>

>>>>(I think we've heard enough.)<<<<<<
 —Nemo (00:00:00/01-01-01)

>>>>(Who is this fragging joker? And is that it for the file?)<<<<<<
 —Styles (20:38:14/06-10-55)

>>>>(What more do you need to know? You go to Chinatown for great food, but you need to behave yourself and don't ask too many questions. They won't hurt you if you don't hurt them. Have I mentioned the seafood at the Imperial Gardens?)<<<<<<
 —Gopher P. (20:48:54/06-20-55)

>>>>(Is your mind always on food, Gopher?)<<<<<<
 —Rhonda (18:10:45/06-21-55)

>>>>(O.K., all you chummers, listen up! I just got back from a run in Hong Kong and the major drek going down over there is unbelievable. I've had a firsthand look at their magic. Mind control, flying assassins, lightning pouring out of their mouths, I saw it all. And the Chinese government—the so-called Sleeping Dragon—is about to wake up. Think about it. What would be the percentage of mages in a country of a billion people? And half the fragging people that don't cast spells are physical adepts.

Even as the Chinese gather their strengths, the capitalist haven of Hong Kong processes a ton of new products every fragging day, and the Japanese megacorps continue to field-test their products there."(So what if they blow up a few Chinamen in the process?)

But the Chinese will have the last laugh. They'll learn everything they can from the Japanese and use it against them, just like the Japanese did to the good ol' USA (may she rest in peace.)<<<<<<
 —Soldier of Fortune (21:30:12/06-21-55)

>>>>(Don't believe a word he says! I fear that some elements of the Humanis policlub continue to spread their hateful, false propaganda. How dare they invade this BBS with their filth? If you want the real truth, contact the Travel Guy and come visit Denver's Chinatown for yourself. We are insular only for self-protection. It does not mean we don't welcome friendly visitors. After all, you provide substantial income in tourist revenue.)<<<<<<
 —Li Chen (21:34:15/06-21-55)

>>>>(Would someone check out Li Chen's response times? What does he do? Monitor the system 24 hours a day?)<<<<<<
 —Healey (09:14:42/06-22-55)

>>>>(I wouldn't be surprised. Ever hear of a neuro-sleep damper? By the way, I AM NOT A HUMANIS POLICLUB MEMBER!)<<<<<<
 —Soldier of Fortune (17:15:04/06-23-55)

>>>>(Don't believe a word he says!)<<<<<<
 —Li Chen (17:15:10/06-23-55)

WHERE IT'S HAPPENING

Here's where to go when something's happening or you want something to happen, or even if you just want something to eat or drink.

HOTELS

Melbourne Hotel

Coffin Hotel Archetype/607 24th St./Gordon Letson, Manager/Extreme Bias against Tribal Shamans/LTG# 2303 (92-6386)/Map Location 9

A very unpleasant coffin-style hotel, but close enough to downtown that visitors to the sector will put up with the grunge for the convenience. Gordon Letson owns and runs the place, and he seems to spend most of his life wandering around the building. He has some major ax to grind against Amerind shamans and doesn't care who knows it.

>>>>(Right. Like you can spot a shaman just by looking.)<<<<<<
—Moraya (09:14:44/6-1-55)

>>>>(You can't. So Letson vents his grudge on Amerinds who happen to be carrying/wearing bits of wood and drek that look like fetishes and foci. He doesn't care whether they're working gear or just fashion statements for mundanes.)<<<<<<
—Tallsmonger (18:38:55/6-1-55)

>>>>(So why hasn't some shaman pulled out his teeth through his ears?)<<<<<<
—Carnival (23:07:15/6-1-55)

>>>>(Because Letson is a shaman, and an initiate to boot. He doesn't use his gift openly, won't admit to having it, and won't tell anyone about his background. There's a story here, boys and girls, but I haven't figured it out...yet.)<<<<<<
—Wryter (02:09:51/6-2-55)

Stouffer Concourse Hotel

Average Hotel Archetype (5 floors)/3801 Quebec St./Cheryle Tutkaluke, Manager/Slight Bias against Amerindians/LTG# 3303 (99-7500)/Map Location 10

The Stouffer Concourse is the third incarnation of an airport hotel that dates back to the latter half of the last century. It burned down and was rebuilt in 2003, and again in 2034. Each time, layers of old-time elegance got stripped away, leaving the present hotel nothing more than a roof over the heads of business travelers and others making a short layover at Stapleton.

>>>>(Not any more. They're in different sectors now, remember? The Stouffer's in CAS, Stapleton's in UCAS. I figure that explains the Stouffer's low occupancy rate.)<<<<<<
—Shabir (19:27:03/5-25-55)

>>>>(Don't knock it, it's better than a coffin. At least they don't hose out the rooms between guests.)<<<<<<
—Sharona (23:41:59/5-29-55)

>>>>(Sometimes that's not such a bad idea.)<<<<<<
—Tomtom (13:51:25/5-30-55)

>>>>(The Concorde lounge is a pretty good place to wolf down a plate of nachos (real cheese for only 2 nuyen more!) and a couple of liters of brew. Just try to time your visit to fall between arriving or departing semiballistics or the noise'll delaminate your teeth.)<<<<<<
—Billabong (00:06:21/6-2-55)

Regency Tech Center

Luxury Hotel Archetype (10 floors)/7800 Tufts Ave./Ralph Parr-Peterson, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 7303 (79-1234)/Map Location 11

Another one-time luxury hotel fallen on rough times, this establishment is located in the heart of the Denver Tech Center. In long-gone days, Hyatt owned this place but sold off the TC (as the locals call it) to a local outfit before the Treaty of Richmond and the creation of the CAS Sector. The sale, of course, stipulated that the buyers drop the Hyatt name. A few years later, along came the Treaty of Richmond, and the hotel's owners suddenly found themselves in CAS territory...outside the jurisdiction in which the agreement with the Hyatt chain held any water. The ink had hardly dried on the Treaty of Richmond before the owners of the TC slapped the "Hyatt Regency" name back on the walls, signs, business cards, and stationery. The TC slid down the quality scale pretty fast, of course, which didn't do much to help the Hyatt chain's reputation worldwide. Predictably, the Hyatt chain pitched a dozen fits with no visible result—until a major shareholder in the local company died in a tragic accident. Soon afterward, similar tragedies claimed the lives of two other key players. Before you can say "corporate influence," down came the Hyatt name and the TC became the "Regency Tech Center."

>>>>(Check out the TC sometime. The rooms are as big as any in a real luxury hotel—but they're filthy, they smell like honk, and you've gotta share with the bugs.)<<<<<<
—Dean (04:45:15/6-1-55)

>>>>(So here's the trick. Rent one room for maybe three times what you'd pay for a single cot at a flophouse, and you've got enough space for six or seven of your best chummers to doss down.)<<<<<<
—VU (12:04:39/6-1-55)

>>>>(The Tech Center gangers already tipped to that scam, VU. Stay in the TC and your next-door neighbor might turn out to be the entire Skinpeelers thrill-gang. If that's not a problem for you, go for it.)<<<<<<
—Iris (20:41:47/6-2-55)

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

Grassroots

Mid-Sized Restaurant Archetype/1700 Humboldt St./Tamira Gaudette, Owner/Slight Bias against Amerindians/LTG# 8303 (31-7310)/Map Location 12

Subscribers to the *Rocky Mountain Post* datafax consistently rate Grassroots as the best restaurant in Denver, though this tiny place never seems crowded.

>>>>(Could it have something to do with the fact that Tamira Gaudette is the daughter-in-law of the Post's managing editor...?)<<<<<<
—Victoria (02:37:59/5-27-55)



>>>>(Oooh, restaurant review corruption ...)<<<<
—Triumph (06:14:56/5-29-55)

The food is consistently excellent and slightly underpriced for its quality. Still expensive, but you get five-star food for four-star prices. That's a bargain. Grassroots is quiet and cozy, and it offers an incredibly extensive wine list.

>>>>(Physical and magical security is lousy, yet somehow the place manages to avoid getting ripped up or hassled.

Can anybody tell me why?)<<<<
—PJ (13:08:09/6-1-55)

>>>>(Honto? I'll look into it.)<<<<
—Sevrin (11:41:59/6-2-55)

Goodfriends

Night Club Archetype/3100 E. Colfax/Brett Mitchell,
Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 3303 (99-1751)/Map
Location 13

A restaurant or club has occupied this site for more than eighty years, and every single one of them has been named Goodfriends. (You'd think that after all that time, somebody would have come up with a better name.) Today's incarnation of Goodfriends is a pickup joint par excellence, attracting underage women and young studs interested in hitting on same. The dress code is actually enforced: no gang colors, no black leather, no studs, and definitely *no weapons*.

>>>>(The bouncers here are tough, and they love their jobs. You rarely see so much as a minor scuffle in Goodfriends. (The parking lot is another story. An ambitious entrepreneur could easily turn it into a pit-fighting arena and sell tickets.)

A couple of second-string local players call Goodfriends home. And recurring rumors claim that Brett Mitchell does a roaring trade in stolen goods, particularly weapons, out of the place's back rooms.)<<<<<

—Ringo (00:13:38/6-3-55)

Rock Solid

Small Bar Archetype/6050 E. Colfax/Elizabeth Grimes, Owner/Slight Bias Against Metahumans/LTG# 3303 (65-2232)/Map Location 14

With a name like Rock Solid, you might expect this dive to be a retro nightclub. Actually, it's a small tavern on Colfax that lives up to its name by blasting rock of every class and flavor through its killer sound system at a volume guaranteed to melt the fillings in your teeth and possibly cook off the rounds in your pistol. Despite this, or maybe because of it, lots of first-tier Denver runners hang here.

>>>>(Don't come in here expecting to talk biz. Gesture biz, or mouth biz, or scrawl biz in spilled beer on the table top, maybe.)<<<<<

—Kerumi (22:45:06/5-28-55)

>>>>(Owner Liz Grimes used to run the shadows herself under the handle Black Heart. Her regular clients are unshakably loyal to her, and getting on her bad side means you're on their bad side too. Ugly.)<<<<<

—Hammer (03:46:09/5-29-55)

MISCELLANEOUS SIGHTS

Denver Tech Center (Map Location 15)

The area along the boundary between the southeast of Denver proper and the suburb of Englewood picked up the name "Tech Center" before the turn of the century. Back then, it deserved the moniker. The original Denver Technological Center, off Intercity 25 and Belleview Avenue, was an industrial park that attracted high-technology businesses, and by the turn of the century also served as a kind of incubator for start-ups. Over the years, the "Tech Center area" branched out from this original

seed to cover ten other industrial parks, several hotels, and countless support businesses. The Tech Center's fortunes began to decline when a fierce shake-out hit the high-tech industry in 2012.

>>>>(The Awakening and the re-emergence of magic shook many people's faith in science and tech. "Why do I need a (fill in your favorite tech-toy) when soon I'll be able to just cast a spell?" Didn't turn out that way, of course, but technological start-ups like the kinds of companies hugging the Tech Center were very sensitive to changes in the stock market like those caused by the Awakening.)<<<<<

—Pittman (14:14:48/5-29-55)

Various blossoming megacorps swept in like barracudas, picking off the more interesting companies and (usually) gutting them for their assets. The Tech Center had barely begun to climb out of that chasm when the Crash of '29 hit. Down came all the promising but oh-so-vulnerable start-ups once again, and this time the Tech Center didn't recover.

As the tech outfits collapsed, so did all the area's support businesses. Today, Tech Center is in a "chicken-and-egg" situation. Only the most daring start-up will move into an area without the necessary support businesses in place—but no support businesses will set up shop where no high-tech industry exists to provide customers.

>>>>(Tech Center is a gangers' playground these days. (With some exceptions, granted.) A couple of outfits are still trying to make it there, most of them hemorrhaging cred, but the vast majority of the offices, lab space, warehouses, machine shops, and so on are vacant. Vacant space breeds squatters and gangers, and that's mostly who lives in the Tech Center today.)<<<<<

—Darla (18:38:09/5-29-55)

Ketring Park (Map Location 16)

Ketring's a pretty little park around a pretty little lake...by day. At night, it often becomes a battleground for several local gangs. Knight Errant knows the situation and seems to know in advance when a major rumble's going down. Instead of trying to close the park down and stop the gangs from fighting, they set up a perimeter to make sure the violence doesn't spread beyond it. Then they watch the fun.

>>>>(As long as you can "persuade" the gangers to stay off your hoop, Ketring Park's a fine place to do biz after the sun goes down.)<<<<<

—Frazier (02:38:24/5-31-55)

PUEBLO SECTOR

<<Sure, the PCC's efficient. Isn't it the efficient governments that end up killing the most...?>>
—Toad-Man (IntraZone Online/REF# MSM-2092k02)

P

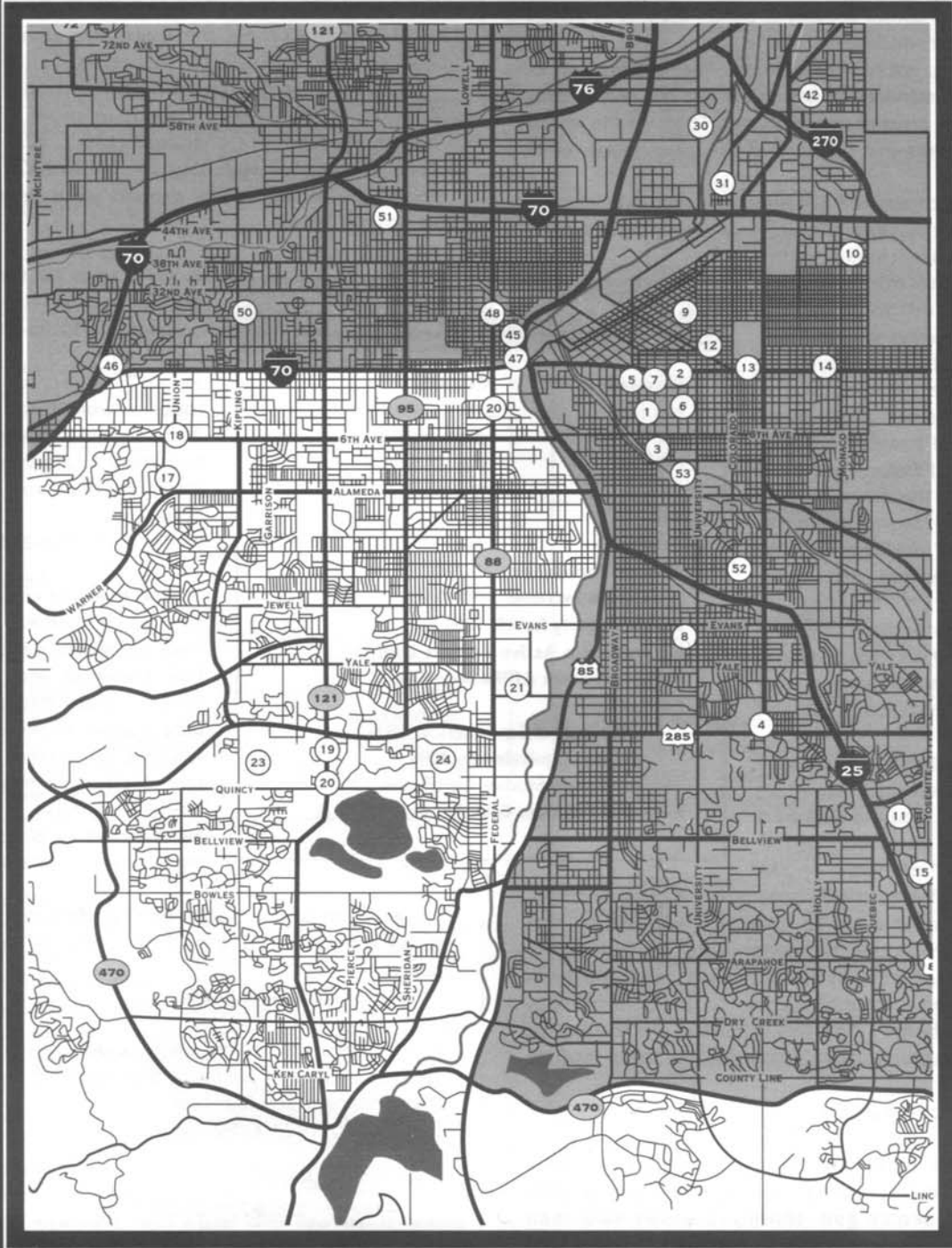
ueblo's demarcation line in Denver metro follows Highway 70 eastward to just south of Golden, then runs along Highway 40 into the city center. From there the line swings south to follow Intercity 25, the South Platte River, and Highway 85 down to Route 470, where it turns east. At Intercity 25 and the CAS Sector border, the Pueblo line swings south. Around Colorado Springs, the Pueblo Sector border follows Intercity 25 and the 1986 municipal boundary.

>>>>(It also includes the Fort Carson Military Reservation, chummers. Don't forget that. Where else would Pueblo keep all its doggies?)<<<<<
—Trajan (09:26:41/6-1-55)

▼
▼
▼

>>>>(Query: "doggies?")<<<<<
—Alexei (09:26:56/6-1-55)

>>>>(From "dog-faces," an old name for soldiers. Of course, none of the Pueblo personnel at Fort Carson are military... (Ha. Like drek. Take a scan at the section on Carson a little later in this file.))<<<<<
—Trajan (09:28:12/6-1-55)



PUEBLO ▼ SECTOR

BORDER SECURITY

by Sgt. York

Most people who know a little bit (but not enough) about Denver figure that border security is border security is border security, no matter which sector you're talking about. Not necessarily so, chums, not in Pueblo Sector. Pueblo blocks off its territory with the standard fences and walls, but only patrols the most sensitive areas of its boundaries. To guard the rest of the line, the powers-that-be slapped up autonomous, electronic systems.

Sound easy to sleaze? Try another keystroke, chums. Here's how it works. Other sectors pack their portions of no man's land with land mines, sentry guns, UAMs, and other nasties; Pueblo's installed some of the sweetest sensor arrays you've never wanted to face. Imagine having to slide by pressure sensors, motion detectors, chem-sniffers, MAD metal detectors, thermal imaging systems, and AP radar...all *before* you even reach the fence. The fence itself is wired every which way; touching it, cutting it, or even looking at it cross-eyed triggers some kind of screamer.

>>>>(Motion detectors? Outside? Drek. A drifting leaf or a bird or even a strong wind sets them off.)<<<<<<
—Memnos (17:32:09/5-22-55)

>>>>(Ever heard of linked sensors, you bimbleheaded slot? Any "hit" on a single sensor subsystem issues a "tentative alert" that focuses the control system's "attention" on the area in question. The alert only goes active if additional sensor subsystems report a hit. To take your own example, a floating leaf might trigger the motion detector, but the AP radar and pressure sensors will stay dark. How the tech works depends on the sophistication of the control algorithms in the software—and this is Pueblo we're talking, remember? "Sophisticated software" is their middle name.)<<<<<<
—Rage (09:35:58/5-23-55)

So what, you're thinking. So you set off a screamer—you've just got to be prepared to scrag the armed guards or take out the sentry gun. (Both are easier said than done, but I know folks who've managed it.) But guess what? No armed guards, chums. No sentry gun. No, the screamer alerts one of a flock of stealth drones that loiter a couple of hundred meters up the line. Down comes the drone on remote autopilot to take a look-see with its camera/thermal imaging systems. The control system does a

little pattern-recognition dance, and if it "sees" something the system's been programmed to worry about, it taps the shoulder of a Pueblo rigger (sitting nice and warm and comfortable in a guardhouse, possibly klicks away from what's happening). The rigger jacks in and takes control of the drone.

Using the drone, the rigger can scope out the danger level of a potential incursion, follow a insurgent without the target knowing she's under surveillance (stealth drones, remember?), or mow down invaders before they have a chance to blink. With at least one "eye in the sky" watching the intruders, the rigger can send a patrol aircraft or ground team or whatever right to ground zero.

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Population:	700,000
Human:	57%
Elf:	13%
Dwarf:	10%
Ork:	18%
Troll:	1%
Other:	1%
SINless Population:	21,720
Per Capita Income:	32,000 ¥
Below Poverty Level:	12%
On Fortune's Active Traders List:	1%
Megacorporate Affiliation:	54%
Education:	
High School Equivalency:	38%
College Equivalency:	40%
Advanced Studies Certificate:	12%
Regional Telecom Grid Access:	NA/PUE

>>>>(Sounds just too fragging efficient for comfort.)<<<<<<
—Luke (11:43:28/5-22-55)

>>>>(Gotta mention there's anti-air radar as well—good anti-air radar. Buzz your t-bird or your Yellowjacket over the line and you'll have a couple of drones on your butt in no time at all.)<<<<<<
—Zak (08:26:51/5-23-55)

Those trying to cross the legit way may face an entirely different set of nasty problems, depending on their true degree of "legit." Each Pueblo border-crossing station usually maintains a squad of sec-guards ready to roll in a Citymaster at the precise moment trouble erupts. The larger ones also have two or three Yellowjackets or Wasps, either loitering overhead or on deck ready to go.

>>>>(What about magic, huh? A spellworm could just go invisible or whatever and jander on by all those wizzer sensors.)<<<<<<
—Trixy (11:23:17/5-21-55)

>>>>(That's why Pueblo also has watchers on the line. They don't interdict, they just follow and whistle up help at an appropriate moment. Simple.)<<<<<<
—Daria (19:23:00/5-21-55)

>>>>(I give up.)<<<<<<
—Firelight (02:28:20/5-23-55)

>>>>(Check this buzz. I hear a corp somewhere up in Seattle's marketing a surveillance drone that can see astral creatures. They call it the Witchsight or some drek. I also hear Pueblo bought a couple hundred.)<<<<<<
—Dog (20:18:36/5-29-55)

>>>>(If so, then Pueblo wasted a drekload of money. The Witchsight's a flawed concept. It doesn't work. It can never work. Sorry.)<<<<<<

—Tom (10:26:10/6-1-55)

WHO LIVES HERE (AND HOW)

>>>>(Affluent, neh? Probably the highest standard of living in the entire Front Range Free Zone, and all because the economy of the Pueblo Corporate Council is so solid. Trickle-down in action, folks; Pueblo's money spreads to all corners of the Pueblo sphere of influence. Including its piece of Denver.)<<<<<<

—Rhodes (22:09:12/5-23-55)

>>>>(Too many frogs and squats and dandelion-eaters for my liking.)<<<<<<

—Snake (03:06:53/5-24-55)

>>>>(What rock did he crawl out from under?)<<<<<<

—Lincoln (15:27:08/5-24-55)

>>>>(Wish he'd crawl back.)<<<<<<

—Sol (15:49:40/5-24-55)

MONEY

by Flashman

Not much to say about this subject, other than the standard here's-what-it-costs-in-Seattle-here's-what-it-costs-in-PS. I seen my duty and I done it, folks—here's your cost-o'-living table, with notes explaining all the funky drek. PuebSec currency's the good ol' nuyen (ain't that a relief? No money-switch headbangers for Seattlites), and prices tend to stay more stable than in, say, CAS-ville or Azzietown. (Which ain't to say they don't change—shop around if you're smart, bucko.)

Cost of Living Notes

¹Anything other than standard military ball ammo is restricted, and you can't get *anything* by the belt (legally, that is—check the shadow market).

²Light body armor is legal. Everything else is restricted; not even corp security personnel wear it. Only Pueblo Security Enterprises has access to all the good stuff.

³To buy any kind of explosives you need a license, for which you have to jump through so many fragging hoops that by the time you get it, whatever you wanted to blow up has probably eroded away. And don't bother trying to forge the license datawork—this is Pueblo, bucko.

⁴Silencers, smartlinks, and wizzer drek like that is heavily restricted. Recoil compensation is legal; apparently the bigfellas figure it *might* be used for hunting.

>>>>(Gyro-mounts?)<<<<<<

—Sturm (01:04:58/5-24-55)

PUEBLO SECTOR COST OF LIVING

ITEM	COST (% of Seattle prices)
Weapons and Armor	
Ammunition ¹	95
Armor ²	110
Explosives ³	110
Firearm Accessories ⁴	95
Firearms	95
Melee Weapons	105
Projectile Weapons	105
Throwing Weapons	100
Surveillance and Security	
Communications	90
Security Devices	90
Surveillance Countermeasures	100
Surveillance Equipment	100
Survival Gear	110
Vision Enhancers	90
Lifestyle	
Lifestyle	100
Cybertech and Electronics	
Biotech	110
Bodyware	105
Cyberdecks	100
Electronic Equipment	90
Headware	100
Internals	100
Programs	95
Magical Equipment	
Hermetic Library	145
Magical Supplies	120
Magical Weapons	125
Power Foci	110
Ritual Sorcery Materials	125
Spell Foci	110
Vehicles	
Aircraft	110
Boats	120
Ground Vehicles	90
Military Vehicles ⁵	500

>>>>(Get actual.)<<<<<<

—Hammer (03:55:35/5-24-55)

⁵Forget it on the up-and-up, bucko. (Think about it; if the Pueblo sec-forces get knots in their shorts about medium body armor, are they gonna let you have a fragging tank?) As for black-and-shadow deals, sec-boys come down hard on anyone dealing in LAVs and the like, which pushes the price way up.

HOW PUEBLO SECTOR WORKS

by Wears Funny Hats

(First off, no comments on the moniker. I'm Native American, and I can call myself whatever I fragging well please.)

Like the Pueblo Corporate Council, the Pueb Sector has two dominant tribes: the Zuñi and the Hopi.

>>>>(And they show the same differences in attitude as Zuñi and Hopi everywhere else. Most Zuñi are mellow, conservative, and structured in everything they do. Hopi are the firebrands, dissatisfied with the status quo, willing to tear things down and try something new. (Okay, okay, I know generalizations are dangerous. But this one is pretty accurate.)<<<<<

—Reid (23:39:18/5-22-55)

>>>>(In the Corporate Council, the population's split about 50-50. The sector's more than two-thirds Hopi. Draw what conclusions you like.)<<<<<

—Arclight (04:27:32/5-24-55)

Not too many non-Amerinds live here, which should surprise no one. There's more Anglos and Asians and Afs in the sector than in the Corporate Council, but they still number fewer than 10 percent of the total population.

>>>>(Anglos stand out like sore fragging thumbs. There's not much overt hostility toward Anglos, but the scarcity of non-Amerind faces on the street communicates quite clearly who "belongs" and who doesn't.)<<<<<

—Royston (00:26:02/5-26-55)

>>>>(Walking the streets of the Pueblo Sector is a weird experience. It's a bustling, high-tech place, and you can practically smell the money and corp power in the air. But the high-ranking corp exec who joins you in the elevator might just as easily wear a woven cotton kilt as a flash suit from Mortimer of London.)<<<<<

—Talon (13:44:30/5-29-55)

>>>>(Somebody's got to mention the Nef. Remember that this is the Pueblo Sector, chummers, and remember what you've heard about the Pueblo Corporate Council. That's right—it's home to a neighborhood of the Matrix that's maybe ten years ahead of anything you've ever seen before. Now, what level of sophistication would you expect from anything to do with computers and data processing within the Zone? Right again—state of the fragging art or better.)<<<<<

—Rage (00:23:05/6-2-55)

Taking its cue from the PCC, the sector government runs itself like a corp (some Ivory Tower egghead once called it a "democratic plutocracy." Nice and understandable, neh?). Every PuebSec citizen owns at least one share in the corporation that is the Corporate Council. How this translates into votes is tricky

to understand unless you know some higher math. A "shareholder" has a number of votes equal to log to the base 10 of the number of shares held, plus one. In other words, a citizen with one share has a "vote" of one (log of 1 equals 0, plus 1), while the vote of a citizen holding 1,000,000 shares weighs 7 (log of 1,000,000 equals 6, plus 1).

Sector residents with Pueb citizenship cast their votes for a twelve-member governing board, which manages the sector's economy, security, justice system, and law enforcement. The board appoints (and can shuffle or fire) corp officers like prez and various veeps who do the actual work.

>>>>(It seems to work okay, no matter how convoluted it sounds.)<<<<<

—Cyn (23:04:28/5-27-55)

At the moment, Juanita Iglala serves as chairman of the board. Sector prez is Julio Caron.

>>>>(Ah, beautiful, black-haired Juanita. The brotherhood of hired assassins lost out when she decided to go into politics.)<<<<<

—Scavenger (12:03:29/5-23-55)

>>>>(She used to be a hitter?)<<<<<

—Hersh (21:46:33/5-23-55)

>>>>(Doesn't anybody scan irony anymore?)<<<<<

—Scavenger (11:56:57/5-24-55)

>>>>(Yeah—what do you think this is, the fraggin' Aztlan Sector ... ?)<<<<<

—Firelight (02:18:37/5-28-55)

LAWS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Okay. Now that I've gotten the basic background drek up on the board and out of the way, I'll say a little something about a few areas of interest to those considering coming to PuebSec for (shadywise) "business ventures."

Immigration

Anybody interested in permanent relocation to PuebSec (or faking same), scan this well. Pueblo Sector management uses the same immigration laws and guidelines as the PCC—so it's incredibly choosy about just who it accepts for official immigration. During every fiscal quarter, the Department of Immigration whips up a list of skill-sets and backgrounds in demand by corps operating in PuebSec or PCC. If a would-be immigrant matches a slot on this list (lucky, lucky), he'll probably get the chance to become a citizen. No match, no chance. On paper, individual corps can sponsor specific immigrants, but the datawork involved (proving to the government dingwhacks that the job can't be filled by a citizen) puts most everybody off.

If the immigrant gets the prize, he or she has to give up any and all citizenships held anywhere else and must buy at least one share in the Corporate Council at market price (8,252 ¥ at the last price tick).

**So, what race should we make
undesirable this week?**

**—John Talking Weasel, Third
Undersecretary of Relocation Control**

>>>>>(Currently pushing 8,500 ¥.)<<<<<<
—Rhodes (13:07:02/6-10-55)

There's no such thing as a Pueblo Sector work visa. Only a citizen can work legally in the sector.

Travel Passes

For short visits, try a travel pass. You can apply for a short-term travel pass electronically or in person at any Pueblo border-crossing station. Applying takes only a few minutes, because nobody makes you fill out any forms. Sound good to you, chums? Guess again. Instead of throwing forms at you, they scan the personal data on your credstick *verry* carefully and then crosscheck the data with other sources. If your personal data says you graduated from NYU, for example, the Pueblo system will most likely tap NYU's database to confirm that fact.

>>>>>(Huh? They crosscheck your entire personal background? That'll take more than "a few minutes," no matter what wizzer-level Pueblo tech has reached.)<<<<<<
—Randy (11:20:27/5-26-55)

>>>>>(They don't do a complete crosscheck, Randy. It's more like a spot check—they pick one or two key facts at random and send a frame to confirm them.

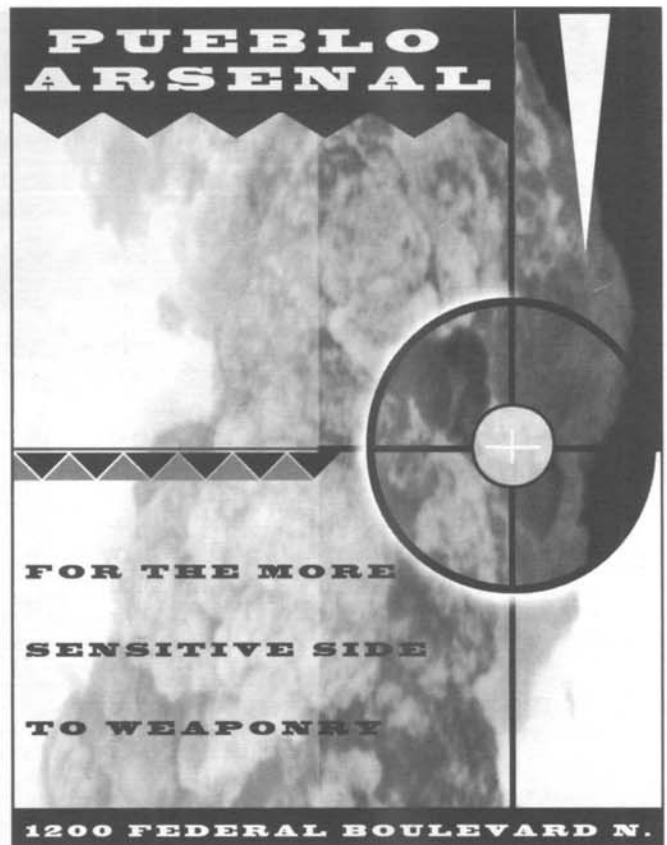
If something they spot makes them suspicious, then it's complete-crosscheck time. You'll be there for hours, and if they catch you in any deception, kiss your hoop goodbye. The border posts are officially Pueblo territory, and if you're found guilty of "data falsification," you've committed a felony in their jurisdiction.)<<<<<<

—Monitor (20:31:51/5-27-55)

>>>>>(Ouch!)<<<<<<
—Randy (11:32:15/5-28-55)

Weapons

Pueblo proper is pretty tight-hooped about weapon licenses and restricting the more lethal kinds of bang-bang, and the Pueblo Sector gets even more cramped up about it. Sector management knows its turf is close to plenty of sources for these weapons, so it comes down hard on illegal acquisition and possession. As in most sectors, you can legally carry a "personal defense" weapon, defined as anything up to and including a light pistol. 'Course, you have to have a license for it, and the necessary datawork digs pretty deep into your background. Any heavier metal than a light pistol is restricted, and autofire weapons are right out. A few loopholes exist for such hunting



weapons as single-shot rifles and shotguns, but you need yet another license for these guns.

Chips, Drugs, and Alcohol

PuebSec management places few restrictions on alcohol, most kinds of recreational pharmies, and most simchips (up to and including California hots). Hell, they couldn't care less if you bend your brain with something in the privacy of your own home. If you harm someone else or someone else's property in an altered state of consciousness, however, you're in for one nasty-bad trip upriver. Pueblo Sector law adjudicates any crime committed under the influence of any mindbender as though it were premeditated. ("Well, hey, you *planned* to get wasted...") UCAS citizens, take note: your favorite defenses, like, "I was too drunk to know what I was doing," cut no ice in Pueblo.

BTLs are big-time illegal, and they slap you fragging hard for dealing. Penalties tend to be three to five times as nasty as penalties for personal possession.

Support Your Local Sheriff

An outfit named Pueblo Security Enterprises, Inc. (don't forget the "Inc.") plays badge in PuebSec. On paper, this private corporation is a wholly owned subsidiary of sector management (a bigger corp). On paper, PSE is purely civilian and therefore legit under the provisions of the Treaty of Denver.

Now let's talk reality. All PSE wagers, from the street grunt up to the commander-in-chief, come straight out of Pueblo Corp

WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Weapon Type	Offense and Fine/Imprisonment			
	Possession (1)	Transport (2)	Threat (3)	Use (4)
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	200¥	750¥	1,500¥	6,000¥/6 mo
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	400¥	1,500¥	2,500¥	12,000¥/1 yr
(C) Blunt Weapon	250¥	800¥	2,250¥	10,000¥/1 yr
(D) Projectile Weapon	300¥	1,000¥	3,000¥	8,000¥/9 mo
(E) Pistol	1,000¥	2,250¥	7,500¥/6 mo	3 yrs
(F) Rifle	1,500¥	4,500¥	10,000¥/1 yr	5 yrs
(G) Automatic Weapons	10,000¥	15,000¥	1 yr	8 yrs
(H) Heavy Weapon	20,000¥	30,000¥	2 yrs	15 yrs
(I) Explosives	20,000¥	30,000¥	3 yrs	20 yrs
(J) Military Weapons	1 yr	2 yrs	6 yrs	30 yrs
(K) Military Armor	2,000¥	—	—	—
(L) Ammunition	4,000¥	—	—	—
(BA) Class A Bioware	2,500¥	—	—	—
(BB) Class B Bioware	12,000¥	—	—	—
(BC) Class C Bioware	10 yrs	—	—	—
(CA) Class A Cyberware	3,000¥	—	—	—
(CB) Class B Cyberware	15,000¥	—	—	—
(CC) Class C Cyberware	10 yrs	—	—	—
(CD) Matrix Tech	5 yrs	—	—	—
(EA) Class A Equipment	1,500¥	—	—	—
(EB) Class B Equipment	5,000¥/6 mo	—	—	—
(EC) Class C Equipment	40,000¥/2 yr	—	—	—
(MA) Class A Controlled	500¥	—	—	—
(MB) Class B Controlled	5,000¥/1 yr	—	—	—
(MC) Class C Controlled	100,000¥/10 yrs	—	—	—

Council's security force. In every single case, the wager got discharged from the force one day and hired by Pueblo Security Enterprises, Inc., the next.

>>>>(Does that scare you? It should. Back in Pueblo proper, the security force is divided into two "arms"—the civilian arm (police) and the defense arm (national armed forces). The two arms do a lot of cross-training and personnel transfers...and Pueblo Security Enterprises will only "hire" personnel who've gone through this cross-training. That means the "civilian security officer" you meet on the streets of the Pueblo Sector might well have spent most of last year slugging it out in Desert Wars ...)<<<<<<
 —Hatchetman (19:47:56/5-31-55)

Crime and Punishment

The Pueblo Sector justice system looks pretty-fragging-weird to folks who hail from elsewhere. Shamanic tribunals take care of the crime-and-punishment mess, with the Department of Justice (under the guidance of the Vice-President of Justice) assigning the three shamans to each tribunal. Forget trial by jury, forget defense lawyers and prosecutors and defense counsel. Don't get none of that in PuebSec, chummo. A PuebSec trial

looks more like a court martial than a UCAS-style criminal trial. The shamans can use magic to examine witnesses, evidence, and even the accused.

Few "miscarriages of justice" happen in Pueblo jurisdiction (and none that the bigfellas admit to).

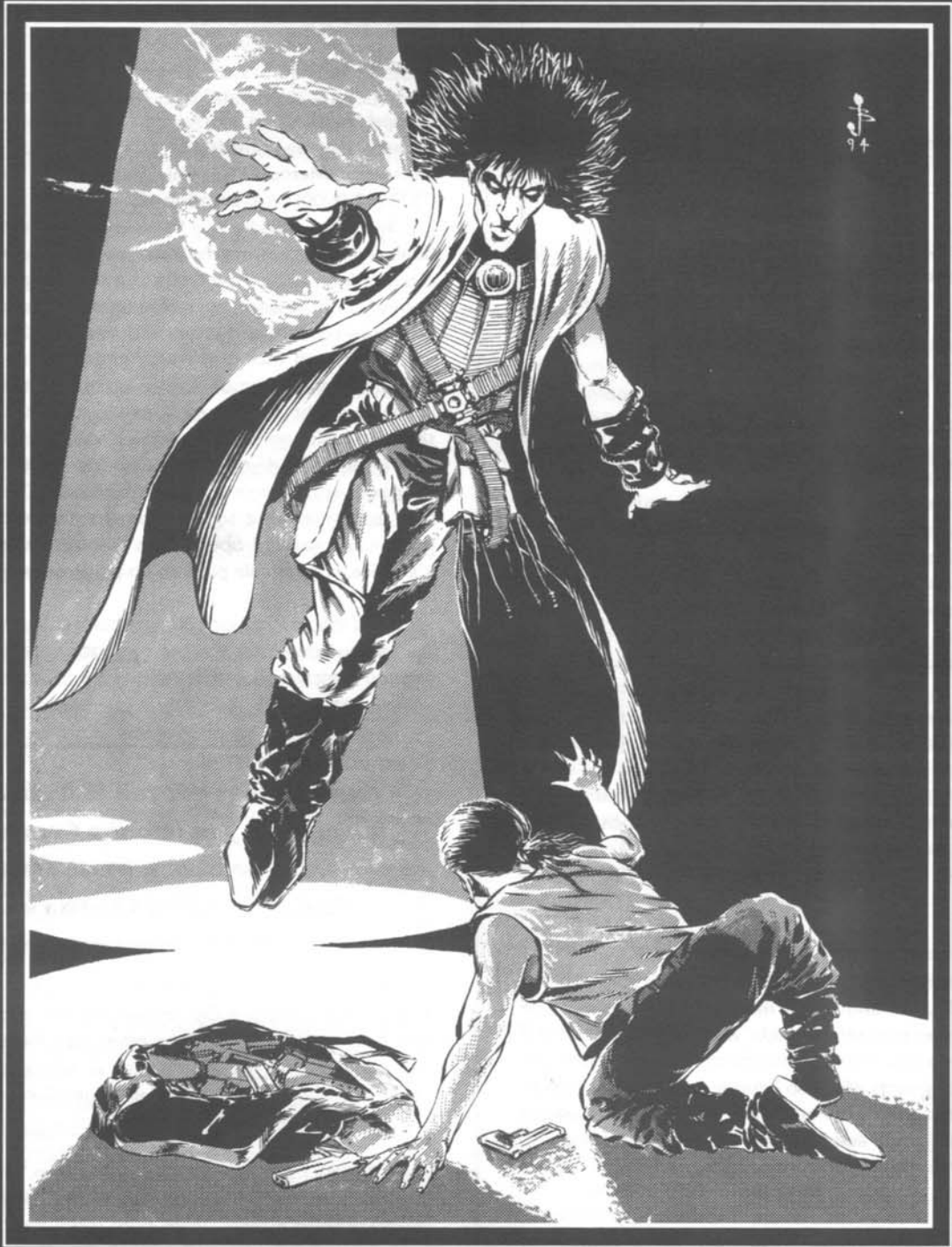
>>>>(These tribunal wizboys can just look into my memory to see if I'm guilty?)<<<<<<
 —Consuello (01:51:24/5-22-55)

>>>>(You got it in one.)<<<<<<
 —Lam (11:51:50/5-22-55)

The table below shows the latest fines and prison terms for all the usual offenses committed by all the usual suspects. UCAS folk, note that the Intent/Use distinction doesn't exist in PuebSec.

Cyberware

Before you set foot in PuebSec, the government goons want to know all about your Class A and B. (As with weapon licenses, cyberware licensing puts you through so much fragging hassle that most cyberware owners just



CRIMINAL OFFENSES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Type	Sentence
Arson	10,000¥/1 yr
Assault	2,000¥/1 yr
Battery	2,500¥/1 yr
Extortion	2-3 yrs
Forcible Confinement	2-5 yrs
Fraud	2-5 yrs
Illegal Entry	1-5 yrs
Kidnapping	12 yrs
Larceny (petty)	2-5 yrs
Larceny (grand)	2-10 yrs
Murder 1	30 yrs-life (no parole)
Murder 2	10 yrs-life
Murder 3	2-5 yrs
Negligence	1-5 yrs
Rape	5 yrs
Rape (statutory)	10 yrs
Reckless Endangerment	5,000¥/100 yrs
Solicitation	2,000¥
Trafficking	25,000¥/2-5 yrs
Treason	10 yrs-life
Vandalism	2,000¥
Accessory	20 percent normal
Conspiracy	50 percent normal

look for somewhere else to visit.) Class C cyberware, like cyberweapons and related skills, are illegal in the Pueblo Sector. If you have this kind of cyber, you ain't gettin' in. Period. If you (by some miracle) sleaze your way in and the sec-forces find you've got Class C mods, they'll slap you in the Big Bug House for at least 10 years (maybe more, if you also falsified your datawork when you entered the sector).

Cyberdecks

Plenty of deckers think of Pueblo as their own little glimpse of the Promised Land, and sector management knows it. The bigfellas make you register all decks and programs with the government when you enter the sector or when you purchase the gear. Security guards who also happen to be drek-hot deckers will scope out your gear and make sure it's not stealth-rigged. Stealth-rigging a licensed deck almost always nets you five solid in slam, with no parole.

Addictives

Penalties for controlled substances apply only to possession or dealing of BTL chips or worse (say, 2XS chips). Penalties for dealing vary depending on the number of chips, how nasty they are, and other circumstances. The average penalty is a 2,000-nuyen fine and 6 months in the slam.

ON THE TOWN

>>>>(The usual assortment of stuff, compiled by locals who know whereof they speak. We invite comments, as always.)<<<<<

—Captain Chaos (10:20:13/2-21-55)

PLACES TO STAY

Compri Hotel

Luxury Hotel Archetype (10 floors)/137 Union Blvd., Lakewood/Marco Eldsasami, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 9303 (69-9900)/Map Location 17

From the outside, this place looks like just another luxury hotel, and the guest rooms force you to agree with that assessment. What makes the Compri interesting is the so-called Compri Room, a large, open area on the main floor full of comfy furniture—couches and chairs with massage/heat systems, coffee tables, and that drek—arranged in groupings of various sizes. Indirect lighting of varying intensity puts some groupings in the spotlight and leaves others in romantic (or comforting) shadow. White-noise generators provide each conversation pit with a surprising degree of privacy, and most of the end tables offer built-in data connections or terminals. There's always coffee (*real* coffee, not soykaf) and tea on the brew, and your guest-room keycard operates an autobartender in one corner. It's a nice, comfortable place to do biz or to hang.

>>>>(As long as you look like you belong. If you look like I look, the sec-guards escort you out the back way without even letting you snatch a mug of coffee.)<<<<<

—Loom (21:14:31/6-2-55)

***Your visa may get you into Pueblo, but
it won't get you into the Compri Hotel.***

***—Tag line from advertisement for
Pueblo Certified Credsticks, Inc.***

>>>>(Sometimes the management divides the room into smaller areas with walls of CO₂ "smoke" constrained by laminar air-flow from ceiling to floor. They often light these "smoke walls" subtly from above, making them glow with a beautiful pearlescence. It's a neat concept, well executed.)<<<<<

—Skrip (00:41:28/6-3-55)

>>>>(There's more than CO₂ in that "smoke." It also contains a specially engineered strain of harmless bacteria, suspended in an aerosol of liquid nutrient. These bugs make the "smoke walls" as opaque to astral sight as to mundane vision. The really slick thing is that the management can raise and lower walls to change the layout of the entire area within seconds just by entering a couple of commands into the control processor.)<<<<<

—Viva (15:20:17/6-9-55)

Golden Days Inn

Average Hotel Archetype (8 floors)/11610 W. 6th Ave., Lakewood/Joseph Kraik, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 2303 (77-0200)/Map Location 18

This place belongs to the same organization that owns the Days Inn Capitol Hill in the Aztlan Sector, and thus is officially part of the same chain. A Santa Fe-based management company runs the Golden Days, however, and the difference shows. The Azzie Capitol Hill establishment is a good, solid, moderately priced hostelry; PuebSec's hotel offers services you'd normally expect from a five-star outfit, but at three-star prices.

>>>>(Computer security here is fragging intense. This is probably the only place in Denver where I'd even consider storing sensitive data in my room's "data vault" (actually a reserved block of memory on the hotel's main system).)<<<<<<
—FastJack (13:48:19/6-1-55)

>>>>(Entirely thanks to Joseph Kraik, the manager. He used to work with the Pueblo Corporate Council data-processing arm—a hell of a place to learn your licks—and took a lot of marketable skills with him when he went into the private sector. He's behind a quiet but effective marketing campaign that's pitching the Golden Days Inn as the place for deckers and other computer surfers to stay.)<<<<<<
—Rage (16:00:41/6-3-55)

The Raintree Inn

Average Hotel Archetype (4 floors)/3605 S. Wadworth Blvd., Lakewood/David Vass, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 9303 (89-6900)/Map Location 19

Lakewood locals claim this used to be a comfortable, safe hostelry where you could get a clean room for a reasonable price. At least the prices haven't changed.

The Raintree seems to have fallen on bad times over the past few years. Apparently, cleaning and maintenance have reached an all-time low on the owner/manager's priority list. Go-gangers hang out in the back parking lot and get their yuks from hassling guests, and people lose all kinds of drek from lightfingers helping themselves into their rooms.

>>>>(If you visit the Raintree, check out the scorched stretch of the back hallway. I hear a difference of opinion between two shamanic adepts led to one of them spontaneously combusting. Manager Vass still hasn't gotten around to replacing that bit of carpet, even though it happened a year ago.)<<<<<<
—Wanda (11:03:22/5-21-55)

>>>>(Vass has had other things on his mind recently. He ran the shadows under the handle Mustang until he got married and came into the light, eight or nine years ago. That's when he bought the Raintree. His wife bought it in late 2052, which coincides pretty close with when the Raintree started its slide. I guess Vass is too fragged up to keep on top of things.)<<<<<<
—BRC (04:47:45/5-23-55)

>>>>(Buldrek! I ran with Mustang. He doesn't get depressed, he gets even. He's been letting the hotel slide because he's easing his way back into the shadows, to get a line on the Ares network motherfraggers who splattered his wife.)<<<<<<
—Voyager (08:20:22/5-23-55)

>>>>(Why would Ares corp assassins grease a hotel manager's wife? Get straight.)<<<<<<
—Mungo Jerry (17:07:20/5-24-55)

>>>>(Just because Mustang let go of the shadows doesn't mean the shadows let go of Mustang.)<<<<<<
—Voyager (07:13:12/5-25-55)

PLACES TO HANG, PLACES TO EAT

Tablelands Restaurant

Mid-Size Restaurant Archetype/1100 Federal Boulevard N./Kathy Logan, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 6303 (24-6951)/Map Location 20

Tablelands is an upscale but casual restaurant with a Southwestern theme. It's not the kind of place you visit in suit and tie, but don't go there in leather and Doc Martens, either. No official dress code exists as such, but the staff will make it abundantly clear that you *don't quite fit* if you're not wearing a wardrobe that costs a couple of hundred nuyen. Once you overcome that obstacle, however, Tablelands is a wonderful place. The food is topnotch Southwestern cuisine, often with a twist, like rattlesnake in a light mango vinaigrette. A decent wine list and quiet music round out an atmosphere perfect for face-to-face discussions—either biz or romantic.

>>>>(Despite her name and half-Amerind/half-Anglo background, Kathy Logan is tied in tight with the Red Dragon Triad. The group funnels a fair whack of credit through Tablelands for laundering. If you're looking to meet up with Triad reps, don't come to Tablelands—they never hang there. Don't want to draw attention to their involvement.)<<<<<<
—Capricorn (00:21:08/5-21-55)

>>>>(One regular at the place is sector prez Juanita Iglala. Interesting that she always goes there alone—no date and, more importantly, no security. Anybody scan this? Sounds risky to me.)<<<<<<
—Pablo Fiasco (19:32:59/5-23-55)

>>>>(She's not alone, Pablo. She brings along a spirit, an anima she calls Díaz, who doesn't manifest physically so as not to alarm the other diners. Díaz is all the protection she needs. (For those who care, some people also link Juanita and Díaz romantically and intimately.)<<<<<<
—Allan (13:08:59/5-24-55)

The Rattlesnake Grill

Mid-Size Restaurant Archetype/2455 W. Dartmouth Ave., College View/George Mandel, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 6303 (42-4452)/Map Location 21

If you like no-frills Southwestern decor, friendly service, good food, and classic R&B, this is the place to hang. The tile floors and mock adobe walls make the place acoustically "live" and pretty fragging loud when the band's playing, but it's more popular as a place to eat, drink, and dance than talk. No dress code and everyone's welcome—corp suits, ganger-wannabes, middle-class wageslaves, everyone. The cuisine is Southwestern, and the centerpiece of the menu is (surprise!) rattlesnake.

>>>>(Live music plays Thursdays through Saturdays; the place is pretty quiet the rest of the week. Down time's when some of the local shadowrunners—the real gen, not wannabes—hang around the bar, trade war stories, and strut their stuff.)<<<<<<
—Hammer (16:07:01/5-25-55)

>>>>(George Mandel is a hot contact if you're looking for cyberdecks or icepick software. He's also got tight ties with some of the warez doodz (the intel brokers), so he can supply that, too.)<<<<<<
—Grunt (04:17:20/5-27-55)

>>>>(Don't leave George Mandel alone with your date. I've never seen anyone smoother with the ladies (or the men, for that matter...))<<<<<<
—Direx (18:20:18/5-31-55)

Hard Target

Bar Archetype/4200 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Lakewood/"Slash," Owner/Extreme Bias against Suits/No listed LTG#/Map Location 22

If you're looking for a seedy, no-nonsense watering hole, look no further than Hard Target in Lakewood. A stone's throw from the Lakewood Correctional Institution ("The Can") and not much further from the Fort Logan Medical Center ("The Asylum"), this dive attracts an eclectic mix of patrons. Nowhere else we know of can you find off-duty correctional officers drowning their sorrows sitting next to Fort Logan outpatients who look like they're one step ahead of a tight-fitting canvas coat with long arms and lots of buckles.

>>>>(You know how correctional officers tend to be either professionals or scumbags? Guess which ones hang at Hard Target.

Slash, named for the long, wide scar you can just see under his double chin, peddles BTLs and various choice mind-benders. He also dabbles in "Saturday night specials." If you want unlicensed weapons with more authority than a hold-out, however, you'd do better approaching the off-duty prison guards.)<<<<<<
—Wonk (18:44:59/6-3-55)

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Lakewood Correctional Institution (Map Location 23)

"The Can" lies just south of Route 285, not quite two clicks northwest of Marston Lake. Before the Treaty of Denver, it was the Federal Correctional Institution. As soon as Denver became a "free city," the U.S. decommissioned the place.

>>>>(By releasing most of its occupants on to the streets of Denver. Thanks, guys.)<<<<<<
—Lennox (11:31:16/5-30-55)

When Pueblo carved its slice out of divided Denver and took possession of the land incorporating the federal institution, it renovated the decaying structure and recommissioned it. Lakewood reopened for business in 2038. Its capacity is nowhere near that of the old institution, and occupancy barely reaches 50 percent of capacity. Despite the lack of crowding, it's still an unpleasant place to do hard time.

>>>>(I hear they're experimenting with something new in one wing of the Can—"simsense penology." Instead of locking someone in a cage for ten years, they hook him up to a simsense rig and make him think he's been locked in a cage (or worse) for ten years. If this catches on, you could sentence a slag to 200 years, if you felt like it, and let him out a week after he got put away.)<<<<<<
—Hawthorne (06:30:19/5-28-55)

>>>>(Drek. You can't do that with simsense. Bulldrek rumors.)<<<<<<
—Sylvie (21:36:18/5-31-55)

>>>>(Then what are they doing in Wing 5? Maybe this warrants some investigation.)<<<<<<
—Maus (02:04:58/6-1-55)

Fort Logan Medical Center (Map Location 24)

Once the Army post for the southwest of Denver, Fort Logan still grooms the large military cemetery planted there. Things change, of course. Denver expanded and surrounded the fort, and the Army moved on. Logan became a mental hospital in the 20th century and, despite its generic-sounding official name, still serves that function.

Known as "The Asylum" to locals, Fort Logan is a pleasant-looking place with attractive buildings and well-landscaped grounds. Security works as much to keep people out (and protect the contents of the large pharmacy) as to keep people in, but it's unobtrusive.

>>>>(In other words, largely electronic. No guards, no fences. Also no easy way in.)<<<<<<
—Featherstone (11:32:32/5-31-55)

>>>>(Or out. Regardless of their PR flacks' favorite lines of conscience-soothing drek, the people running the place seem real nervous about some of their "guests" leaving without permission.)<<<<<<
—Complex (20:38:09/5-31-55)

>>>>(Now, let's not bother trotting out any of those old rumors about mind-control experiments. We've heard them too many times, and the only people who believe them should be in Fort Logan themselves.)<<<<<<
—Gorgon (23:21:30/5-31-55)

>>>>(So forget those old rumors. But here's a new one. There's a large research lab in Fort Logan, working on using simsense for therapy so they can compress a 12-month course of treatment down to a few weeks. Now why would some of the researchers from this lab be making frequent visits to the Lakewood Correctional Institution? Hawthorne's post above has got me wondering ...)<<<<<

—Wryter (13:46:51/6-2-55)

Fort Carson

Fort Carson Military Reservation lies south of Colorado Springs—right on the city line, as a matter of fact, flanked by Route 115 and Intercity 25. Back in the days before the Treaty of Denver, Fort Carson housed the Fourth Mechanized Infantry Division and several smaller independent formations of the United States Army. Things have changed a tad since then.

At the beginning of the 21st century, Fort Carson served as an important staging area for the various Rapid Deployment Forces that the U.S. was rapidly deploying hither and yon around the world on a disturbingly regular basis. It became even more important as the "Indian Question" metastasized into a drawn-out guerrilla quagmire. In the early days of the Indian Wars, Carson provided logistics, supplies, and C-cubed-Eye (Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence). As it became more apparent that Denver was to be the main battleground, the U.S. packed more and more troops into Fort Carson and construction brigades started tearing down buildings to create a broad "security zone" around the base.

>>>>(Time out. Looking at Colorado Springs and Carson today, it's hard to understand the importance of that killing ground...excuse me, security zone. Back in the 20-teens, though, C-Springs was a major sprawl that surrounded most of Carson, with housing subdivisions crowding the fence lines. When the war brewed up, most of the families living in those subdivisions packed the dog and the 2.3 kids into the station wagon and left the white picket fences behind. Which was just as well; the Seabees were warming up their bulldozers, and the combat engineers were getting ready to lay mines in what used to be suburbia.)<<<<<

—Backlash (03:09:37/5-24-55)

All the build-up went for squat, of course. The troops in Fort Carson fought a few guerrilla-style engagements, mostly to defend their own base from solitary missile-shooters, and then got themselves all cranked up for the "Genocide Campaign." When the brass rescinded the orders for the campaign precisely two minutes after H-hour, the troops held their staging points for a few days while the fallout settled (so to speak), then turned around and marched back to Fort Carson.

Soon thereafter, the U.S. signed the Treaty of Denver, from which point on, of course, the U.S. could not legally station any military forces on Free Zone territory. Though the U.S. government easily finessed that little inconvenience by converting

masses of military units into "civilian security assets" to meet the Treaty's provisions (as did every other country), nobody could figure a graceful way of reclassifying the forces at Fort Carson. Within three months of the Treaty, the troops deserted Fort Carson.

>>>>(And a bunch of bombs coincidentally exploded on the site, like they did at the Air Force Academy. Nothing useful left at all.)<<<<<

—Moraya (20:16:09/6-3-55)

>>>>(With the same rumors as I noted for the Academy—supposedly, not everything got blown up.)<<<<<

—Huahine (17:01:52/6-7-55)

The land lay idle until 2035, when the "native sector" of the Free Zone fragmented and Pueblo took control of Fort Carson. They quickly got new construction under way, and within a year the Pueblo boys had re-created the bustling base and filled it with the civilian Pueblo Security Enterprises, Inc.

>>>>(Civilian, my lily-white hoop.)<<<<<

—Cyn (13:40:45/5-29-55)

For the people of Colorado Springs and Denver, little about Fort Carson has changed since 2018. Personnel who think and act like military still wander the streets on what must be referred to as liberty, and the rumble of heavy weapons still echoes from the various firing and test ranges.

>>>>(In other words, they're still doggies underneath the uniform.)<<<<<

—Trajan (09:53:53/6-1-55)

>>>>(Wait one. Fort Carson got violently decommissioned, right? So why did the Pueblo brass rename it Fort Carson? That name's gotta have bad mojo for them.)<<<<<

—Larkspur (05:22:58/6-4-55)

>>>>(Don't know for sure, Larkspur, but I'd guess they did it just to grind the UCAS. Kind of like saying, "Remember the Fort Carson your forebears occupied so proudly? Well, we own it now!" That kind of taunt wouldn't have anywhere near the same edge if they'd called it Fort Cibola or some such drek.)<<<<<

—Ripper (19:46:14/6-4-55)

>>>>(The real answer is both simpler and more complex. Names have power. Changing the name of a place can diminish that power.)<<<<<

—The Laughing Man (23:18:08/6-4-55)

>>>>(Oh drek, who invited him?)<<<<<

—Canticle (02:41:26/6-5-55)

>>>>(And why the frag would he care...?)<<<<<

—Dreamer (20:29:02/6-8-55)



SIOUX SECTOR

<<These on-line shadow-boards make it sound like everyone in the Sioux Nation is ex-Wildcat. I wish it were so—things would be so much more interesting.>>

—Arthur Windsign (IntraZone Online/REF# 029-a920)

The key stretches of the Sioux Sector's demarcator follow Intercity 25 south to the Highway 70 interchange, then east as far as Route 85, follow Route 85 north, then head northeast along Highway 76 and out of the Denver metropolitan area.

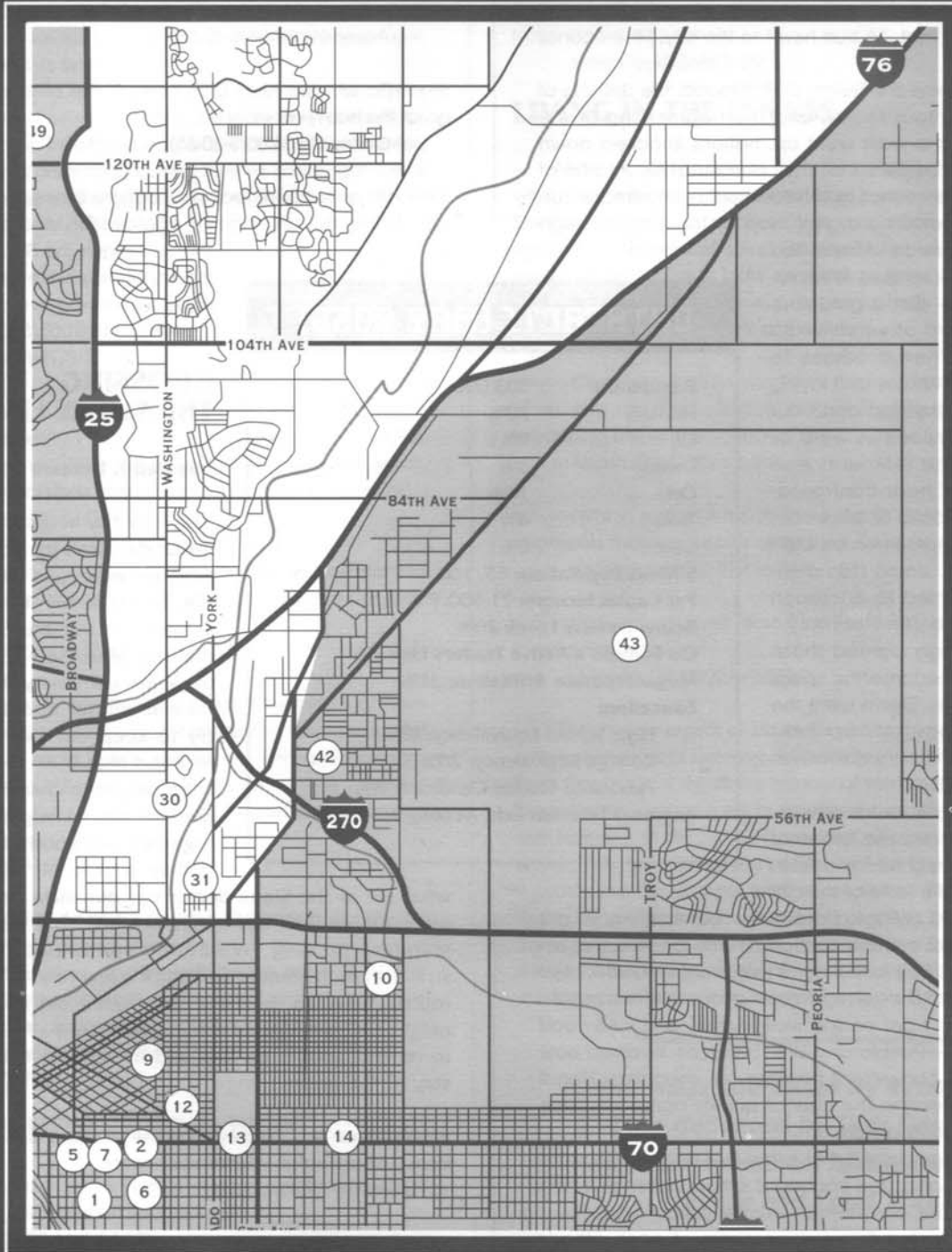
The Sioux non-contiguous sector (NCS)—one of two in the Free Zone—covers a small area carved out of the downtown core. Apparently drawn by people with maps in front of them, but with no knowledge about the actual geography of the area, the northern and eastern demarcators of the Sioux non-contiguous sector run due east-west and north-south, but the streets themselves align along north-east-southwest and northwest-southeast axes.

▼
▼
▼
>>>>(The non-contiguous sectors perfectly symbolize the way all of present-day Denver was laid out. Arbitrary decisions, made without reference to the real world.)<<<<<

—Bender (16:50:36/5-23-55)

The demarcator for the NCS follows 17th Street, Broadway, East 18th Avenue, and Pennsylvania Street, then drifts off into north-south orthogonal-land again, cutting across blocks and through buildings—or more precisely, through lots where buildings used to be—without much logic.

>>>>(No drek. But when you think about how the Sioux Nation and the UCAS took control of these fragging non-contiguous sectors in the first place, the erratic boundaries get a little easier to understand. Settle back and let me tell you the whole sordid story.



SIoux ▼ SECTOR

The council originally planned to make the whole downtown core into open territory—truly open territory, and even after the United States established its autonomous sector. Apparently, the council visualized a kind of bazaar, a place where anyone and everyone could come to enjoy diverse cultural drek, buy goods, and partake in other joyful warm-and-fuzzy drek like that. "A true heart to the city," the council trumpeted.

Then along came the Treaty of Richmond, the splitting of the UCAS autonomous sector, and the fragmenting of the native sector. As the walls went up, nations knocked down any buildings that bordered on their demarcators. As part of their discussion, the council had traced out approximate outlines for the bazaar on a digital map of the city, a rough square centered on downtown. This outline was never intended to represent real borders—just a guideline showing the extent of what would be the "Hub." When it comes to building walls and fences and laying land mines, guidelines just don't cut it, right? But the guidelines were all that existed at the moment. And after a couple of near-confrontations in which people of a certain nation (we won't name names, but I wish their serpents would stop molting on the floor) tried to encroach on the designated "free territory," everyone grudgingly agreed those guidelines would become the specs for the demarcators. Down went the rest of the buildings, and up went the walls, fences, and what-have-you around the Hub.

And every single sector government immediately realized just what an overwhelming nightmare a free-market sector in the middle of the city actually represented. Set up a bazaar, fine, but then you've got to let shoppers cross into the Hub and come back out again with their purchases. You're looking at major, largely unrestricted traffic into and out of a small region contiguous with two national sectors that don't get on too well—Aztlan and CAS—and close to two more—Pueblo and Ute. Everyone involved now saw the Hub as a convenient passage for smugglers, illegal immigrants, and terrorists. The council quickly agreed to tube the idea of a non-national Hub.

Next issue: a big square full of prime real estate, with some of the best restaurants and important office buildings in the whole fraged-up city, can't remain extraterritorial.

So two nations step forward, unaware of each other's intentions, and volunteer to "take the area off the hands of the council"—uncompensated, out of the goodness of their hearts, drekcetera. As the Sioux and UCAS spokespeople stand glaring at each other in consternation, the council must make a decision. It doesn't want the Hub, but it can't leave

the place to rot, either. So it awards roughly half of the area to each nation, charges their respective governments with figuring out the demarcator, and hastily washes its hands of the matter.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is how the non-contiguous sectors came to be.)<<<<<<

—Aesop (17:19:58/5-20-55)

>>>>>(So why just two? Didn't any of the other nations want a go at the Hub?)<<<<<<

—Carley (20:38:00/5-20-55)

>>>>>(As a matter of fact, no. I believe they suspected it would be nothing but an ongoing aggravation and kept their yaps shut. (I believe the Sioux Council and the UCAS now wish they'd done the same.)<<<<<<

—Aesop (18:01:57/5-21-55)

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Population:	503,000
Human:	70%
Elf:	9%
Dwarf:	3%
Ork:	14%
Troll:	4%
Other:	0%

SINless Population: 65, 160

Per Capita Income: 21,500 ¥

Below Poverty Level: 20%

On Fortune's Active Traders List: 1%

Megacorporate Affiliation: 31%

Education:

High School Equivalency: 55%

College Equivalency: 26%

Advanced Studies Certificate: 8%

Regional Telecom Grid Access: NA/SIO

CROSSING THE SIOUX LINE

by Ned F. Landers

Hideley-ho, neighbors. It's a beautiful day, isn't it? Now, I know it's hard for everyone to be like one, big, happy family all the time, and sometimes our baser natures get the best of us. So I hope you won't think me unfriendly if I give you a little reminder about the way we try to keep our side of the fence nice and neat.

The people in charge decided that the best way to help everyone work together like good citizens was to put up a little-ol' fence all along

what we in the Sioux Sector call our main demarcators. In more places than our neighbors, we built walls instead of standard fencing. We added some electricity to long stretches of the fences and stuck a few rows of monowire on top of the walls. In the area between our borders and our neighbors', we planted a few flowers and a lot of land mines to remind people on foot and in vehicles that they should stay on the paths.

>>>>>(I hear Sioux is buying some of those UAM missile mines from CAS, so watch your hoops.)<<<<<<

—Pal (07:59:43/6-1-55)

>>>>>(Heard the same thing, Pal, but I also heard deploying them's been a problem. Apparently, the Sioux techs found out that the IFF subsystem has a backdoor that lets CAS vehicles bypass them without risk. The slanging match between purchaser and supplier has taken on fragging epic proportions.)<<<<<<

—Doggie (05:34:55/6-3-55)

We also put some handy-dandy sensors on our fence lines, but our civilian security operatives feel that its a whole lot friendlier to show a hefty human presence along the borders. Our security assets patrol the demarcator on foot, in light scout vehicles (GMC-Beachcraft Patrollers and Sikorsky-Bell "Red Ranger" Scout ACVs are their favorites), or in light aircraft. And they respond to all alarms with an efficiency that many people sadly misunderstand as brutality.

>>>>(Those "civilian ops" are fragging Wildcats, chummers, Sioux Special Forces. Doesn't matter a frag who's paying their salaries, they're still shamanic commandos. And they've usually got a real nasty spirit or two tagging along for companionship.)<<<<<

—Converse (20:42:16/5-26-55)

>>>>(In answer, I merely refer you to the quote that opens this section and my previous comments on mages. 'Nuff said.)<<<<<

—Firelight (20:28:41/5-27-55)

>>>>(The Sioux border patrols don't "distrust" tech. They've got plenty of it, from thermal imaging systems and motion detectors to surveillance drones. They just supplement it with the meat, and Sioux border security is even tougher because of it.)<<<<<

—Hatchetman (05:52:04/5-29-55)

>>>>(For those who need to know, the drones du jour seem to be Sikorsky-Bell Microskimmers, those trash-can lids that can stay up fragging forever.)<<<<<

—Hamish (14:06:34/5-31-55)

>>>>(You know those "Red Ranger" scouts? The Wildcats modified them with Vigilant rotary autocannons in the turrets and two external missile racks, each geared out with one standard SAM. (Those racks put paid to an old chummer who believed the specs that said the scouts were only capable of engaging ground targets.)<<<<<

—Jingo (20:02:31/6-1-55)

>>>>(It's important to point out that the sector/national border is very porous. Entire sections of fence have no juice or other defenses most of the time, and the sec-guards swap out many of the sensors and weapon positions to use as spares in the more critical border areas. Seems that the most survivable way in is across that stretch of border.)<<<<<

—Firelight (20:18:14/6-3-55)

WHO LIVES HERE (AND WHY?)

>>>>(Four percent trolls—Isn't that a disproportionately high percentage? Any explanation for it?)<<<<<

—Hardesty (16:38:11/5-24-55)

>>>>(It's only marginally lower than the percentage in the Sioux Nation as a whole. According to Danchekker, the figure there is 5 percent. I guess proportionately fewer trolls decided to emigrate to the Sioux Sector than other metatypes.

If you're asking, "Why so many trolls in the Sioux Nation itself?", the only answer I can give you is "drek happens." In certain parts of the world, the Awakening caused a higher incidence of certain metatypes. In Tir Tairngire and Tir na nÓg, elves predominated. In the Kingdom of Hawai'i, orks and trolls predominated. Nobody understands why—or, if they do, they haven't told me.)<<<<<

—Holly (15:15:36/6-2-55)

LIVING IN THE ESS ESS

Many people profess to find themselves a mite confused by what they see as a deep dichotomy in our nation's economy. The Sioux Nation as a whole supports a fairly straightforward agrarian economy and a sophisticated information-based industry. Because it plainly lacks the land to grow crops, the Sioux Sector's economy relies almost exclusively on information-based industry and genetic engineering.

>>>>(The Sioux Nation has three major exports—wheat, software, and targeted subviral phages. The Sioux Sector just skips producing the wheat.)<<<<<

—Miliikin (00:21:30/6-1-55)

>>>>(Which makes it much more dependent on outside food shipments than any sector other than Aztlan.)<<<<<

—Monkeywrench (19:36:04/6-1-55)

>>>>(No sector is even close to self-sufficient, so it's not a significant point.)<<<<<

—Atlanta (14:12:22/6-2-55)

There's one aspect of life in the sector that certain misguided people accuse us of fostering deliberately to make visitors' lives difficult. The fact is, a significant number of permanent residents in the Sioux Sector communicate in an ultra-competitive, ritually aggressive behavior. In the Sioux Nation itself, this behavior seems to be favored mainly by the young people, so I guess it makes sense that a goodly number of them went to the sector. Though it may look like threat and counterthreat make up a major part of social communication between strangers, it's simply our little way of determining social order, just like the so-called threat-dominance-submission behavior shown in nature in some wolf packs.

Is this what you mean by overreacting?

*—Line delivered by Dirk Dangerous
after the infamous massacre scene
in the trid Total War*

>>>>(That's exactly what it is. It's a way of establishing a social "pecking order" (if one steps away from the wolf metaphor.)<<<<<

—Socio Pat (20:44:56/6-3-55)

SIoux SECTOR COST OF LIVING

ITEM	COST
	(% of Seattle prices)
Weapons and Armor	
Ammunition ¹	105
Armor ⁴	165
Explosives ²	120
Firearm Accessories ³	90
Firearms	110
Melee Weapons	105
Projectile Weapons	105
Throwing Weapons	100
Surveillance and Security	
Communications	100
Security Devices	100
Surveillance Countermeasures	100
Surveillance Measures	100
Survival Gear	200
Vision Enhancers	75
Lifestyle	
Lifestyle	135
Cybertech and Electronics	
Biotech	135
Bodyware	100
Cyberdecks	75
Electronic Equipment	100
Headware ⁵	100
Internals	100
Programs	100
Magical Equipment⁶	
Hermetic Library	225
Magical Supplies	200
Magical Weapons	350
Power Foci	165
Ritual Sorcery Materials	225
Spell Foci	165
Vehicles	
Aircraft	145
Boats	200
Ground Vehicles	160
Military Vehicles	200 ⁷

Now, we've applied a good deal of ritual to the set of rules that people must follow for this social order practice, and naturally, we all know the rules backward and forward. The whole point of the ritual is to avoid silly misunderstandings that might lead to serious physical conflict, though in rare instances it may come to lethal violence.

>>>>(Ah, rules. Well, people outside this little tribal club usually don't know those rules, and when some of these hyper-competitive Sioux types start baring their teeth, people not in the know tend to think they're about to get their throats ripped out. I

know, I've been on the receiving end of this drek. Depending on who the "outsider" is, she might try to bluff it out, turn and run, or respond with the hard option.)<<<<<<

—Major (02:48:56/6-2-55)

As long as visitors understand and try to remember that pride in personal and tribal honor form the basis of our entire Sioux culture, they will avoid intentionally or unintentionally insulting the honor, ancestry, or heritage of a Sioux citizen. And this, in turn, helps them stay out of trouble. All it takes is a certain amount of concentration and a willingness to learn while accepting life's little lessons, and most every neighbor or visitor will get along fine and avoid suffering any unfortunate incidents in our sector.

>>>>(Citizens of the Sioux Sector seem even quicker to anger than citizens of the Sioux Nation—probably because in the Free Zone they're rubbing shoulders with all kinds of people who don't share their world view. Lots of people get defensive and overreact in that situation.)<<<<<<

—Smedman (22:18:51/5-23-55)

One other question most people like to have answered is how prices generally compare with prices elsewhere in North America. Well, friends, I'm happy to be able to tell you that we're very competitive with Seattle's cost of living. For most items, it's not much of a shock purchasing them here as opposed to at home.

>>>>(And since Mr. Happy-Fragging-Apologist-for-a-Whole-Lotta-Bad-Attitudes obviously won't give you the bad word, I added a few reality checks just to keep us all on the same page.)<<<<<<

—Firelight (12:13:14/4-07-55)

Cost of Living Notes

¹Only corporate security forces (and their "legal designates," of course) can buy explosive rounds and the nastier forms of ordnance.

²Explosives are easier to obtain in the Sioux Sector than elsewhere. All you need is an easy-to-forge certificate of need and a smooth line of buildrek.

³Corp and sector security forces can use silencers without restriction. Civilians cannot possess them legally. People can install smartlinks at will, but the only legal model is a very poor excuse for cyberware from a company called Telspot.

⁴Civilians cannot legally possess any armor heavier than armored clothing.

⁵Only Sioux-manufactured headware may be legally installed in sector citizens. Unfortunately, headware is not an item the Sioux Nation seems to be able to manufacture well.

>>>>(Unless you're feeling particularly suicidal, do not install anything of Sioux manufacture in your head.)<<<<<<

—Hammer (23:03:38/6-2-55)

6The cost of any legally purchased magical item includes major premiums, because the only legitimate talismonger/distributor willing (allowed?) to deal with the Sioux Sector is based in Casper, Sioux Nation. As a result, you pay the nation's surtax on magical dreck (built into the cost, of course, to circumvent the "anti-gouging" provisions of the Treaty).

7The Sioux government places very few restrictions on what corporate security forces and their "legal designates" may possess in the way of security vehicles.

>>>>(Translation: get yourself named a legal designate by greasing the right palms with cred. Then legally buy yourself a t-bird LAV. Sure, you'll be paying twice what you'd pay in the shadows of Seattle, but when you legally own the fragging thing, nobody can take it away from you.)<<<<<

—Lamont (09:08:11/5-28-55)

>>>>(Not legally, at least.)<<<<<

—Blackbeard (11:47:19/5-29-55)

THOSE IN CHARGE

Our Sioux Sector is wisely governed by the Council of Chiefs, which includes a chief from each of the five biggest tribes in the Sioux Nation: Sioux, Crow, Navaho, Hidatsa, and Arapaho.

>>>>(The distinction made between major and minor tribes to determine who sits on the council is too fragging arbitrary. Two of the major tribes each comprise 10 percent of the population. The two "minor" tribes with the next largest populations are the Cree and the Plains Chippewa, each with about 8 percent. Considering that the entire population of the Sioux Nation was 31,995,000 souls at the last census, that means that the Cree and Plains Chippewa were denied any representation on the Sioux Sector Council simply because they missed an arbitrary number by less than a third of a million people. The criteria for representation on the council must be changed. Now.)<<<<<

—Cree Warrior (09:26:16/5-26-55)

>>>>(What do you propose to do? Expand the council to twenty tribal reps, or however many the frag it is in the Sioux Nation? That means you're going to have the same fragging governmental gridlock in the sector as you've got in the Sioux Nation. Too many people flogging-too many divergent special interests. Frag, the only reason the Sioux Nation government gets anything done at all is because it's so damn corrupt.)<<<<<

—E Pluribus (16:04:20/5-26-55)

>>>>(Lies!)<<<<<

—Cree Warrior (10:03:53/5-28-55)

>>>>(Right. The sector council and the bureaucracy it heads is even more fragging corrupt than its counterpart in the nation. And that's fragging saying something.)<<<<<

—Gardner (15:26:07/5-30-55)

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700 17TH ST.
AMERINDIAN CUISINE
MADE WITH ONLY NATURAL
INGREDIENTS

>>>>(If you had any honor, you'd repeat your shameful lies to my face, rather than hiding behind the anonymity of a data-jack.)<<<<<

—Cree Warrior (22:59:24/5-30-55)

>>>>(Hey—that kinda sounds like the hyper-macho bulldrek behavior, neh?)<<<<<

—Nobrusco (01:06:23/6-1-55)

The members of the sector Council of Chiefs are named by the same Council of Elders (mostly shamans) who appoint the

chiefs ruling the Sioux Nation itself. Chiefs may only serve one five-year term.

>>>>(They can serve once on each council. It's possible for a sector chief who's distinguished himself to be appointed to the nation council.)<<<<<

—Holly (14:47:22/6-10-55)

WHAT TO DO (AND NOT DO)

by an agent of T.R.A.V.E.L.

It's not hard to get where you need to be and avoid trouble at the same time, but you need to know a few things before you go. An experienced T.R.A.V.E.L.er uses the motto: Be prepared.

GETTING TO LIVE THERE

It's relatively easy to arrange immigration into the Sioux Nation, and only slightly more difficult to get into the sector. If you can prove descent from one of the major tribes that make up the Sioux Nation's population, more or less all you have to do is apply. The government will grant you citizenship and the right to live and work in the sector. In this definition, "major tribes" extends to include nearly a dozen, rather than just the five represented on the Council.

>>>>(That bit of info doesn't really help most runners. Not because we can't prove we've got tribal blood—many of us do. But because the application requires us to have a SIN and prove that we've never been convicted of a major felony.)<<<<<

—Logos (02:04:36/5-27-55)

If you don't have the appropriate heritage, you can apply for Official Resident status, which allows you to live and work in the nation and the sector, and then apply for citizenship after three consecutive years of residence.

Work visas are available and required for anyone who wants to work in the high-technology industry. No work visa is necessary for employment in other economic segments, particularly those dependent on manual labor. All that's necessary is a visitor's visa, which can be had more or less for the asking.

>>>>(I don't scan this. I thought the Sioux Sector was really militant about defending its borders. Now you're saying all you have to do is say "please" and down go the barriers?)<<<<<

—Artisan (13:04:58/5-26-55)

>>>>(In a word, yes. But you have to accompany your "please" with a credstick containing your SIN, current citizenship information, medical and criminal records, drekcetera. The Sioux computer system isn't as efficient as the Pueblo system when it comes to cross-checking records, but it will spot-check to confirm the data on your credstick. In other words, when you go to the border and say "pretty please let me in," you've also got to

provide a whole drekload of information that your average shadowrunner would rather not reveal.)<<<<<

—USR (00:29:18/5-27-55)

>>>>(Obviously, when the Sioux government puts a procedure in place, by spirits, they want everybody to follow that procedure and not just slip the line.)<<<<<

—Gaard (03:48:38/5-29-55)

>>>>(Remember that Official Resident status doesn't exempt you from a shakedown at the border anytime you're returning to Sioux territory from somewhere else.)<<<<<

—Tully (11:28:48/5-29-55)

Travel Passes

Travel passes to the Sioux Sector are virtually the same thing as time-limited visitors' visas. The application process is exactly the same, and, after the initial approval, the time limit can be extended on request at the border-crossing point where the visitor entered the sector.

>>>>("On request"—with another slot of your credstick and cross-check of your credentials, and with the presentation of a fragging good excuse for staying in the sector longer than you'd anticipated.)<<<<<

—Blue Doctor (10:31:11/5-31-55)

>>>>(Chill, chummer. The customs/immigration service is so fragging corrupt, you just slip the border goon some hard currency and you skate.)<<<<<

—Harlan (00:26:06/6-1-55)

>>>>(Sometimes.)<<<<<

—Morlock (14:28:04/6-1-55)

WEAPONS

All firearms heavier than light pistols must be licensed. Anyone applying for such a license must provide a SIN and other personal information. Once an application is approved, the individual may purchase the desired weapon following a 48-hour waiting period. Individuals may carry light pistols in public, but may not carry heavier weapons.

>>>>(It's not legal to carry hold-outs, either. The official rationale is that large numbers of citizens carrying such concealable weapons would be "destabilizing.")<<<<<

—Hatchetman (05:16:08/5-22-55)

"Hunting weapons" such as single-shot, semi-auto, and burst-fire long arms are legal. However, such weapons must be licensed and can only be transported between your home and a recognized hunting area. Cruising the sector with your handy-dandy hunting rifle is an invitation to trouble. Bow hunters should be aware that any bow with a draw-weight of 13 kilograms or more falls under the same restrictions as firearms. Only security forces and their legal designates may carry weapons capable of full autofire.

>>>>("Legal designates" again. There's the loophole in all this drek.)<<<<<

—Chuckie (18:49:51/5-30-55)

CHIPS, DRUGS, AND ALCOHOL

The Sioux Nation keeps a tight rein on all kinds of mind-benders, whether electronic, narcotic, or alcoholic, and the Sioux Sector only allows a little slack. Only government-licensed purveyors can sell simsense chips legally, and the restrictions on modulation amplitude are stricter than in UCAS. (Chips far less "edgy" than California hots are illegal in the Sioux Sector.) Recreational drugs fall into the category of big illegal, and penalties for possession and private use rival those for out-and-out dealing. Grocery stores sell wine and beer, but both have government-mandated limits on alcohol content: 12 percent for wine, 4.5 percent for beer. Hard liquor may only be bought from government "Liquor Distribution Branch" outlets.

>>>>(Weedheads should take note that tobacco is considered a controlled substance in the sector. You can buy butts only at outlets licensed by the government.)<<<<<

—Puffing Billy (18:58:27/5-24-55)

>>>>(Unless you're a shaman and can prove you need it for your rituals. Then you can get a special license that allows you to place bulk orders by phone.

Habitual smokers should also be aware that indulging in tobacco in public is socially unacceptable, and citizens of all sizes and stripes gladly demand that you butt out now if you try it. And don't bother refusing. The next person you talk to will be a large, militant Sioux warrior.)<<<<<

—Tintin (09:47:33/5-26-55)

>>>>(Great. The whole fragging sector's a non-smoking section.)<<<<<

—Gravis (16:01:04/5-26-55)

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Bureau of Civil Enforcement, a branch of the bureaucracy under the control of the Council of Chiefs, contracted out its law enforcement responsibilities to a Cheyenne-based private security outfit known as Eagle Security Services Inc. (ESSI). Founded within weeks of the signing of the Treaty of Denver, ESSI quickly assembled its staff by hiring retired members of the Sioux Nation's civil police force and the national armed forces.

>>>>(Those were the good old days, chummers. Policing was done by overweight, burned-out ex-cops who needed informants to tell them the way to the nearest doughnut shop.)<<<<<

—Rocker (01:20:13/6-1-55)

Within a year, ESSI was working hand-in-gauntlet with the national police force and the army. Certain assets from both national organizations were laid off or decommissioned and immediately hired by ESSI.

>>>>(Need it be said? A significant percentage of ESSI personnel come from the Sioux Special Forces Wildcats, chummers. Just remember that the street monster who flags you down for speeding on Highway 85 might be a shamanic commando with a Wildcats tattoo on her bulging biceps.)<<<<<

—Keith (18:00:42/6-1-55)

>>>>(Typical gear for an ESSI operative is light armor and SMGs, unless he expects trouble. Then it's heavy armor with all the bells and whistles, medium MGs, and an assault cannon just for good measure. ESSI likes "combined arms" ops, so a sweep on a smuggler's den might include some ground-pounders, a couple of Citymasters, Yellowjackets for air cover, and a couple of summoned and bound spirits going in astrally. (And these guys try to pretend they're not military.)<<<<<

—Masura (18:37:13/6-5-55)

The Bureau of Justice (BJ) dispenses justice in the Sioux Sector. The BJ is much less efficient than ESSI. Suspects scooped up and dropped into the holding pens might stay there for months before a judiciary council hears their cases. A single judge, usually a shaman, presides over the judiciary council. The BJ appoints judges for life unless it finds reason to remove them. Prosecutors, defense counsels, and all lawyers must be licensed by the BJ in Cheyenne. Though the adversarial trial process resembles what you'd see in the UCAS, Sioux judges enjoy much more freedom to either admit or reject evidence, and infinitely more leeway in following or ignoring precedents.

>>>>(That means that a bribed judge can do you much more good than in the good old UCAS. Unfortunately, judges are expensive in the Sioux Sector. (Hey, why doesn't anybody list this kind of price differential under cost of living? Much more useful for slags like me than the cost of fragging trideo sets.)<<<<<

—Krait (12:18:47/5-27-55)

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Because of the freedom Sioux Sector judges take in following or ignoring precedents, the following table provides even fewer hard-and-fast rulings than this same information for other sectors.

>>>>(Just say it: "wild-assed guesses." There, that wasn't so hard, was it?)<<<<<

—Mungo Jerry (01:24:06/5-24-55)

Cyberware

The Sioux Sector has no licensing requirements for Class A cyberware. In effect, ESSI couldn't give a frag. Class B and Class C must be licensed, however. The licensing process involves a background check.

>>>>(That's a little misleading. If you've got Class B or C chrome and you apply for a license, you won't be turned down. But you'll have to bare your soul and background to ESSI, the Bureau of Civil Enforcement, and everyone else with access to the licensing datastores. That's why most runners,

WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Weapon Type	Offense and Fine/Imprisonment			
	Possession (1)	Transport (2)	Threat (3)	Use (4)
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	—	—	500¥	2,000¥/3 mo
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	—	200¥	1,000¥	5,000¥/6 mo
(C) Blunt Weapon	—	—	500¥	2,000¥/3 mo
(D) Projectile Weapon	1,000¥	3,000¥	8,000¥/3 mo	2 yrs
(E) Pistol	750¥	2,250¥	10,000¥/1 yr	2 yrs
(F) Rifle	1,000¥	3,000¥	8,000¥/3 mo	2 yrs
(G) Automatic Weapons	10,000¥	15,000¥	1 yr	5 yrs
(H) Heavy Weapon	20,000¥/1 yr	30,000¥/2 yrs	5 yrs	10 yrs*
(I) Explosives	20,000¥/1 yr	30,000¥/2 yrs	5 yrs	10 yrs*
(J) Military Weapons	1 yr	2 yrs	8 yrs	20 yrs*
(K) Military Armor	2,000¥	—	—	—
(L) Ammunition	2,000¥	—	—	—
(BA) Class A Bioware	—	—	—	—
(BB) Class B Bioware	6,000¥	—	—	—
(BC) Class C Bioware	1 yr	—	—	—
(CA) Class A Cyberware	—	—	—	—
(CB) Class B Cyberware	5,000¥	—	—	—
(CC) Class C Cyberware	1 yr	—	—	Death penalty
(CD) Matrix Tech	25,000¥/1 yr	—	—	—
(EA) Class A Equipment	—	—	—	—
(EB) Class B Equipment	20,000¥	—	—	—
(EC) Class C Equipment	50,000¥/6 mo	—	—	—
(MA) Class A Controlled	**	—	—	—
(MB) Class B Controlled	15,000¥/1 yr	—	—	—
(MC) Class C Controlled	25 yrs	—	—	Death penalty

Notes

- *Death penalty applied in some cases.
- **Variable (see Controlled Substances).

smugglers, and jammers will avoid going this route if they can.)<<<<<

—Hatchetman (18:04:29/5-28-55)

>>>>>(Check out the penalties for Class C cyberware—which is cyberweapons. Unlicensed possession isn't too bad, just one year in the can. (It's ten years in the UCAS Sector.) But if you use the gear you're going on the Big Trip. Very pragmatic, and very Sioux.)<<<<<

—Carson (14:34:00/6-2-55)

Cyberdecks

Cyberdecks must be licensed by the appropriate department of the Bureau of Civil Enforcement. License applicants must provide the inspectors with all the personal background data we've bagged on about above and allow them to inspect the chipset to ensure the deck writes the appropriate signature to the Matrix audit trail. Applicants must also license utility software. All attack and masking utilities are strictly illegal. All other

utilities may not exceed Rating 4. The penalty for possessing or using illegal software is the same as for using an unlicensed deck—25,000 nuyen and one year in jail. And that penalty applies for *each piece of illegal software in your possession* (including backup copies).

>>>>>(Let's see now, if I include my unlicensed deck and all my wizzer utilities, I'd be up for 750,000 nuyen and 30 years in the slammer.)<<<<<

—Slicer (10:20:39/5-26-55)

>>>>>(Do you find that funny? I consider it a reminder of the potential consequences of being sloppy and overconfident.)<<<<<

—Rage (03:05:18/5-27-55)

Controlled Substances

The penalties for possession, use of, or trafficking in controlled substances cover a huge range, and they don't seem to

depend in any predictable way on circumstances and quantities involved. For example, a local BTL dealer was fined 20,000 nuyen and thrown in jail for a year in 2053. Early this year, a user—not a dealer—was sentenced to four years in jail for possessing a single 2XS chip.

>>>>>(Dealers are occasionally executed.)<<<<<<
—Nova (09:46:41/5-23-55)

PLACES TO SEE AND BE

This list includes good places for biz and just good places. Don't spend all your nuyen in one place.

HOTELS

Overmon-Aberny

Luxury Hotel Archetype (5 floors)/1601 17th St./Jeffrey Eagle, Manager/Slight Bias against Non-Amerindians/LTG# 6303 (28-5500)/Map Location 25

Originally built in the late 1990's, the Overmon-Aberny oozes frontier kitsch. Despite its fake rustic look, the hotel offers all the latest technological accessories and other modern conveniences.

>>>>>(I'd rate the OA as having the best security—physical, magical, and Matrix—of any doss in the Free Zone.)<<<<<<
—Tarquin (05:07:09/5-28-55)

>>>>>(Echo that. The scrutiny you undergo just to book a room makes some border crossings look easy.)<<<<<<
—Cruiser (12:52:18/5-31-55)

>>>>>(A quick note on this "frontier charm" drek: don't expect cowboy and Old West memorabilia. This is a tribal nation, scan? They got very different ways of looking at the frontier days.)<<<<<<
—Donjon (09:10:42/6-2-55)

>>>>>(That's worth emphasizing. There's a sense of historical authenticity to many of these places, but it's somewhat revisionist. If you take the cultural subtext as gospel, you'll be convinced that the Native American societies in the mid-1800s were one or two steps more sophisticated than ancient Greece.)<<<<<<
—Holly (17:59:15/6-3-55)

Hyatt-Star Regency

Luxury Hotel Archetype (21 floors)/1750 Welton St./Slight Bias against Non-Amerindians/Martha Wicapi, Manager/LTG# 2303 (95-1200)/Map Location 26

Despite the name, the Hyatt Regency International chain does not run this establishment. Through various kinds of arm-twisting, a Sioux outfit called Star Management arranged to license the name for local use. Apparently, this arrangement included a provision that gave Hyatt the right to pull out or force Star Management to change the name if service quality

CRIMINAL OFFENSES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

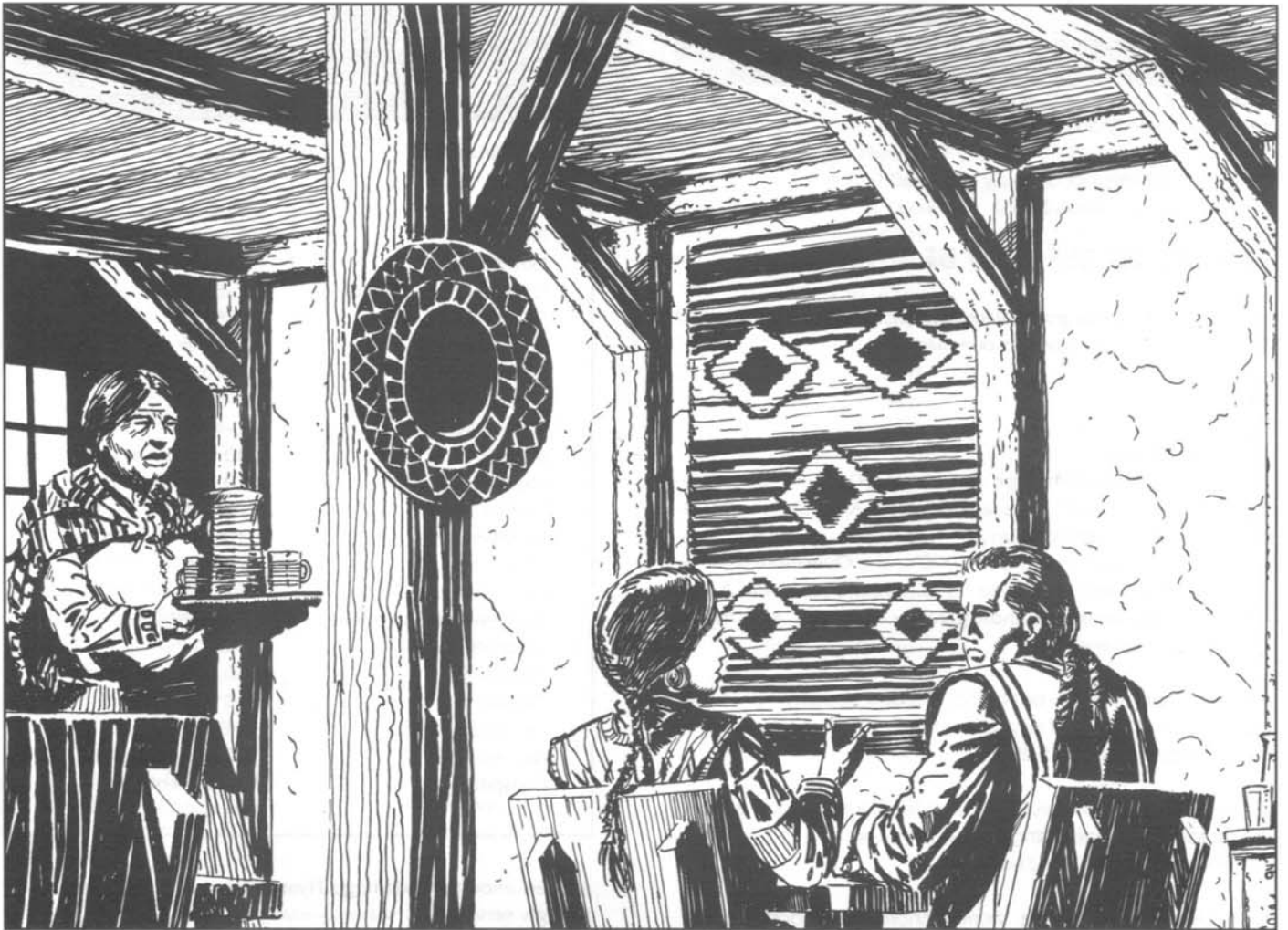
Type	Sentence
Arson	10,000¥/2 yrs
Assault	5,000¥/1 yr
Battery	5,500¥/1 yr
Extortion	2-3 yrs
Forcible Confinement	2-5 yrs
Fraud	2-5 yrs
Illegal Entry	1-5 yrs
Kidnapping	5-10 yrs
Larceny (petty)	2-5 yrs
Larceny (grand)	2-10 yrs
Murder 1	30 yrs-life or death
Murder 2	10 yrs-life
Murder 3	2-5 yrs
Negligence	1-5 yrs
Rape	2-5 yrs
Rape (statutory)	5-15 yrs
Reckless Endangerment	15,000¥/2 yrs
Solicitation	1,000¥
Trafficking	50,000¥/2-5 yrs
Treason	10 yrs-life
Vandalism	2,000¥
Accessory	20 percent normal
Conspiracy	50 percent normal

slipped enough to damage Hyatt's reputation worldwide, and though service *has* slipped—*badly*—it's still using the Hyatt Regency name.

>>>>>(The place still looks good. It literally oozes luxury, at least as far as the physical facilities go. What blows the picture is the service. Everyone from the concierges to the cleaning staff seem terminally sullen and more inclined to cack you where you stand than help you in any way. If you're missing something and can do without it, keep it that way: asking for service just gets you branded as a troublemaker.)<<<<<<
—Sally Anne (21:42:57/6-1-55)

>>>>>(A labor-management dispute has been dragging on at the Regency for fragging near a year now. No employee's seen a raise since 2051, while the salary and bonuses paid to senior management go through a higher roof every year. Suffice it to say that morale isn't the best.)<<<<<<
—Doric (11:52:32/6-2-55)

>>>>>(And that tells me that the hotel staff is probably ripe for "co-option." Slip 'em some cred and they'll be in your pocket, with no loyalty to their employers to hold them back.)<<<<<<
—Jackrabbit (20:32:28/6-2-55)



>>>>>(In case you haven't heard, Martha Wicapi is a major shareholder in Star Management, the outfit that owns and runs the Hyatt.)<<<<<

—Timeon (01:51:27/6-3-55)

Comfort Inn

Average Hotel Archetype (6 floors)/401 17th St./Louie Burlo, Manager/Slight Bias against Non-Amerindians/LTG# 2303 (96-0400)/Map Location 27

The Comfort Inn sits way down the luxury scale from the Hyatt, but it's run by the same outfit—Star Management. The inn provides basic accommodations.

>>>>>(The buzz I hear says Louie Burlo operates a "shadow" bulletin board system using the Comfort Inn's central computer system. It's not part of the Shadowland system, though.)<<<<<

—Wolverine (00:05:01/6-2-55)

>>>>>(Burlo's board is heavily used by t-bird jammers, local operators, and related fixers.)<<<<<

—Zak (11:10:59/6-2-55)

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

The Front Range

Mid-Sized Restaurant Archetype/700 17th St./Jane Moyle, Owner/Strong Bias against Non-Amerindians/LTG# 8303 (31-8900)/Map Location 28

Simply prepared traditional Amerindian dishes, made with entirely natural ingredients, draw customers to the Range. The simple decor is limited to a pair of native carvings on each wall. The only accommodation this restaurant makes to Anglo tastes is a wine list.

>>>>>(If you like a quiet place to eat, this is the spot. Nobody talks, they all just sit around looking stoic. It'd be oppressive if it weren't so fragging funny.)<<<<<

—Ralphine (01:04:35/6-1-55)

>>>>>(The Front Range is a favorite among half-bloods and pinkskins—basically, people who want to be more Amerindian than real Amerindians. Take me, for example: I'm Lakota, and I

find the place uncomfortable. Give me a cozy Italian place with cheap Chianti.)<<<<<<

—Moraya (20:37:33/6-3-55)

>>>>>(Buzz in some quarters claims that the Range’s manager, Jane Moyle, has connections with the Mediwiwin Society back in Sioux (you know, that group that’s been trying to stop the BTL trade by blowing drek up real good). Anybody check me on that?)<<<<<<

—Conti (13:58:25/6-4-55)

>>>>>(No, huh?)<<<<<<

—Conti (12:59:41/6-12-55)

Eyrie

Large Restaurant Archetype/1801 Broadway/John Crane, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 2303 (93-2288)/Map Location 29

The Eyrie tries *really* hard to be a high-tone restaurant—and just misses. Instead of looking sophisticated, the decor seems pretentious. Instead of aloof, the maître d’ comes across as confused. And rather than eclectic, the menu seems totally scattered. Still, the Eyrie does manage to pull in a good businessman’s-lunch trade, and after work the bar area hops.

>>>>>(Mainly because it’s one of the few places to go without crossing a demarcator.)<<<<<<

—Ernest (09:53:10/6-2-55)

>>>>>(I was surprised at the number of shadowrunners in the Eyrie after the suit trade tailed off. I could almost feel the buzz of biz in the air.)<<<<<<

—Wode (13:04:05/6-3-55)

>>>>>(That was the buzz of desperation you felt, Wode. It’s wannabes only at the Eyrie. Who else but a wannabe would hang in a place so closely watched by the Wildcats?)<<<<<<

—Monitor (21:45:06/6-3-55)

Hardpan

Bar Archetype/600 E. 54th Ave./Raquel Sands, Owner/Strong Bias against Non-Amerinds/LTG# 6303 (23-7299)/Map Location 30

Located between the algae tanks, the sewage treatment plant, and Riverside Cemetery, the watering hole named the Hardpan isn’t in one of the better neighborhoods of Denver. It does a solid, regular trade, though, and the owner—Raquel Sands, “Sandy” to her friends and colleagues—is doing well for herself. The Hardpan is the preferred meeting place for many of the Sioux Sector’s runners—the Amerindian ones, at least—and serves as something of a hiring hall.

>>>>>(Remember the comments earlier about hyper-competitive behavior and ritualized aggression? This is where it lives, chummers.)<<<<<<

—Hurting (03:16:57/5-26-55)

>>>>>(Sandy used to run the shadows before she lost her eyes in 2048. (Her replacement optics are better than her meat orbs ever were, but the experience scared her into the light.) She still fixes from time to time, and she’s a great resource if you want to learn just whose palms to grease to get around a particular government edict.)<<<<<<

—Raoul (23:53:06/5-29-55)

>>>>>(The way I hear it, Sandy still goes out on the occasional run. She’s just much more selective about the job, the Johnson, and her teammates.)<<<<<<

—Nik (16:27:42/5-31-55)

>>>>>(Don’t start trouble at the Hardpan. There are quicker ways to commit suicide, but not many.)<<<<<<

—Hammer (15:09:48/6-2-55)

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Denver Foodstuffs Inc. (Map Location 31)

Denver Foodstuffs Inc. is a corporate enclave located in the southern portion of the Sioux Sector. Decades ago, the area was the Denver Union Stockyards, but economic changes drove the yards out of business. Denver Foodstuffs Inc. (DFI) bought the land in 2013 and turned it into one of the Southwest’s largest sources of dietary algae.

We are what you eat.
—From an ad campaign
rejected by Denver Foodstuffs

>>>>>(That’s right, boys and girls. That big sprawling hellhole that looks like a petrochem refinery, complete with plumes of burning gas—that’s the source of something like 30 percent of your dietary protein. DFI grows different kinds of gengineered algae in huge fragging vats and then processes, colors, flavors, presses, and packages them for sale as meat substitutes, dairy substitutes, vegetable substitutes, and various construction and packaging materials as well. Yes, that’s right: your EatBurger® and the little package it’s served in come from the same fragging vat! Isn’t technology wonderful?)<<<<<<

—Jurgen (22:19:45/6-2-55)

>>>>>(You don’t want to know about the strange, complex, and marginally carcinogenic chemicals shipped to the DFI plant for use in the food-making process. You also don’t want to hear the story about the plant worker who fell into one of the algae vats.)<<<<<<

—Gogo (09:23:04/6-3-55)

>>>>>(I heard about that one. The plant supervisors didn’t even notice anything was wrong until the guy’s artificial heart jammed one of the processing pumps.)<<<<<<

—Tardis (15:42:22/6-3-55)

UCAS SECTOR

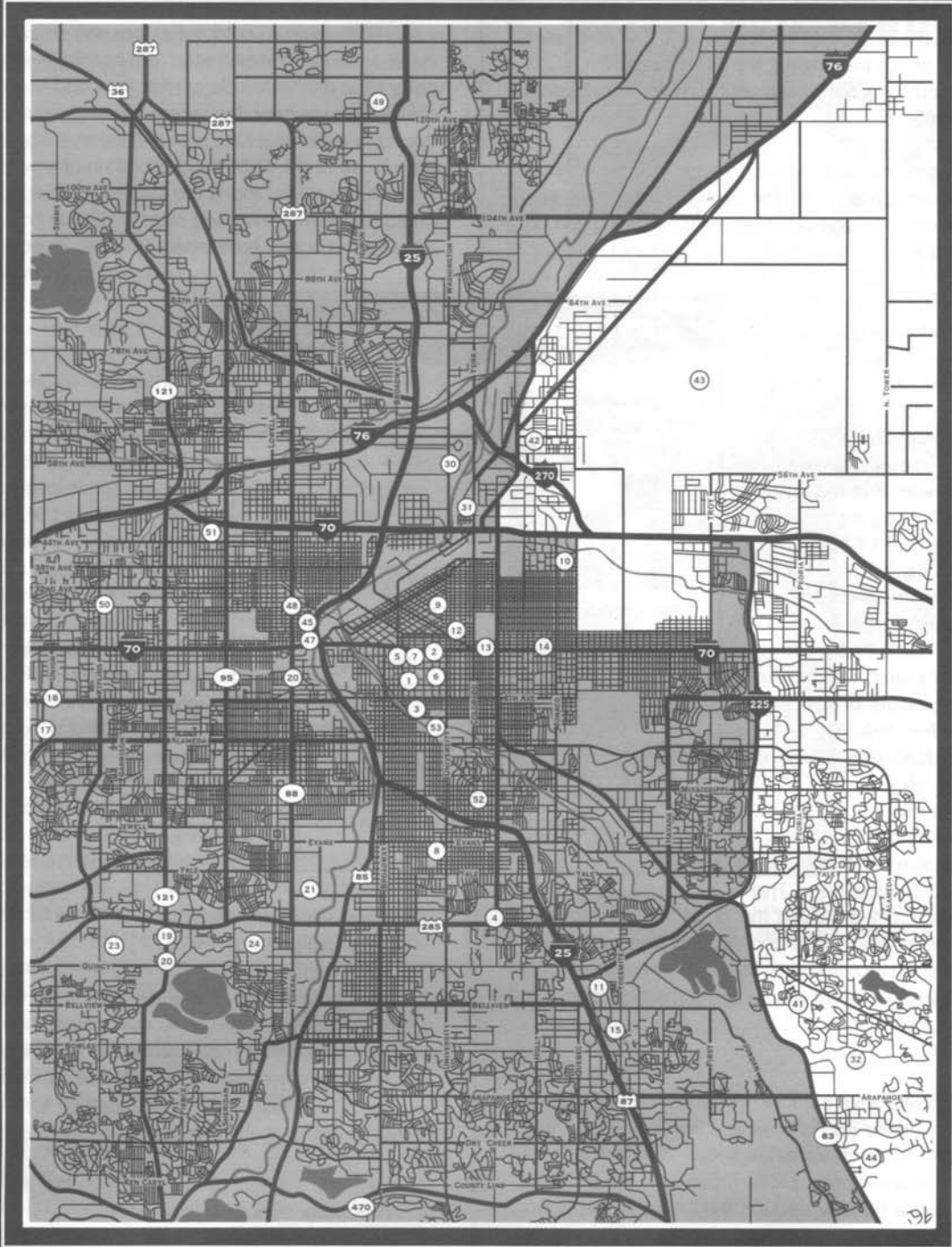
**<<I hate it here, but somebody has to take a stand. If we back down, if we show any kind of passivity, NAN will just crank up their fraggin' Dance again and start chipping away at what little land we have left. Bastards. Somebody has to do something ... >>
—EyeBall, local citizen (IntraZone Online/REF# 7629-b182)**



Within the Denver metro area, the UCAS Sector border follows Highway 76 from the northeast, angles over southwest toward the city center, and then follows Route 6 as far as Highway 70. At that point, the line heads eastward again, then cuts nearly due south along Highway 225 and Route 83. As a result of some bureaucrat's drek-brainer, the UCAS Sector includes a non-contiguous area in Denver's downtown core, bounded in part by East Colfax Avenue, Pennsylvania Street, East 18th Avenue, and 17th Street.

>>>>(Check out the comments under the Sioux Sector for various rants about the illogic of non-contiguous sectors. Fragging committees ...)<<<<<
—Bender (17:18:28/5-23-55)

Down south in Colorado Springs, the boundary follows Route 2A to Intercity 25, and then heads east along the old city border.



UCAS ▼ SECTOR

INJUNS, KEEP OUT—BORDER SECURITY

The UCAS (the U.S. at that point) was the first of the Treaty of Denver signatories to establish an autonomous sector and hide behind walls. Literally: a wall more than 75 klicks long marked the original border of the U.S. Sector. Several "adjustments" occurred between 2018 and 2055, and so the current borders no longer match the original line of the wall. The UCAS has managed to put to good use many lessons it learned in those bygone days.

>>>>(It's kind of spooky wandering through the UCAS slice of the city, particularly the north part of Aurora. You can see the broken foundations of the original wall, now bordered on both sides by cleared, free-fire zones.)<<<<<

—Kris (23:20:41/5-26-55)

The UCAS Sector still protects its border with more klicks of wall than any other sector, including those hyper-paranoids in Aztlan. Throughout the Denver and Colorado Springs metro areas, a 6-meter-high wall—topped with razorwire and monowire and bristling with imaging systems and sensors—lines the UCAS side of the border, keeping watch over no man's land. Only the rural stretches of the line use standard fences instead of plascrete slabs. The UCAS doesn't mine the no man's land, nor does it mount manned patrols of the area during the day. After dark, guard-dog patrols cover the UCAS side.

>>>>(Not paranimals, but something just as scary: big German shepherds, engineered for size, strength, and unbelievable aggressiveness. The UCAS fraggers surgically removed the dogs' larynxes so they can't bark. You never hear them coming until they've bowled you over and torn out your trachea. The (meta)human security personnel call them the "silent killers." Even their handlers are scared drekless of them.)<<<<<

—Derek (15:26:45/5-29-55)

>>>>(Sounds kind of stupid, but it works. By day, as sophisticated a suite of sensors as you'd ever try to avoid watch the boundary. By night, when darkness degrades the vision systems ever so slightly, the silent killers prowl around. A good runner could probably sleaze his way through the sensor line—go real slow, wear a cold-suit to suppress your thermal image, that kind of thing—but you'll be in no man's land for at least a couple of minutes, maybe more (particularly if you account for the time spent disabling the contact sensors on the wall). Two fragging minutes is plenty of time for the silent killers to find you.)<<<<<

—Rhino (08:21:12/5-31-55)

>>>>(That's something I don't understand. The dogs are silent, right? So how come anytime the dogs mix it up, a patrol arrives on the scene a couple of minutes later to mop up the mess?)<<<<<

—Vox (13:40:18/5-31-55)

>>>>(Wondered if you'd catch that. The dogs have a mod—not cyber, really, so it doesn't send 'em psycho. A sensor on the dog's collar picks up the muscle contractions and nerve impulses of the animal trying to bark. The sensor then triggers a locator transponder in the collar and turns on a microcam (also on the collar) that broadcasts to the nearest guardpost roughly what the dog's seeing. (All too often, that's the inside of some guy's throat.) The guards monitoring the "dog circuits" decide how to respond and send out the appropriate orders. Slick, neh?)<<<<<

—Derek (10:36:51/6-1-55)

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Population:	740,000
Human:	65%
Elf:	12%
Dwarf:	8%
Ork:	12%
Troll:	3%
Other:	0%

SINless Population (est.): 222, 630

Per Capita Income: 19,500¥

Below Poverty Level: 36%

On Fortune's Active Traders List: 1%

Megacorporate Affiliation: 32%

Education:

High School Equivalency: 33%

College Equivalency: 26%

Advanced Studies Certificate: 7%

Regional Telecom Grid Access: NA/UCAS-WE

>>>>(I hear they use biosensors that monitor the dog's heart rate and respiration. That way, the guards respond whenever the dog becomes agitated or flatlines. Tracking the barking response is silly, because the dog will eventually stop barking if no sound comes out. Barking's not a completely automatic response.)<<<<<

—Tyger Trainer (11:00:51/6-1-55)

>>>>(The UCAS also has a bunch of watcher spirits and minor elementals, and probably other weirdo astral drek watching the border. The hoodoos have orders to go whistle up either a guard detachment or a pack of dogs whenever they spot something.)<<<<<

—Walks Fast (14:38:04/6-1-55)

>>>>(No comment.)<<<<<

—Firelight (02:17:27/6-3-55)

Along the stretches of fence away from the city, the UCAS heavily mines its portion of no man's land. Patrols on the UCAS side of the fenceline putter around in GMC Banshee LAVs and Yellowjacket rotorcraft with non-standard armor. The LAV crews usually extend their surveillance range by hanging one or more drones in the air at all times.

>>>>(UCAS prefers armed drones to the pansy surveillance-only drek other people favor.)<<<<<

—Garvey (12:33:44/5-26-55)

LOCAL YOKELS, MONEY, AND LIFESTYLE

>>>>(Just look at this drek. It's like they always say: there's lies, there's damn lies, there's statistics...and there's government

statistics. The population figures are bulldrek, for one thing, because they don't have anywhere near an accurate count of the SINless crowds that live in the Aurora Warrens, dreading the day the bulldozers roll. At a wild-eyed guess, I'd put the unlisted population at a third of a million. That pushes the real pop of the UCAS Sector over one million.

And the per-capita income and poverty level figures? Yeah, right. Scan me another one. They're probably not huge distortions if you consider only SINners. Include the Warrens dwellers, fragging near all of whom live well below the poverty line, and the average income drops like a shotgunned pigeon.

Why do I bother?<<<<<
—Lewis (21:25:07/6-1-55)

HOME, SWEET HOME

by Custer

If I had to choose a single phrase to describe the ambiance of the UCAS Sector, I'd pick "siege mentality." No surprise, is it? Here's this bitty little sector fulla Damn Yankees, surrounded by tribals who live to drek-kick the Great White Father and a buncha crazy Southerners still fighting the War between the States, a little enclave of the real America in the midst of the drekheap that the Home of the Brave became after the Great Ghost Dance.

>>>>>(Oh, this guy's a beaut. Lives right up to Denver's conservative red-neck rep. Didn't that attitude start sometime before the turn of the century? Something about legalizing discrimination against gays or some drek?<<<<<
—Driver (22:13:40/5-26-55)

>>>>>(It wasn't anywhere near that cut-and-dried.)<<<<<
—Leo (14:25:04/5-28-55)

Most UCAS Sector residents dislike Amerinds because your average white boy sees them as a threat. (Again, no surprise. They are a threat.) 'Course, nobody does much about that dislike. Walls or no walls, the sector exists because the NAN nations let it exist. So whether we like it or not, we palefaces learn to live with the redskins. No firebombs through windows, no "Injuns Out" protest marches, not even any real discrimination. We don't dare pull any of that drek.

>>>>>(If the tribals tried to take back the sector, our government would nuke their fragging teepees back into the fragging stone age (which they barely crawled out of anyway.)<<<<<
—Tico (21:40:24/6-2-55)

>>>>>((What's that bright red glow? Oh—Tico's neck.) UCAS nukes the NAN states, they'll just fire up the Great Ghost Dance again. We'd be so deep in the drek that the last days of the Indian Wars would look like the fragging good old days.)<<<<<
—Mentor (03:28:08/6-3-55)

>>>>>(Why don't you just eat drek and die, Tico?)<<<<<
—Deer (04:00:29/6-3-55)

UNIVERSAL
BROTHERHOOD
CHALLENGE
FRONTIER
US
RESOURCES

THE GOOD SAMARITANS...

AMONG THE DARKNESS

FREE MEDICAL CLINIC, SOUP KITCHEN, & PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSING

AT THE INTERSECTION OF
E. HINSDALE & E. TELLURIDE COURT IN THE WARRENS

>>>>>(Hey, don't slag Tico off too bad. Just consider him an example of the siege mentality—hostility and braggadocio intensified by the fact that he's drek-scared. Custer's just a milder example of the same jetwash. Welcome to the UCAS Sector.)<<<<<
—Hammer (09:23:37/6-3-55)

WHAT COSTS WHAT

Seattle folks, scan this good: some of the prices on the table below are gonna knock your fragging feet above your ears. Before you start filling the Shadowland e-mail boxes with beefs and bitches, think through the reasons for the big differences in

UCAS SECTOR COST OF LIVING

ITEM	COST (% of Seattle prices)
Weapons and Armor	
Ammunition	125
Armor	115
Explosives	160
Firearm Accessories	125
Firearms	125
Melee Weapons	105
Projectile Weapons	100
Throwing Weapons	95
Surveillance and Security	
Communications	120
Security Devices	160
Surveillance Countermeasures	85
Surveillance Equipment	135
Survival Gear	105
Vision Enhancers	130
Lifestyle	
Lifestyle	150
Cybertech and Electronics	
Biotech	110
Bodyware	120
Cyberdecks	160
Electronic Equipment	130
Headware	120
Internals	115
Programs	225
Magical Equipment	
Hermetic Library	135
Magical Supplies	220
Magical Weapons	220
Power Foci	165
Ritual Sorcery Materials	190
Spell Foci	165
Vehicles	
Aircraft	120
Boats	140
Ground Vehicles	135
Military Vehicles	275

cost. Seattle's on the Pacific Rim, a trade center for drekloads of stuff and cred from the other Rim nations. In the UCAS Sector, most of the (legit) trade comes from the rest of the UCAS proper—a nation that's cutting-edge technically but has next to squat in natural resources. Keep those facts in mind, chumboys.

>>>>(Ouch! Fragging bloody ouch!)<<<<<
—Quaestor (19:47:26/5-21-55)

>>>>(Starting to see why t-bird runs are such big business?)<<<<<
—Lagtime (22:17:56/5-21-55)

POLITICS: THE BIG AND THE DIRTY

by Mother Jonah

Keeping faith with the grand tradition of North American democracy, the UCAS Sector holds free and fair elections for its own local Congress...hah. Wrong. Don't we all wish, my children? But the UCAS Sector has even less real democracy than UCAS proper; in UCASec, they don't even bother with appearances anymore.

Anyone out there remember ancient U.S. history? (Anyone out there ever *read* any history? Or anything? Literates are a dying breed in this sound-bite, dataflash age. <Sigh>) The old American colonies, before they became a nation, danced to the tune of a British governor. The UCAS Sector works something like a UCAS colony, presided over by a commissioner appointed by the president of the UCAS. The current bootlicking toady, Samuel Clemens Waybridge, has held the position since 2046.

Originally, the UCAS government treated the commissioner as a nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives in DeeCee, allowing him to "attend" sessions virtually rather than physically so as not to take time away from his local duties. In 2037, the UCAS government (in its infinite wisdom) changed this policy, and so the UCAS Sector no longer has representatives in either House of Congress. Not much chance of a Tea Party or a Revolution, either; the phrase, "no taxation without representation" has too many syllables for the average sector resident to understand.

>>>>(Hey, I resemble that...but seriously, you want to know why we've got no reps in Congress? Because drek that gets discussed in Congress gets leaked to the press, that's why. (Congresscritters just can't keep their damn-fool mouths shut when somebody shines a bright light at them. Some kind of "mediatropic" behavior flaw, I figure ...) That means the Great Unwashed get to hear a lot more about the drek going down in the Front Range Free Zone than the government wants them to know. Solution? Remove all representation in Congress.)<<<<<

—Van Pelt (22:40:36/5-24-55)

Nobody can make a difference.

Vote for Nobody.

**—Campaign poster seen recently
In the heart of the UCAS Sector**

>>>>(Too simplistic. Not incorrect, as such, but too simplistic.)<<<<<

—Ace (02:37:15/5-25-55)

>>>>(For those out-of-towners who don't know, good ol' Commissioner Samuel Clemens Waybridge used to be General Samuel C. "Bomber" Waybridge, commanding officer of the Fourth Mechanized Infantry Division out of Fort Carson. Logistical

wiz, originator of the "security zone" (free-fire zone) concept, and a major player in the Genocide Campaign (or he would have been if it had ever gotten off the ground). The appointment of Bomber Waybridge as Commissioner eloquently illustrates the UCAS government's view of Denver.)<<<<<<

—Sister Sinister (05:39:46/5-30-55)

LEGAL FUN AND GAMES

Now for the really important part, children. A dissertation on all the little obstacles the sector's legal beagles have tossed in the way of ordinary hustlers just trying to make a living. I'm talking getting in and staying in, getting what you need once you're here, and what happens to folks fool enough to get caught. Enjoy.

SO YOU WANT TO LIVE HERE?

The UCAS Sector prides itself on its "tight" borders. So it should seem fairly obvious that sometimes it's easier to slip the border and get in illegally than to muddle through all the picky, niggling datawork required to enter the sector on the up and up. First off, the only people who can enter the sector without some kind of pre-approved travel documentation or visa are UCAS citizens. Even those so privileged (hah!) must undergo a rigorous inspection (and sometimes an interrogation) at the border checkpoint.

>>>>>(The non-contiguous sector in downtown Denver runs a looser ship for a couple of reasons. First, it doesn't have the resources to manhandle the traffic through the relatively few downtown crossing points. Second, the commissioner doesn't consider the downtown sector to have much strategic importance. (The megacorps with facilities in those couple of dozen blocks would probably disagree with that assessment, but the Commissioner figures (rightly) that the megacorps can fragging well handle their own security.)

So if you want to get into the rest of the sector, the sec-boys give you the once-over with chem-sniffers and other sensors, make you slot your stick, and then make you wait around while the computer systems pretend to do some cross-checking to weed out forgeries. Once that's over, you might have to sit down and answer some probing questions from a terminally crabby border officer. Only then can you cruise on through.

Going into the downtown region, you still get the once-over, but the sensors are flabbier and the scan is less rigorous. You slot your stick, but validation goes quicker because the computers do less cross-checking (which means it's easier to pass a forgery). And you almost never have to do the face-to-face unless the scans turn up something suspicious (in which case, you're in drek).

So UCAS Sector residents who work downtown have it easy getting to work, particularly if they're certified frequent travelers. Getting back into the rest of the UCAS Sector at the end of the biz day is another story.)<<<<<<

—Garner (11:24:04/5-23-55)

Citizens of other nations must apply for various kinds of visas to get into the UCAS Sector—visitor's visa, student visa, work visa (the famed green card), diplomatic visa, and on and on. Each of these magic chunks of data requires an application to be submitted from outside the sector. If you're in the sector on a visitor's visa, say, and you want to upgrade it to a student visa, you must leave the sector and apply for your brand-spanking-new visa from outside. This wonderful system makes it much easier for the government to keep you out once you leave, if that happens to run their program. This holds true even for citizens of countries such as Russia and the Pan-African Congress who don't normally need visas to enter the UCAS; the UCAS Sector makes itself a special case.

>>>>>(Obviously, you've got to have—and divulge—a SIN to apply for any of these visas.)<<<<<<

—Garner (11:24:58/5-23-55)

According to the legal slugs, only UCAS citizens or residents with green cards can work in the UCAS Sector. Needless to say, megacorporations that qualify for extraterritorial status need not abide by this law. Convenient, isn't it?

WEAPONS

Anyone intending mayhem or even a little intimidation in UCASec should think twice. All weapons-related offenses in the sector draw the same punishment as federal crimes, which carry higher penalties and are more stringently enforced. (For a more in-depth discussion of this drek, refer to the so-called **Neo-Anarchist's Guide to North America**, posted elsewhere on the Shadowland datanet.) In the sector, all weapons—including such innocuous utensils as knives with blades longer than 12 centimeters—must be licensed.

>>>>>(You know why all the different sectors get so tight-hooped about licensing everything? It gives them an excuse to keep a close eye on their citizens and update their national databases by repeatedly uploading personal data from applicants' credsticks. Think about it. What's on your credstick? Your personal ident, address, SIN, tax drek, medical records, bank balance and credit rating...need I go on? Sure, they're stored in different sectors of memory on the stick's optical chips and supposedly accessible only to authorized persons. But don't you think a fragging government could whip up a utility to crack that security? Every time you slot your stick to license a Streetline Special, the government scans your confidential medical record ("Is that evidence of a bullet wound I see here?") and your credit data ("Regular income, no registered employment. Hmmm..."). That's the story here.)<<<<<<

—Zeke (04:29:20/6-1-55)

>>>>>(You really think the government has to go to all that trouble to check out its citizens' laundry, *omae*? What century are you living in, heh?)<<<<<<

—Gypsey (18:52:43/6-1-55)

WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Weapon Type	Offense and Fine/Imprisonment				
	Possession (1)	Transport (2)	Threat (3)	Use (4)	Intent (5)
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	100¥	250¥	2,500¥/3 mo	5,000¥/6 mo	10,000¥/1 yr
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	200¥	300¥	2,500¥/3 mo	5,000¥/6 mo	10,000¥/1 yr
(C) Blunt Weapon	200¥	300¥	2,500¥/3 mo	5,000¥/6 mo	10,000¥/1 yr
(D) Projectile Weapon	250¥	500¥	2,500¥/3 mo	5,000¥/6 mo	10,000¥/1 yr
(E) Pistol	1,000¥	2,000¥	5,000¥/1 yr	10,000¥/2 yrs	25,000¥/3 yrs
(F) Rifle	1,000¥	2,000¥	5,000¥/1 yr	10,000¥/2 yrs	25,000¥/3 yrs
(G) Automatic Weapons	5,000¥	10,000¥/3 mo	25,000¥/2 yrs	25,000¥/5 yrs	50,000¥/5 yrs
(H) Heavy Weapon	10,000¥/2 yrs	20,000¥/2 yrs	5 yrs	7 yrs	10 yrs
(I) Explosives	500¥	2,500¥/3 mo	3 yrs	10 yrs	15 yrs
(J) Military Weapons	10,000¥/2 yrs	20,000¥/2 yrs	5 yrs	7 yrs	10 yrs
(K) Military Armor	5,000¥	—	—	—	—
(L) Ammunition	1,000¥	—	—	—	—
(BA) Class A Bioware	4,000¥	—	—	—	—
(BB) Class B Bioware	8,000¥	—	—	—	—
(BC) Class C Bioware	12,000¥/3 yrs	—	—	—	—
(CA) Class A Cyberware	5,000¥	—	—	—	—
(CB) Class B Cyberware	5,000¥	—	—	—	—
(CC) Class C Cyberware	15,000¥	—	—	—	—
(CD) Matrix Tech	2,500¥	10,000¥/6 mo	—	—	—
(EA) Class A Equipment	1,500¥	—	—	—	—
(EB) Class B Equipment	3,000¥/3 mo	—	—	—	—
(EC) Class C Equipment	6,000¥/6 mo	—	—	—	—
(MA) Class A Controlled	500¥	—	—	—	—
(MB) Class B Controlled	1,000¥	—	—	—	—
(MC) Class C Controlled	25,000¥/10 yrs	—	—	—	—

MINDBENDERS, LEGAL AND OTHERWISE

Any drug or other head-messer that is even mildly physically addictive, as opposed to mentally "habituating" (to use the appropriate psycho-jargon) is federally controlled, which means only a government-licensed biotech can drop any your way. In fact, the UCAS Sector government buys clinically pure cram from time to time; it's prescribed for terminally ill patients to help ease their last nasty hours.

>>>>(I went to the dentist to get some teeth reconstructed (an unfortunate accident involving a troll and a hammer, and don't ask). Instead of giving me a needle, he slipped a chip into my slot. Chummer, for 45 blissful minutes I was a fragging eagle, grooving in the clouds. If that chip wasn't BTL, it was this close. I like this philosophy of medicine.)<<<<<

—Dodd (20:43:53/6-2-55)

>>>>(Want me to knock out some more of your teeth, Dodd? Return engagement ...)<<<<<

—Jonesy (06:57:16/6-4-55)

>>>>(Couple of bad consequences to this setup. Corrupt licensed biotechs can sell this drek in the shadows, and street-

scum can break into doctors' offices looking for a quick hit. (No surprises, I know, but we may as well lay it on the table.)<<<<<

—Boto (23:56:54/6-4-55)

>>>>(Interesting that two of the most addictive substances known—alcohol and nicotine—aren't included under these laws. Shows you the value of having a powerful lobby group, doesn't it?)<<<<<

—DNF (03:48:39/6-7-55)

ABOUT THE BADGE

Lone Star Security Services Denver, a wholly owned subsidiary of the very same Lone Star most of us know and love, enforces the law in the sector. A division of the Star also handles border security. Even though the local badge is officially independent of its parent corp (an arrangement that allows for a much closer liaison between Lone Star management and the sector commissioner's office), any number of physical and personnel resources are transferred regularly between the Denver organization and any and every other Lone Star operation in the world. Lone Star Denver also has a sweetheart deal with the UCAS armed forces; the Star offers employment to any military personnel who lose their army berths to organizational changes.

(The deal essentially legitimizes personnel transfers between the UCAS military and Lone Star.)

>>>>(I don't quite get it, but there's a close link between the Star in Denver and some Lone Star agency in DeeCee that they call Military Liaison. The name seems to make sense; something called "Military Liaison" sounds like a natural for military-civilian personnel transfers. But from what I've dug up so far, the mil-liason folks only exist to coordinate Lone Star's emergency planning with the government's civil defense plans, so they don't get in each other's way come the next earthquake or whatever.

So why is ML so tight with the Denver operation?<<<<<<
 —Queenie (08:42:43/6-4-55)

>>>>(Queenie, there's a frag of a lot more to ML than civil defense drek, believe it. I don't have the time to explain it all now, but here are some questions to get you thinking.

Do major corporations have private armies? Is Lone Star a major corporation? How would the public feel about "the police" having a private army, complete with commandos and assassins? And how would you go about concealing these assets from the public, if you ran the Star?

Catch ya later.<<<<<<
 —Argent (07:29:17/6-7-55)

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

The following table and accompanying notes show you, in a ni-i-i-ce convenient format, what gets you in drek and for how long (or how much). Scan close, boys and girls.

Intent

The UCAS Sector is the only part of the Free Zone that makes the ludicrous distinction between "intent" and "use." I offer the following definitions for your enlightenment, copped from a public source.

"Use covers any use of a weapon against or in the general vicinity of a living target or public or private property. It is not necessary to prove intent to harm for this offense, only use. Neither must harm have resulted from use of the weapon."

"Intent covers any use of a weapon explicitly intended to cause physical injury or property damage, whether or not such injury actually occurred."

Lots of words, little meaning. I much prefer the view espoused by Tir Tairngire and most other civilized nations, which is that if you *used* a weapon, you *intended* to use it (except in the case of accidental discharge, which wouldn't be prosecuted under the UCAS definition of "use" anyway).

>>>>(To quote some slag from elsewhere on Shadowland, the idea of "Intent" as distinct from "use" leads to defenses like, "Yes, judge, I shot the drek out of him with an assault cannon, but I didn't mean to hurt him. I just wanted to scare him. Matter of fact, he looked pretty fragging scared before his head came off." Only in the UCAS.)<<<<<<

—TraceEx (07:45:59/5-26-55)

CRIMINAL OFFENSES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE	
Offense	Sentence
Arson	5,000¥/1 yr
Assault	2,000¥/1 yr
Battery	2,500¥/1 yr
Extortion	2-3 yrs
Forcible Confinement	2-5 yrs
Fraud	2-5 yrs
Illegal Entry	1-5 yrs
Kidnapping	5-10 yrs
Larceny (petty)	2-5 yrs
Larceny (grand)	2-10 yrs
Murder 1	30 yrs-life (no parole)*
Murder 2	10 yrs-life
Murder 3	2-5 yrs
Negligence	1-5 yrs
Rape	2-5 yrs
Rape (statutory)	2-10 yrs
Reckless Endangerment	5,000¥/100 yrs
Solicitation	2,000¥
Trafficking	25,000¥/2-5 yrs
Treason	10 yrs-life
Vandalism	2,000¥
Accessory	20 percent normal
Conspiracy	50 percent normal

*Some jurisdictions still assign the death penalty for Murder One. Denver does not.

Cyberware

Like most government slags in Denver, UCAS government slags want to know exactly who's got what under their skin. Therefore, they require all Class A and Class B cyberware to be licensed either upon entry into the sector or upon installation. Pay attention, children; you may not jander around with any unlicensed cyberware, no matter how harmless.

Class C cyberware is right out of the brawl zone for anyone but Lone Star and megacorporate security personnel. It is a felony to install Class C chrome or to have it installed. If caught, both the slag with the mods and the cutter who installed them get whacked with a 15,000-nuyen fine for each and every Class C subsystem involved.

>>>>(They make certain exceptions for some visitors to the sector. If you've got Class C chrome and a cover ident that's up to taking a lot of close scrutiny, you can apply for a special license from the commissioner's office. If you can prove to the government's satisfaction that letting you and your Class C chrome into the sector will benefit the sector more than harm it, you might get the special license. But expect to have your chrome restrained in some way. For the techniques they might use, check out the discussions elsewhere on this board. Predictably,



tampering with the restraint in any way invalidates your special license and puts you in violation of the law.)<<<<<

—Kerr (10:40:21/5-25-55)

Cyberdecks

Just like everywhere else in the Zone, the UCASec government goons make you license all cyberdecks and Matrix software upon entering the sector (giving those curious individuals a chance to make sure your deck isn't stealth-rigged and leaves all the right audit trails). If you are caught in possession of an unlicensed deck or software chip, the laws let the sec-boys confiscate your deck and 'ware, as well as levy a fine of 2,500 nuyen for each item deemed in violation. (Lone Star counts each and every utility on your deck or in your possession as one item in violation. Depending on what you've got loaded, a single "icepick" deck might qualify as more than a dozen "items in violation." Big cred, kids.) And

here's the real kicker. Because UCAS law distinguishes between possession and use, you get whacked with "items in violation" fines for both offenses. Using that icepick might cost you damn near a quarter million and put you in the can for six years or more.

Addictives

Possession of controlled substances for personal use can be treated as a single crime regardless of the amount involved, or can be considered one "count" for each dose (depending on the type of substance). For example, the penalty for possessing a dozen California hots is usually 500 nuyen. Possession of 2XS chips, a deadly mindbender if ever there was one, might put the fine at 500 nuyen per chip.

Trafficking offenses work the same way. A small-time chip-legger handling Cal hots might only get slapped with a fine of 1,000 nuyen, no matter how many chips she actually has in her

possession. A pusher handling 2XS, however, faces fines of at least 1,000 nuyen per hit.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Some of these are places to be, others are places to do...biz.

HOTELS

Brown Palace Hotel

Luxury Hotel Archetype (11 floors)/321 17th Street/Royce Buntain, Manager/Strong Bias against Amerinds/LTG# 2303 (97-3111)/Map Location 33

A hotel of this name has existed on or near this spot since 1892 according to the historians, all that time serving as a magnet for the rich and famous from around the world. (We copped that last part from a press release by the hotel's PR flacks.) Cynicism aside, it *is* a nice place...if you don't mind paying 250 nuyen for the smallest room in the house.

>>>>(Even the smallest room is packed full of antiques and objets d'art...all of which are electronically theft-proofed, so don't get any ideas.)<<<<<

—Runt (11:42:30/6-1-55)

>>>>(If you don't stay at the Brown, make the time to jander on by some p.m. for a traditional English afternoon tea.)<<<<<

—Puddle-Jumper (21:10:24/6-2-55)

>>>>(Yeah, fragging right. I jander in for tea and get thrown out or arrested. Chromed trolls apparently don't do tea.)<<<<<

—Tasha (02:51:03/6-3-55)

>>>>(They do at the Brown, Tasha. The waiters have seen everything. If you wandered in on fire, they'd politely extinguish you and then serve you scones and cucumber sandwiches.)<<<<<

—Puddle-Jumper (21:49:00/6-3-55)

>>>>(For a high-class hotel, the Brown has lousy computer security.)<<<<<

—Marco (11:48:51/6-5-55)

>>>>(That's why the guests never trust anything to the hotel's central system.)<<<<<

—Rage (19:16:52/6-7-55)

Conner-Westin Hotel

Luxury Hotel Archetype (25 floors)/1672 Lawrence St./Roz Campbell, Manager/Slight Bias against Amerinds/LTG# 5303 (72-9100)/Map Location 34

It's a Conner-Westin. What more can we say? Once in the lobby, you might as well be in Danzig or Durban or Detroit. Only the occasional, half-hooped hint of what some no-brained corporate decorator defined as Southwestern decor lets you know you're in Denver. About the only thing that sets it apart is the half-indoor, half-outdoor swimming pool, which extends out onto a patio exactly one mile (1,609 meters) above sea level.

>>>>(Well, whoopee fragging drek.)<<<<<

—Krash (15:21:01/5-24-55)

>>>>(There's something snakey about Roz Campbell's background. (She's the manager and tin-pot tyrant in charge of operations at the Conner-Westin.) I hear the rattling of skeletons in her closets, but I haven't pinned down the dirt yet. I'll post updates when I learn something useful.)<<<<<

—Dinsdale (17:57:09/5-29-55)

>>>>(What's the big fragging secret? She runs a high-toned "escort agency" out of the place, "servicing" VIPs from all over, including a couple of the councilors.)<<<<<

—Carnet (19:00:33/5-29-55)

>>>>(No drek, Dagwood. I'm talking about something more.)<<<<<

—Dinsdale (18:00:45/5-31-55)

Radisson Hotel

Luxury Hotel Archetype (11 floors)/1550 Court Pl./Sharon Manthey, Manager/Slight Bias against Amerinds, Orks and Trolls/LTG# 8303 (93-3333)/Map Location 35

The Radisson recently changed its marketing pitch. Its main selling point used to be drop-dead luxury; now it's tight-hooped physical and magical security. Security guards, some of them combat mages or physical adepts, openly patrol the lobby and hallways. They're always polite, but you know exactly what they are and why they're there (the body armor tends to give it away). If you don't look like an upper-tier corporate suit, you'll get a cold reception at the front desk. The only way to change their attitude is to show the receptionist a really fat credstick.

>>>>(Even that won't change it if you're ork or troll. Or, god help you, an Amerind ork or troll.)<<<<<

—Dinsdale (18:01:21/5-31-55)

>>>>(If you don't mind dressing up a bit and washing off the smell of sweat and cordite, the high-grade security has its advantages. I've done quite a bit of biz in the back room of the hotel lounge, a wizzer little place called Finnigan's Irish Eating and Drinking Establishment. It's a good, safe place for a meet.)<<<<<

—Mandy (21:44:06/6-2-55)

>>>>(Interesting: the manager, Sharon Manthey, has poured nuyen and effort into upgrading physical security, but Matrix security stays just as lousy as ever, with particularly lame ice around the system resources devoted to guest use.)<<<<<

—Candide (10:58:37/6-3-55)

>>>>(Of course. Improved security would make it harder for Manthey herself to crack into guests' datastores, and then she'd have to find other ways of supplementing her salary.)<<<<<

—ExPat (17:00:02/6-3-55)

Cambridge Hotel

Luxury Hotel Archetype (3 floors)/1560 Sherman St./Jessie Ashley, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 8303 (31-1252)/Map Location 36

A small, intimate place, and incredibly luxurious. (It should be, at the prices they charge: 255 ¥ and up.) The Cambridge only offers about two dozen suites, which allows their personal service to be very attentive. In fact, the unstated motto of the Cambridge is, "If a service isn't listed, ask for it."

>>>>(And if a service isn't legal, ask for that, too. Odds are you'll get it...if you're willing to pay.)<<<<<<
—Doric (10:20:26/5-24-55)

>>>>(Manager Jessie Ashley maintains friendly associations with several successful local fixers, and she's also tied into the Ute chipmeisters' distribution net.)<<<<<<
—Neon Dog (11:34:51/5-24-55)

Holiday Inn

Average Hotel Archetype (21 floors)/1450 Glenarm Pl./Vivien Shen, Manager/Slight Bias against Suits/LTG# 5303 (73-1450)/Map Location 37

This place has a strange ambience. Even though it's in the downtown core, it feels more like a working person's hangout than a place that caters to megacorp types. Service is good, the place is clean, and the decor is very bare bones, all of which somehow adds up to a subtle undercurrent of bias against anyone who's obviously a corp exec or similarly employed.

>>>>(Hey, my kinda place.)<<<<<<
—Blackjack (13:12:05/5-26-55)

>>>>(A surprising number of corp-types adopt false identities and backgrounds just to stay here. Sometimes they have fragging good reasons to leave the old executive suite behind ...)<<<<<<
—Mandy (21:47:41/6-2-55)

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

Augusta

Large Restaurant Archetype/1572 Lawrence St./Cathy Matreska, Owner/Strong Bias against Amerinds, Slight Bias against Orks and Trolls/LTG# 5303 (72-7222)/Map Location 38

The Augusta bills itself as the trendiest, classiest restaurant in the entire Front Range Free Zone, and scales its prices to prove it. Even if you manage to talk your way past the snotty maître d' at the front door—in itself quite a task unless you look like you could buy the place, and that's if you've got a reservation—they'll assess you a "seating charge" of 35 nuyen before you order a thing. The food is out of this world, however, and the wine list second to none. Dinner for two with wine will run around 250 nuyen.

>>>>(This place moved, I hear, back around 2010. It used to be in the Westin.)<<<<<<
—Mentor (15:31:09/5-31-55)

>>>>(Couple of months back, I put on my best corporate phone voice and made a reservation at the Augusta for the following week. Two days beforehand, I phoned to confirm the reservation. When I showed up with my date, my reservation somehow had been conveniently lost. Could it have had anything to do with the fact that my escort and I are orks? No, of course not.)<<<<<<

—Lucky Lindy (23:59:01/6-2-55)

>>>>(Could it have had something to do with the fact that your halitosis would kill a man at five paces and the fact your escort looks like 20 klicks of bad road? No, of course not.)<<<<<<

—Marciano (05:02:13/6-3-55)

>>>>(Okay, kids, take it outside.

Point is, the Augusta has a strict dress code, and the maître d' takes the liberty of enforcing it by "losing" a reservation when he feels it to be appropriate.)<<<<<<

—Tempest (09:28:01/6-3-55)

>>>>(Cathy Matreska—known to her old customers as Cathy Mattress before she got into the management end of things—runs a high-toned, out-call "massage service." No request too kinky, no party too large to "cater." Though I can't confirm it, I also suspect our dear Cathy is heavily into the chip biz.)<<<<<<

—Prof (06:04:43/6-7-55)

Café Giovanni

Mid-Size Restaurant Archetype/1515 Market St./Roger Sarangi, Owner/Strong Bias against Amerinds/LTG# 8303 (25-6555)/Map Location 39

This elegant little restaurant is a reincarnation of an establishment that won awards around the turn of the century. It's small and dark and intimate, and usually schedules one staff person per potential guest. Service is attentive but discreet. Many megacorporate types come here to talk biz over a plate of lobster-and-crabmeat lasagnette. The Giovanni offers every feature you'd expect from a high-toned restaurant: magical security protecting the entire establishment, state-of-the-art weapon detectors at the doors, and efficient white-noise generators at each table.

>>>>(The owner, Rog Sarangi, knows the importance of security and what people will pay for privacy and safety (or for the illusion of privacy and safety: I'm not convinced his perimeter's as secure as he'd like everyone to believe). In any case, old Rog learned his licks on both sides of the shadows—he worked Lone Star in Atlanta before moving to Chicago to run the shadows under the handle Gnome. He operated as a decker, but he was also greased lightning with an SMG. Knowing Gnome, I wouldn't be too sure he's gone totally legit, despite appearances.)<<<<<<

—Dray (02:17:01/5-28-55)

The New McCormick's Seafood House

Large Restaurant Archetype/1659 Wazee St./Gillian Roth, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 8303 (25-1107)/Map Location 40

If you like noisy, bustling, East Coast-style seafood restaurants, this is the place for you. Lots of dark wood (okay, wood-grained construction plastic) and black-and-white tiles (hence the noise; sound bounces off them). The New Mac's has no dress code and is very laissez faire about boisterous behavior that would get you kicked out of anywhere else. Check out the extensive whiskey list—*real* whiskey (Scotch and bourbon)—and relish better seafood dishes than you'd expect from a landlocked city.

>>>>(If you need to make contact with the Mafia, The New Mac's is the place. Gillian Roth, the owner—that's right, those Roths—is in tight with the mob. Various lieutenants and enforcers frequently hang out at the bar or use the private rooms.)<<<<<<
—Magus (22:55:12/5-23-55)

>>>>(Whoa, flash update. Somebody just tried to hit Gillian Roth. A smooth attempt, pro all the way, she shouldn't have survived. Somehow, she spotted the hifter coming and cooked him in his Guccis with a powerball. Surprise—nobody knew Roth was a mage ...)<<<<<<
—Setter (04:10:57/6-10-55)

**No shirt, no shoes, no service.
Food fights tolerated only after 9 p.m.
If you can't pronounce the name of
the whiskey, we won't serve it to you.
—Rules from the wall of The New
McCormick's Seafood House**

>>>>(I don't give a frag if she's a Martian, Setter. Who's behind the hit? And what does it mean?)<<<<<<
—Wryter (11:02:58/6-10-55)

The Digs

Bar Archetype/4995 Chambers Rd./Owner Unknown/Strong Bias against Amerinds/LTG# 4303 (58-0094)/Map Location 41

They ought to call this one "The Dogs," 'cause that's where it's going. This archetypal watering hole stands right on the edge of the slum known as the Warrens. According to the relocation committee's geodetic survey map, the land up for "harmonization" starts at about the 5100 block of Chambers Road, two blocks south of The Digs. On any given day or night, Warrens dwellers pack this place trying to drown their sorrows or scam some way of getting out.

>>>>(The neighborhood looks like drek—high-density, low-cost housing. But it's infinitely better than the Warrens proper. Property owners around here actually put some cred into upkeep and renovations, because they know their buildings won't get torn down in the near future. Except maybe by local residents and their neighbors ...)<<<<<<
—Meat (13:45:26/5-29-55)

>>>>(Maybe it's not really in the Warrens, but it's close enough that desperation drips from every molecule of the structure. The Digs doesn't look much worse than any other low-class tavern, but it feels different. It's the feel of an animal dying in a leg-hold trap—slowly, feeling the pain and the growing weakness, and knowing the only thing to hope for is oblivion to end the agony.)<<<<<<
—Roger (09:22:42/6-1-55)

>>>>(A little over the top, Roger. But I have to admit more fights to the death go down in and around The Digs than you should expect.)<<<<<<
—Zero Sum (14:48:34/6-1-55)

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Aurora/The Warrens (Map Location 32)

Welcome to the neighborhood, chumboy...the worst one in all of fragging Denver. The Warrens is less a "place of interest" than a place to stay the fragging hell away from. You think the Barrens in Seattle are bad? They got nothing on this slum. Nothing. Matter of fact, the Warrens are still standing purely on the sufferance of the relocation committee, which could send the bulldozers rolling in on any given morning.

The sector's put no money into maintaining the high-density housing in the Warrens, and it shows. Lone Star patrols the area once in a blue fragging moon, DocWagon responds to calls from the Warrens on a "when we get around to it" basis, and firefighters could fragging care less about minimizing collateral damage. In real English, that means that the smoke-eaters will let a building burn to the fragging foundations if the fire appears to be well-entrenched, and concentrate on stopping it from spreading to surrounding buildings. Anywhere else but the Warrens, they'd make an effort to knock out the fire and save at least some of the building.

>>>>(Not true. Not true at all. We always make our best effort, regardless of the fire's location. The problem with the Warrens is that nothing there works like it should to help us do our jobs! Fire suppression systems in buildings haven't been maintained or tested for fragging years, so 95 percent of them don't work (surprise). Access to buildings is often blocked by burned-out cars, squatter shacks, and piles of drek in the hallways. And plenty of those piles of drek are incredibly flammable. Just about every building in the fragging Warrens is a firetrap, chummer. That's why we can't save many buildings in that area. We try—frag, but we try; I personally have lost three good friends to fires in the Warrens—but we simply can't do it. All we can do is stop the whole area from going up in a fire storm.)<<<<<<
—Backdraft (10:35:06/5-27-55)

>>>>(Whatever the case, the Warrens has an awful lot of burned-out, vacant lots. You sometimes see whole blocks where every building's burned to the ground and nobody ever cleared the rubble away. Ever seen pictures of London after the World War II blitz? That's what the Warrens reminds me of. Some areas look even worse, like Dresden or even Hiroshima.)<<<<<<
—Archivist (23:12:34/6-1-55)

>>>>(World War II? The blitz? Who is this fossil?)<<<<<
—Nova (00:15:14/6-2-55)

Most of the buildings in the Warrens have no power, phone, or sanitation hook-ups, and those that do receive these services illegally.

>>>>(You want to visit Hell, visit the Warrens. There has not been a worse pit of misery, disease, and despair anywhere in the world this century.)<<<<<
—Tomtom (03:17:50/6-2-55)

>>>>(I take it you've never visited Calcutta.
Still, Tomtom is right about the disease. The Warrens is the perfect breeding ground for pathogenic organisms. It saddens and frightens me to say it, but there will be a plague in the Warrens within the next decade unless somebody does something now, and it will spread throughout the rest of Denver. Maybe farther. VITAS-4, anyone?)<<<<<
—Emdee (21:17:36/6-5-55)

>>>>(Burn it down to fragging bedrock. Caulterize the source of the potential infection and decrease the surplus population at the same time.)<<<<<
—Edge (15:18:47/6-6-55)

>>>>(I hope you're farcing.)<<<<<
—Darla (00:14:05/6-7-55)

Broncomania Stadium and Denver Sports Complex (Map Location 42)

Residents of the Denver area have always regarded sports as fragging close to a religion.

>>>>(That is patently not true, and we native Denverites find this generalization offensive. Football is a religion. Everything else is just a diversion.)<<<<<
—Nox (14:13:56/5-23-55)

The central catechism has always been football—specifically, the Denver Broncos, who used to play at Mile-High Stadium near the intersection of Intercity 25 and Route 40. In 2023, thousands of Anglo football fans realized in horror that this temple of their religion had landed firmly in Ute territory. The Broncos franchise was U.S. to the core, and the owners declared they would play in Hell before they'd operate in the Ute Sector.

>>>>(Assuming the Ute Sector would let them...)<<<<<
—Rico (03:59:55/5-27-55)

The Indian Wars had given the NFL a rough time, and the owners considered it a minor loss to pull the Broncos out of the league for a year while the city built a new sports center in U.S. territory. The Bronco owners and their backers (plus various megacorps that saw the immense public relations potential) pooled their shekels, bought out the Mile-High Kennel Club in

Commerce City, and constructed the Denver Sports Complex, centered on Broncomania Stadium.

Broncomania Stadium became home to the Broncos in 2025. The Denver Nuggets NABA basketball team plays in the Forum, in another part of the Sports Complex.

>>>>(The Broncomania Stadium's been undergoing a lot of mods recently, and not just the usual cosmetic drek. Buzz I hear is that the Broncos owners are going for a WCCL Combat Biker franchise. Big-time carnage!)<<<<<
—Tama (02:-06:17/5-29-55)

>>>>(And speaking of carnage, if you're talking sports, you've got to mention the Denver Thunderheads Urban Brawl squad, part of the ISSV. The Heads have picked up quite a following in the UCAS Sector and elsewhere, and they are kicking some serious hoop in the ISSV this year. I make a fearless prediction that it looks like the Denver Thunderheads versus the Ares Predators in the Super Brawl.

The Heads base their offices, clinics, armories, and so on in the Sports Center, but when time comes for a home game, they focus the killing glare on the northwest quarter of Aurora.)<<<<<
—CyberJock (14:09:41/6-2-55)

>>>>(Don't count Seattle out yet!)<<<<<
—Puget Deb (05:56:08/6-7-55)

Rocky Mountain Arsenal (Map Location 43)

Once a highly restricted area, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal no longer contains anything worth protecting. The fences and guardposts still surround it but are unmanned and unmonitored, and years of neglect have taken their toll. Anybody capable of walking can penetrate what's left of the security. Surprisingly, squatters have so far failed to settle in this large area.

>>>>(Would you move into a place crowded with megatons of unexploded munitions waiting for someone to trip over? Last year alone, five people bought it exploring the arsenal area just by putting a foot wrong.

And add to that danger the persistent rumors (strenuously denied by the sector government, but who listens?) that some of those undetonated munitions contain chem-bio ordnance. (I know it doesn't make a difference—dead's dead, after all—but a lot of people who'd risk setting off high-explosive shells will run a hundred clicks to avoid shells that spew nerve agents.)<<<<<
—Hardcase (10:55:33/5-23-55)

>>>>(I'm pretty sure there aren't any unexploded munitions in the area, Hardcase—and any that are would be real tough to set off. When the U.S. military decommissioned the arsenal and moved out, they treated it the same way they did the Academy and Fort Carson—they carpeted the area with so many bombs that they may as well have nuked the place. There's not a single fragging stick standing, and the ground has this strange, rippled look to it from the air. If unexploded bombs had been lying around, the concussion from all those FAEs should have blown anything capable of detonating.



Yet I've heard the same rumors, and it's true that a few people get blown up every year wandering through Rocky Mountain. So what's going down?

I figure the rumors are disinformation to "dissuade" curious visitors. The ones who get cacked weren't dissuaded and came close enough to see something they shouldn't have. I think the UCAS government—not Bomber Waybridge, but the big boys in DeeCee—have something going in the arsenal, and they're more than willing to expend a few Denverites to keep it secret.)<<<<<

—Shelly (04:34:01/5-24-55)

>>>>>(I can't buy that, Shelly. If there's anything going down in the heart of the arsenal, it must be real small. Remember, every nation in Denver plus a few others keeps the Front Range Free Zone under close observation from spysats. Considering that a modern spysat's CCD imaging system can resolve something about the size of a dinner plate, night or day, the UCAS couldn't expect to keep anything of significant size secret from the NAN nations, the CAS, or Aztlan. If it's military in nature, or otherwise of interest to (or threatening toward) the other nations, they'll know about it. And they'd consider just about anything the UCAS government does threatening, wouldn't they? So it seems likely something's going on in the arsenal, but not that the UCAS government's behind it.

How about private interests, though? A megacorporation or two. Or (my personal suspicion) a group of gray traders. They're not doing anything strictly illegal by UCAS law, so the sector government doesn't close them down. The other signatory nations have no say in non-military, non-national issues, so they don't squawk. Maybe a bunch of t-bird jammers and their

support crews hang somewhere in the heart of the old arsenal, blowing the drek out of anyone who stumbles onto what they've got going.)<<<<<

—Louis (23:06:36/5-24-55)

>>>>>(That still doesn't hang together for me. Hmm. Anyone up for a field trip? Relay at LTG# 5303 (22-4605) (NA/UCAS-WE).)<<<<<

—Jammer (02:26:39/5-26-55)

>>>>>**[Universal Brotherhood Chapterhouse (Map Location 44)]**

Though the Warrens deserves its reputation for despair, a few people refuse to give up hope and now work to alleviate the crushing poverty, disease, and sense of hopelessness. Chief among these Good Samaritans is the Universal Brotherhood. The Brotherhood set up a chapterhouse in the heart of the Warrens, at the intersection of E. Hinsdale Avenue and E. Telluride Court in the worst stretch of Aurora. This building contains a free medical clinic and soup kitchen, and the Brotherhood personnel provide psychological support groups to help people deal with the horrors of the Warrens mentally as well as physically.

I'm amazed by the sensitivity and kindness of the Brotherhood people...and astounded that the organization willingly invested so much money in building an establishment that might be razed tomorrow. If the Warrens represent a black hole of suffering, then the Brotherhood chapterhouse offers a point of light—small, but brilliant—doing what it can to illuminate that darkness.)<<<<<

—Essian (09:24:24/6-2-55)

>>>>>(Does this slag really not know ... ?)<<<<<

—Sidewinder (14:20:51/6-2-55)

UTE SECTOR

**<<When push comes to shove, remember that Howling Coyote was a Ute. We breed true warriors. We are always ready.>>
—Abraham Free Flight, citizen (IntraZone Online/REF# 6536-x189)**

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Within the Denver metro area, the Ute Sector border follows Intercity 25 from the north, then turns west along Route 40 and follows Highway 70 out of town.

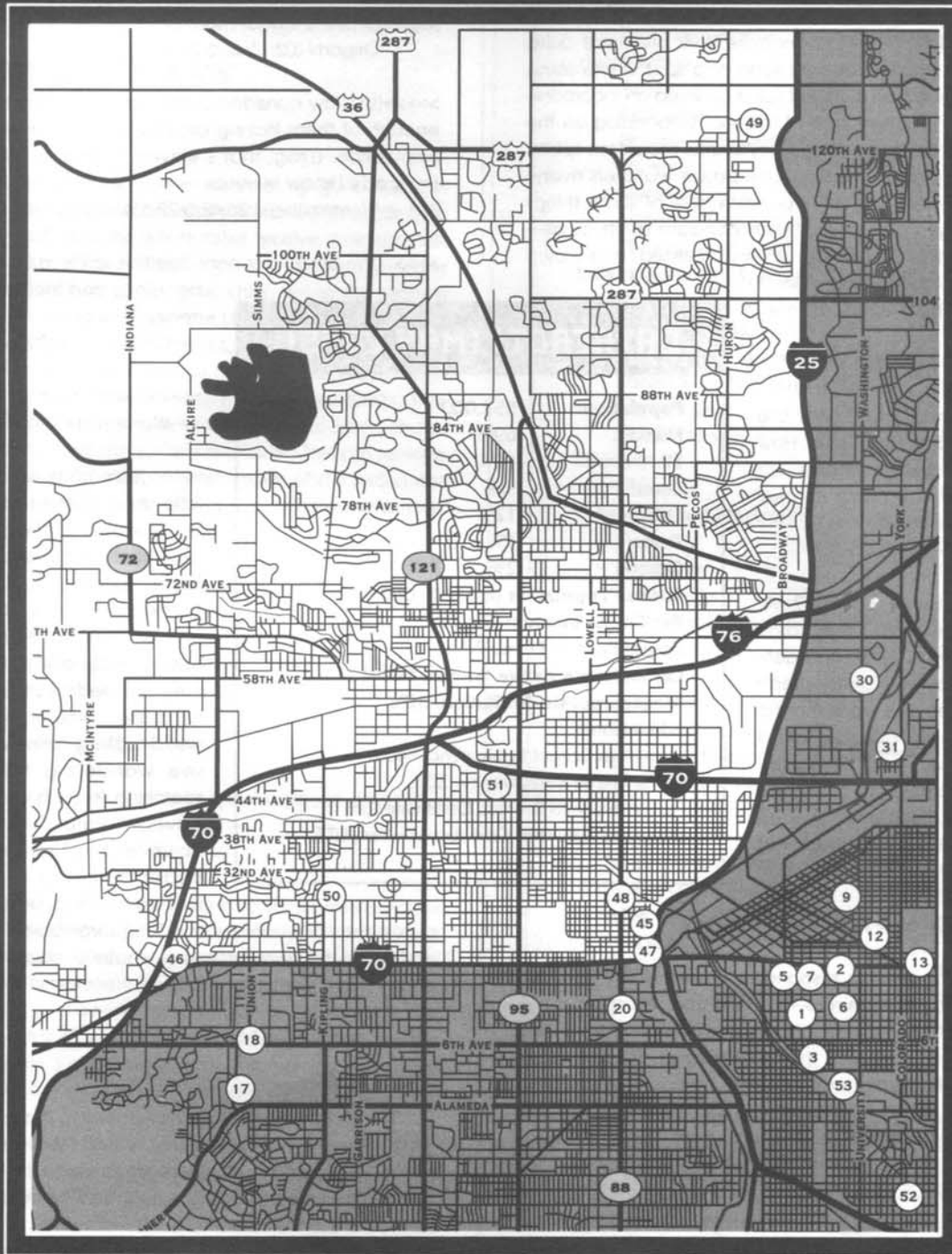
RUNNING THE UTE LINE

by Crystal

At first glance, the boundaries surrounding the Ute Sector seem the easiest to penetrate of all sector borders. Fences run along most of the border's length, with walls comprising only a few kilometers of the barriers around the most sensitive areas. The fences mount sensors to detect crossing attempts, but they're far less sophisticated than those used by other sectors. The Ute portion of the no man's land contains pressure detectors and other sensors, but no land mines or other lethal surprises. Standard border patrols appear infrequently and irregularly (though "containment teams" respond swiftly and efficiently to any invasion alarms). Compared to the Aztlan Sector (sensors and sentry guns) or the Pueblo Sector (armed surveillance drones), the Ute boundaries seem sadly under-guarded.

How is it, then, that the Ute Sector's record for detecting and responding to border breaches is better than Aztlan's and just a hair short of Pueblo's?

Simple question, simple answer: magic. As anyone who astrally assenses the Ute borders can attest, an astounding number and variety of astral beings prowl the no man's land and the fence lines—mainly spirits, but a smattering of elementals as well.



UTE ▼ SECTOR



>>>>(Crystal's right. Next time you pass by a Ute boundary line, give it a quick astral look-see. Pretty closely resembles rush hour in Grand Central Station. Spirits buzzing everywhere.)<<<<<

—Carson (09:38:59/6-2-55)

>>>>(They don't normally concentrate their presence quite that heavily—you musta took your scan at a spot where some watcher had sounded an alert. But spirits do keep an incorporeal eye on just about every inch of the line. Depending on the terrain the line crosses, you'll see city spirits, mountain spirits, plains spirits, and every other kind. Low-power watchers everywhere. And on occasion, I've even seen hints of some things I've never assensed before. Not your standard spirits at all—much more powerful beings. But strange. Twisted, in a way; I want to say "incomplete," but I don't know where that idea comes from.)<<<<<

—Moraya (13:22:38/6-3-55)

>>>>(I don't understand how Ute can afford to bind all those spirits. How many shamans do they have, for frag's sakes? And how many do they burn out each month?)<<<<<

—DeeDee (17:52:49/6-3-55)

>>>>('Tis a puzzlement, ain't it? My guess (and it's only that) is that some of the spirits—maybe most, and definitely the most powerful ones—aren't bound. They're free, but watching the line for personal reasons. (And Moraya, I think we've assensed the same thing. Made me think of a great form city spirit, but somehow twisted out of true. Not toxic, definitely not that. But not...normal, that's all I can say.)<<<<<

—Grover (20:04:55/6-3-55)

Most times, the spirits respond to intrusion attempts by summoning mundane resources—for example, whistling up a couple of Ute security fire teams in a Citymaster or LAV. Under some circumstances, however, they take matters into their own hands, usually with a rather messy ending.

>>>>(Nice understatement. Ever seen what's left of a t-bird after a fire elemental manifests in its fuel tank...?)<<<<<

—Billabong (06:08:15/5-26-55)

>>>>(Frag, is that what happened? RIP, Cat.)<<<<<

—Zak (11:34:52/5-26-55)

>>>>(Couldn't tell ya—I use a porous insert in my tanks. Null vapor. Null burn.)<<<<<

—Trasher Van (02:18:15/6-1-55)

WHO LIVES HERE

>>>>(I'm always fascinated by the "Other" figures in these demographics. What others? Who qualifies? In the northwest, I know sasquatch fall into this category. But what about down in this neck of the woods?)<<<<<

—Origami (02:13:42/5-27-55)

>>>>(Ute law considers dzoo-noo-qua sentient. But there's not enough of them kicking around to make up 2 percent of the population. (Frag, that's eleven thousand "Others," isn't it?) Fragged if I know.)<<<<<

—Wordsmith (04:26:42/5-27-55)

>>>>(The Ute Sector considers free spirits to be citizens in good standing, and includes them in the census.)<<<<<

—Crystal (13:06:29/5-27-55)

>>>>(Yeah, but still...)<<<<<

—Wordsmith (20:41:49/5-29-55)

>>>>(Both of those statements fall a little short of the rather nasty truth. Technically, "Others" includes the genetically unclassifiable. It's one of those tragedies of the Awakening that nobody talks about—scores of people are born every year genetically damaged, their bodies only partially succeeding at becoming something else. Some of these people, the weird-looking folks we occasionally see wandering the back alleys searching through dumpsters, live relatively normal lives. Many others, however, must remain permanently bedridden or require constant medical care. These unfortunates live in

public medical centers and long-term care facilities, merely existing on the good graces of whatever public medical system operates in a particular nation.

That's who the "Others" are.)<<<<<

—Firelight (21:28:41/6-1-55)

COST OF LIVING

Here's the usual breakdown, folks. The table shows you what to get for how much cred, based (as usual) on a percentage of Seattle prices. All prices are in nuyen (lucky visitors, eh?). People interested in doing a little hot biz on a cold night, be sure to read the footnotes.

Cost of Living Notes

¹Lined clothing is the heaviest allowable armor in the Ute Sector. Even corporate security guards must abide by this restriction whenever they step out of corp jurisdiction.

DATAFACTS (MAY 2055)

Population:	552,000
Human:	69%
Elf:	10%
Dwarf:	6%
Ork:	12%
Troll:	1%
Other:	2%

SINless Population (est.): 69,000

Per Capita Income: 20,000¥

Below Poverty Level: 28%

On Fortune's Active Traders List: 1%

Megacorporate Affiliation: 32%

Education:

High School Equivalency: 40%

College Equivalency: 20%

Advanced Studies Certificate: 6%

Regional Telecom Grid Access: NA/UTE

²The Ute Sector requires numerous licenses and stringent approvals before allowing citizens to purchase explosives. All legally manufactured explosives carry chemical tracers that allow forensic chemists to identify the exact batch used to create any given blast.

³Silencers, smartgun rigs, and smart goggles are restricted.

GOVERNMENT AND LAW

by Man Ray II

Think "dictatorship," and you've summed up government in the UteSec. A senior administrator runs the show with a little help from her senior staff, and the whole cabal receive their appointments directly from the Great Chief of the Ute Nation. The senior administrator answers only to the great chief, not to the national Elected Council. Outsiders consider the Ute Nation the most truly democratic country in North America, because slotting near everything the Elected Council decides must be ratified by national electronic plebiscite. Unfortunately for the residents, Ute Sector's light-years away from that kind of freedom. Sorry, chummer—no democrats need apply. Only the Great Chief can remove the senior administrator. Neither the electorate of the nation nor the citizens of the sector have any say in selecting the administrator or any influence over his or her actions.

>>>>(No senior administrator has ever taken advantage of the existing opportunity, but it's an open secret that he or she could temporarily or permanently overturn the Statement of Rights and Privileges (the Ute equivalent of the UCAS Constitution) at will. Only the Great Chief himself could reverse that decision.)<<<<<

—Lobo (04:54:47/5-26-55)

>>>>(Spirits. What was that old quote about absolute power...?)<<<<<

—Gallagher (13:05:51/5-27-55)

Margaret Stands Firm has served the sector as administrator since 2052. She's a Bear shaman, incredibly powerful, and tougher than rawhide. Not a lady to trifle with, though she's been a reasonably benevolent Fearless Leader so far.

>>>>(Mags is a full-blood Wichita, the daughter of a tribal chief, and a troll. She's also a high-grade initiate, and I'm having the devil's own time finding out what initiatory group she's associated with.)<<<<<

—Barry B (14:56:17/5-22-55)

IMMIGRATION PRACTICES

Here's another area where the Ute Nation and the Ute Sector don't always see eyeball to eyeball. The Ute Nation maintains strongly anti-Anglo immigration laws. Most members of the government recognize that this stance will hurt the nation in the long run, but all changes to immigration law must be put to national plebiscite, and the general population's attitude toward Anglos is anything but tolerant or welcoming. In the 20-teens, the Ute

UTE SECTOR COST OF LIVING

ITEM	COST
	(% of Seattle prices)
Weapons and Armor	
Ammunition	110
Armor ¹	120
Explosives ²	100
Firearm Accessories ³	100
Firearms	100
Melee Weapons	110
Projectile Weapons	110
Throwing Weapons	100
Surveillance and Security	
Communications	90
Security Devices	80
Surveillance Countermeasures	90
Surveillance Equipment	90
Survival Gear	110
Vision Enhancers	100
Lifestyle	
Lifestyle	120
Cybertech and Electronics	
Biotech	110
Bodyware	120
Cyberdecks	90
Electronic Equipment	90
Headware	100
Internals	100
Programs	90
Magical Equipment	
Hermetic Library	135
Magical Supplies	120
Magical Weapons	120
Power Foci	120
Ritual Sorcery Materials	125
Spell Foci	120
Vehicles	
Aircraft	100
Boats	145
Ground Vehicles	110
Military Vehicles	110

Nation conducted the most thorough campaign of all the NAN nations of expelling "Anglos" from its lands following the signing of the Treaty of Denver. (Not particularly surprising, considering that Daniel Howling Coyote was Ute and that the Ute government took everything he'd ever said absolutely to heart.) As went the Ute Nation, so went the Free Zone Ute Sector—local government "strongly encouraged" non-Amerinds to leave.

>>>>(And a bunch who didn't respond well to the "encouragement" got geeked by "cultural purity" vigilantes.)<<<<<

—Gorgon (13:19:16/5-20-55)

>>>>(Oh, wonderful. "Ethnic cleansing." Where have I heard that before? (Where haven't I heard that before?))<<<<<<
—Jeunesse (20:45:52/5-21-55)

>>>>(That's true in the Denver area, but less so up north in Boulder. The natives forced some of those Anglos out, but allowed a significant number to stay. Anybody know why?)<<<<<<
—Craven (12:21:33/5-27-55)

>>>>(The ones found acceptable by Boulder's new rulers were none other than the "New Agers" and crystal wavers who'd been living (and meditating and chanting) in the Boulder area since the fragging 1960s. I guess the Ute government or their proxies, the cultural purity types, figured these flakes didn't act like all the other Anglos or some such drek, and so found them more acceptable. Only those Anglos who live in the world as it is got kicked out.)<<<<<<
—Derek (06:52:01/5-28-55)

>>>>(Stripped of its derogatory overtones, Derek's statement is pretty close to the truth. While some of the "cultural purity" monitors figured anyone with the wrong skin or hair color should be expelled, others decided "Anglo" was an attitude more than anything else. (That same view allows the "pinkskin" tribes to flourish in many NAN nations.))<<<<<<
—Carruthers (23:25:57/5-28-55)

In the sector, however, the senior administrator can change policy more or less as she sees fit without worrying about popular ratification of her decisions. Over the past two decades, consecutive senior administrators loosened restrictions (slightly!) for Anglos interested in immigrating into the sector in order to encourage an influx of the high-tech skill-sets the sector needs at the moment. As a result, the population of Anglos in the Ute Sector has begun a slow climb.

>>>>(No matter what the government decrees, its citizens don't welcome Anglos into the Ute Sector.)<<<<<<
—Bevis (03:49:20/5-25-55)

>>>>(Too simplistic. Some Ute residents have a problem with all Anglos. Others have problems with some Anglos. Some are pretty close to colorblind. And others recognize that Anglos will do the nation and the sector more good than harm in the long run.)<<<<<<
—Moraya (08:32:16/5-25-55)

>>>>(According to my (admittedly unscientific) surveys, it looks as though proportionately more shamans live in the Ute Sector than in the Ute Nation as a whole. In fact, the sector has more shamans than any other NAN nation. Why? Government initiatives? Something in the water?)<<<<<<
—Jordan (22:35:42/5-31-55)

>>>>(The shaman overload isn't a result of government policy—it isn't taught in shaman schools or anything, but it reflects a current cultural trend. At the moment, society has declared

dabbling in the shamanic arts as the "in" thing to do. While most of these dabblers lose interest after making a few useless fetishes, dancing some powerless dances, or suffering a heart attack in a sweat lodge, the fact that more people talk and think about shamanic magic means that more "proto-shamans" who have the Gift might become aware of it and actually listen to the Song of the Totems. It's an awareness thing.)<<<<<<
—Barclay (21:52:38/6-1-55)

>>>>(I think there's more to it, Barclay. Have you heard about that guy from Boulder calling himself "The Guide?" I don't know who he is or anything about his background, but I hear that he goes around to schools and somehow picks out those kids who have the potential to hear the Song of the Totems, then arranges for a mentor to guide them along the path. If their Gift is particularly strong, I hear, he mentors them himself. There's something unusual about this slag.)<<<<<<
—D-Pack (05:40:41/6-3-55)

Margaret Stands Firm has spent the past three years slowly tightening some of those restrictions again, and it's anyone's guess where she'll stop. Even with these changes toward the conservative, it's still easier for a non-Amerind to immigrate to the Ute Sector than to the Ute Nation.

Here's how it works. Those who can claim 50 percent or more native Amerind blood can relocate to the sector with only rudimentary datawork and background checks. New immigrants must accept resident alien status until they've lived in the sector for four consecutive years, after which time they may apply for full citizenship. Sector dwellers gain no real benefits from citizenship because the sector isn't a democracy. In the Ute Nation, citizenship confers the right to vote.

Non-tribals cannot become citizens or resident aliens ("Anglo go home ..."). Anyone the "wrong" color or blood wants to come to UteSec has to get a visitors' visa or a work visa. Neither one's easy; you've got to apply for them from outside the Ute Sector and toss the administrator's trained monkeys a daunting amount of datawork. Visitors' visas are granted only for a month, but visitors can apply for consecutive renewals within the sector. Visitors cannot work (legally, that is).

An applicant for a work visa must electronically submit evidence to the Ute Sector Office of Immigration and Naturalization that he or she has a skill-set of value to the sector. If the OIN agrees with the applicant's assessment, it issues an interim visa valid for 45 days, during which time the applicant must find legal employment. If you're not working at the end of those 45 days, the gummint boots you out of the sector. And there's one last hoop-kicker for those slags lucky enough to find jobs; you've got to renew your work visa every two years, and the gummint can revoke it anytime without notice.

Y'all come see us sometime, 'kay?

>>>>(If you want to get around the OIN datawork and that stupid interim visa, arrange for a job before you apply. Prove one's waiting for you, and you can usually get a visa within a couple of days.)<<<<<<
—Vargas (20:09:17/5-27-55)

WEAPONS

The Ute Sector allows its citizens to sell and possess pistols, hunting rifles, and bows, but all of these weapons must be licensed on purchase or import to be legal. In the very official-looking unofficial Weapon Fines and Punishment Table compiled by some jokers of mine, the penalties for possession and transport refer to unlicensed weapons. Forget burst-fire or autofire weapons—illegal, chummer. Way illegal—try smuggling one through a border-crossing point and see what it gets you. (Ten to twenty thou nuyen and half a year in the slam at least, would be my guess.)

CHIPS, DRUGS, AND ALCOHOL

The Ute Sector outlaws only the most brutal mindbenders, whether chips or chem. The way they scan it, it's your brain. If you want to burn neuro, go to it. If you commit any crime under the influence of a mind-blaster, though, just lie down and die right fragging now. Like in the Pueblo Sector, the Uties figure the crime's premeditated and they send you upriver for a good, long stretch.

>>>>(Keep in mind that even the legal, supposedly "minor" mind-fraggers are socially unacceptable. Over the past five years or so, being wasted in public—even just a little, like an alcohol buzz—gets you censured for crass, stupid, gross behavior. You'd be surprised by how fast peer pressure and social stigma reduces the use of any chems or chips.)<<<<<<
—Dawg (20:34:31/6-2-55)

LAW ENFORCEMENT

A supposedly private outfit, Sand Creek Security Services, handles border defense, customs, and law enforcement. Legally, Sand Creek's a civilian business with no ties to either the Ute national or sector government. On paper, its official HQ takes up office space in Las Vegas. In fact, however, the best efforts of my most talented chummers have so far found not a slottin' trace of Sand Creek in Vegas. Reality check, folks—just like the other sectors, Ute has set up a "civilian security force" that the government secretly controls. I'm no paranoid blowing jetwash, either—I checked a few personnel records, and guess what? Almost all of Sand Creek's employees served in the Ute Security Force—the Ute Nation's paramilitary army/police organization—until mere days before the new "civilian" outfit hired them.

>>>>(Wanna know something kinda scary? You know where the name "Sand Creek" comes from? According to my research, the only Sand Creek anywhere around is a place in old Colorado that just happens to be the site of a massacre of Cheyenne warriors by American troops in 1864! Naming their security forces after the place where Anglos slaughtered Amerinds casts just a little doubt on Ute's supposed "kinder, gentler" approach to Anglos, doesn't it?)<<<<<<
—Converse (02:22:48/5-27-55)

>>>>(Honto? The Ute SecForce never struck me as particularly tolerant of anyone except tribals, and not even of all tribals—they don't seem to like Navaho, for some reason. This Sand Creek outfit could easily be even worse.)<<<<<<
—Yukiko (09:52:34/5-29-55)



>>>>(I'm sorry, I seem to be yabbing about this continually, but I just don't get the 'tude. Every sector I read about posts claims that various civvy security forces are actually stuffed to the gills with various retired or former members of "this military" and "that elite strike force." Bulldrek! Maybe, just maybe, a few really skilled military slags hold key positions, or serve on special tac ops teams and the like, but the average border guard was just a guard in the military, too. Just a regular person, now equipped with some special training and wizzo gear, but that's about it. They might wish they were Wildcats or whatever, but they're not.

Think about it. If all these forces, these thousands of people, are actually ex-military and ex-police and x-elite, where did they all come from??? How could there be that many? There aren't. There just aren't.)<<<<<<
—Firelight (21:28:28/6-2-55)

>>>>(I think you're mistaken, Firelight. A lot of these people are former military. The respective nations in the Free Zone get worried about tangling with other nations, and arrange for skilled people to be in place in case they're needed. Believe it or not, it's happening.)<<<<<<
—Quentin (20:18:41/6-3-55)

The national SecForce, from which Sand Creek draws its jobbers, makes little distinction between armed forces and police. In the Ute Nation and the Sector, personnel rotate regularly between different divisions and departments; to give you

WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Weapon Type	Offense and Fine/Imprisonment			
	Possession (1)	Transport (2)	Threat (3)	Use (4)
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	—	—	750¥	2,000¥
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	—	—	1,500¥	5,000¥
(C) Blunt Weapon	—	—	750¥	2,000¥
(D) Projectile Weapon	200¥	300¥	2,000¥/3 mo	5,000¥/3 mo
(E) Pistol	200¥	300¥	2,000¥/3 mo	5,000¥/3 mo
(F) Rifle	200¥	300¥	3,000¥/3 mo	6,000¥/3 mo
(G) Automatic Weapons	5,000¥	10,000¥/6 mo	10,000¥/1 yr	25,000¥/2 yrs
(H) Heavy Weapon	10,000¥	2 yrs	3 yrs	5 yrs
(I) Explosives	10,000¥	2 yrs	3 yrs*	5 yrs
(J) Military Weapons	1 yr	3 yrs	5 yrs	10 yrs
(K) Military Armor	2,000¥	—	—	—
(L) Ammunition	2,000¥	—	—	—
(M) Controlled Substances	500¥	20,000¥/2 yrs	—	—
(BA) Class A Bioware	—	—	—	—
(BB) Class B Bioware	8,000¥	—	—	—
(BC) Class C Bioware	12,000¥/6 mo	—	—	—
(CA) Class A Cyberware	—	—	—	—
(CB) Class B Cyberware	10,000¥	—	—	—
(CC) Class C Cyberware	5,000¥	—	—	—
(CD) Matrix Tech	25,000¥	—	—	—
(EA) Class A Equipment	1,500¥	—	—	—
(EB) Class B Equipment	5,000¥/6 mo	—	—	—
(EC) Class C Equipment	15,000¥/1 yr	—	—	—
(MA) Class A Controlled	500¥	—	—	—
(MB) Class B Controlled	1,000¥	—	—	—
(MC) Class C Controlled	250,000¥/25 yrs	—	—	—

Notes

*Possession of any explosive not chemically "marked" is considered a "threat."

an idea of what that means to us slags on the street, your average beat cop might well have flown a Raven attack helicopter a couple of months back.

>>>>(Let's put this into even sharper perspective. When they're out patrolling the streets and giving out speeding tickets, SCSS personnel (usually called "Scuzzies," but not to their faces) go for light body armor and nothing heavier than SMGs. Back at the station houses, they've stockpiled full-scale mil-spec weapons and armor, and their cross-training means they know how to use it. If necessary, the guy who cited you for jaywalking yesterday might just jack himself into a panzer to come mow you down for today's transgressions.)<<<<<

—Snoop (09:29:41/5-28-55)

... AND JUSTICE FOR SOME

Justice in the Ute Sector must be described as...interesting. As in the Ute Nation, the top dogs in the crime and punishment

system are the three judges, one of whom must be a shaman, who make up the Judiciary Council in each trial.

>>>>(Usually all three are shamans.)<<<<<

—Kerr (17:04:11/5-26-55)

***I'm not ruling against you because
you're a pinkskin—I'm ruling against
you because you're stupid.
—Judge Smiling Ferret***

Officially speaking, judges run trials using the adversarial system (like in the UCAS), with the usual array of prosecuting and defense attorneys. In practice, however, the judges enjoy a lot of leeway in deciding how much they participate. That's where it gets interesting. Some sit back and play the game as

objective, uninvolved observers. Others nudge the attorneys and witnesses enough to get at the truth. Still others prefer to cut through the bulldrek and walk right into the accused's mind to determine guilt.

If you do get caught doing something you shouldn'ta oughta, the table and notes below tell you what kind of slap on the wrist to expect. Keep in mind that none of this is hard-wired—it can change if some Judiciary Council deems it appropriate.

Cyberware

Interestingly enough, the Ute Sector has no restrictions whatsoever on Class A cyberware and does not require it to be licensed. Class B cyberware requires a license, and Class C is flat-out illegal within Ute jurisdiction except for Sand Creek's bully-boys. If you've got Class C cyberware, you can't come to UteSec. Period. They'll kick you out yesterday if you sleaze in with it and they find you.

>>>>(Various senior administrators have been known to bring in "special assets" packing Class C chrome, but only under special dispensation that shadowrunners aren't likely to receive.)<<<<<

—Birdman (00:19:52/5-24-55)

Cyberdecks

Cyberdecks must be licensed and fitted with an autotrace chipset that includes a unique signature assigned to that deck. When a decker uses a licensed deck with the chipset, it writes a unique signature to the audit trail and also sends what is best described as a kind of "Approved by Ute Security" message as well. Matrix software isn't restricted, apparently because the Ute government assumes an illegal deck's going to be easier to find than killer software. And only a fool would wheel out their wizzer icepick software on a deck that writes an audit trail.

Addictives

Even in the case of the more unpleasant mindbenders, possession for personal use doesn't carry much of a penalty. Trafficking, however, will cost you big time.

PLACES TO SEE AND BE SEEN

If you ask another set of shadowy types to recommend their fave places, they'll probably send you elsewhere. These are our picks—but feel free to comment away.

PLACES TO STAY

Holiday Inn Denver Sports Center

Average Hotel Archetype (7 floors) /1975 Bryant St./Doug Matkovic, Manager/Moderate Bias against Non-Amerindians/LTG# 4303 (33-8331)/Map Location 45

The Holiday Inn is a tall, round building right next to Mile-High Stadium. Since the Denver Broncos franchise moved to the new Broncomania Stadium in UCAS territory, this stadium rarely sees use.

CRIMINAL OFFENSES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE

Offense	Sentence
Arson	10,000¥/1 yr
Assault	5,000¥/1 yr
Battery	5,500¥/1 yr
Extortion	2-3 yrs
Forcible Confinement	5-10 yrs
Fraud	5-10 yrs
Illegal Entry	1-5 yrs
Kidnapping	10-20 yrs
Larceny (petty)	2-5 yrs
Larceny (grand)	5-10 yrs
Murder 1	30 yrs-life (no parole)
Murder 2	10 yrs-life
Murder 3	2-5 yrs
Negligence	2-5 yrs
Rape	2-5 yrs
Rape (statutory)	5-10 yrs
Reckless Endangerment	5,000¥/2 yrs
Solicitation	2,500¥
Trafficking	50,000¥/2-5 yrs
Treason	10 yrs-life
Vandalism	2,000¥
Accessory	20 percent normal
Conspiracy	50 percent normal

>>>>(So why would anyone want to doss down near a stadium where abso-fraggin'-lutely nothing happens?)<<<<<

—Gomer (14:32:00/5-21-55)

>>>>(It's cheap.)<<<<<

—Darwin (18:24:37/5-21-55)

>>>>(Just because the Broncos relocated doesn't mean nothing goes down at Mile-High, Gomer. The Ute Sector sponsors its own sporting events, including some pretty wild track-and-field meets. (I can hear you: "Buncha Amerinds running around a fragging track and jumping over drek? Bor-ring!") Shows how much you know. There's no restrictions on cyber, which means the 100-meter sprint record is something like 3.1 seconds at the moment, and the 1500-meter's down to two minutes and change. High-jump record is pushing 8 meters, and—well you scan the program.)<<<<<

—Trigger (18:09:59/5-23-55)

>>>>(The event that frags my mind is the javelin.)<<<<<

—Bongo (05:04:17/5-24-55)

Denver Marriott West

Luxury Hotel Archetype (8 floors)/1717 Denver West Marriott Blvd., Golden/Paula Knox, Manager/Strong Bias against Non-Amerindians/LTG# 2303 (79-9100)/Map Location 46

The Denver Marriott West is owned by Marriott Hotels of Cheyenne, a wholly owned subsidiary of Marriott Hotels International—a not-so-subtle means of circumventing some of Ute's more arcane corporate-ownership laws. No matter whose name's on the datawork, however, this is a Marriott. And that means good service, bland decor, and relatively high prices. Note that this place is in the 'burb of Golden.

>>>>(The bias against Anglos isn't an official policy, like it seems to be elsewhere in the NAN countries. It's more a pervasive attitude you feel from the service staff.)<<<<<<
—Pact (17:52:13/6-6-55)

>>>>(I think you slags are way too fragging paranoid. I've visited the Marriott a couple of times, and I've never felt less than totally welcome.)<<<<<<
—Hammer (01:25:51/6-7-55)

>>>>(Ever occur to you the sight of a chromed-up street sammy might discourage the staff from showing their true feelings, Hammer? Hmmm?)<<<<<<
—Lace (15:32:09/6-7-55)

>>>>(One of the more reputable locals—a slag who runs under the handle Charon—sometimes hangs at Goldfields, the bar downstairs at the Marriott. Best time to find him is "Hungry Hour," from about 23:00 to 02:00.)<<<<<<
—Reform (17:49:58/6-7-55)

>>>>(Charon's an Aztechnology plant, chummers. Trust me.)<<<<<<
—Slick Willy (08:29:34/6-9-55)

The Rack

Coffin Hotel Archetype (**Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life**)/2501 W. 16th St./Grace Rutan, Owner/No Racial Bias/No LTG#/Map Location 47

The Rack is located a few blocks south of the old Mile-High Stadium, right down on the shore of the South Platte River. The place has a particularly bad reputation even for a coffin hotel, and nobody in his right mind would ever stay there. Unless he's counting on the Rack's rep to keep pursuers off his back.

>>>>(So this is what "Amazing" Grace Rutan is doing these days. Running a coffin's got to be a real comedown from her days as one of the best shadowmages in the biz.)<<<<<<
—Jones (22:56:07/6-2-55)

>>>>(If ain't that different, Jonesy. You'd be surprised how many familiar faces I see.)<<<<<<
—Gracie (08:22:29/6-3-55)

EATS AND DRINKS

Adirondack

Mid-Sized Restaurant Archetype/2175 Federal Blvd./Eric Still Creek, Owner/Moderate Bias against Non-Amerinds/LTG# 5303 (73-8900)/Map Location 48

This is another place that dates back a *long* way, right back to the first half of the 20th century—or so the management would have you think. The Adirondack hosts its guests in a striking, open-plan brick building that purportedly housed a historic brewery. The centerpiece of the place is the two-and-a-half-story-tall copper brewing vat.

Sorry, chummers, but not all is as it appears. This neck of the woods did boast a brewery once, but on the other side of the river. That brewery came down 25 years back. Adirondack's owner, one Eric Still Creek, saw pictures of the place and decided the historical connection would be a wizzer marketing coup. He basically replicated the brewery from scratch a couple of clicks away from its original site. The "copper" vat is actually metallicized plastic, and the only beer it's seen comes from sloppy patrons on the outside.

Still, the food is good, a kind of native Amerind/French cross. It sounds weird, but it works.

>>>>(For some unknown reason, the Ute Sector art community now hangs here of a late evening. If you've got something on the go that needs that kind of resource, this is a good place to find it. (It's also a good place to infiltrate that art community, if that's what your biz requires.)<<<<<<
—Rock (22:19:31/6-2-55)

>>>>(Marcia Still Creek, Eric's sister, is a local fixer par excellence. She never shows her face at the Adirondack, but Eric knows where to track her down. And Eric seems always to be at the restaurant.)<<<<<<
—Dark (12:49:08/6-6-55)

The Buckhorn

Mid-Sized Restaurant Archetype/1000 Osage St., Westminster/Carla Big Mountain, Owner/Strong Bias against Non-Amerindians/LTG# 5303 (34-9505)/Map Location 49

The Buckhorn now finds itself in the midst of a once-affluent residential district that hit the skids in a big way during the last decade. The decor seems designed to make Anglos feel very uncomfortable. Artwork on the walls, computer-modified "historical" photographs, dioramas, plaques—all show the pre-European Amerind nations as the epitome of civilization and sophistication and demonize the "invaders" to a startling degree.

>>>>(That's how it is. Don't get me wrong, the Amerinds did have their own civilization, and the Europeans did destroy it. But the native civilization was never as sophisticated as the displays at the Buckhorn would have you believe, nor the Anglos so irresponsible and brutal. History as it actually occurred is instructive enough, without "revising" it to stress someone's pet peeve.)<<<<<<
—Unis (00:29:28/6-2-55)

>>>>(Spoken like a good little Anglo apologist. And who decides what makes a civilization sophisticated, anyway?)<<<<<<
—Land Child (16:07:39/6-3-55)

By reputation, the food is said to be quite good. (We've never been served, Anglos that we are, so we can't speak from experience.)

>>>>(Stay away from the Buckhorn if you want to avoid trouble with militant Amerinds.)<<<<<<
—People Watcher (11:28:40/5-29-55)

Denim

Night Club Archetype/10151 W. 26th Ave./Hugh James, Owner/Slight Bias against Non-Amerinds/LTG# 2303 (32-3461)/Map Location 50

One of the larger and more happening clubs in the Ute Sector, Denim's a banging place six nights a week (the club's dark on Monday nights). The music is a strange mix of retro-flash, shag, and "tribal rock," which draws a young crowd. Denim does not enforce a dress code.

>>>>(Quite a bit of biz gets done in darkened corners and the small, private rooms. Local Ute Sector runners tend to hang here Tuesdays through Thursdays along with slightly smaller crowds.)<<<<<<
—People Watcher (11:29:53/5-29-55)

>>>>(Hugh James keeps contacts with some of the sector's key chipmeisters, and many of the Cal hots destined for the UCAS Sector get warehoused in Denim's storage rooms. (Don't get any ideas: the security is stone.) James is also the elf to talk to if you're looking to cop restricted weapons.)<<<<<<
—Contra (03:32:41/5-31-55)

ONE OTHER PLACE TO HANG

>>>>**[Lakeside Amusement Park (Map Location 51)]**

The long-abandoned Lakeside Amusement Park dates back to the 1980s and 1990s. At that time, Lakeside existed as a town independent from Denver itself. The "town" of Lakeside was the Lakeside Amusement Park. The owner of the park served as town manager and the town's only residents were tenants who rented rooms in a couple of the park owner's ramshackle buildings.

The park's long since closed down, and all the old rides—yes, real rides, not simsense drek—are quietly rusting away. We understand that the site is for sale, but nobody seems interested in ponying up the cred.

Lakeside is still an independent, legally distinct town. The laws that established it were never removed from the books and so were written into Ute Sector law. Apparently nobody noticed the place was deserted or wanted to bother with it.

So what does that mean? Well, chummerinos, anybody out there want to buy themselves their very own town?<<<<<<
—Barker (11:17:16/5-29-55)

>>>>(If the place is closed down and all those rides are falling apart, how come people in the neighborhood keep saying they see lights and hear music coming from the place on foggy nights, hm?)<<<<<<
—Goose (21:26:34/6-1-55)

Go jump in the Lakeside! The water's fine!
—1996 TV advertisement

>>>>(Screaming bulldrek. There's no power to the place anymore.)<<<<<<
—Vejay (07:56:18/6-2-55)

>>>>(I don't know nothing about music and lights, but somebody's living out there, on the edge of the lake. And he does come out on foggy nights. I've seen him moving through the fog.)<<<<<<
—Tankhog (13:18:25/6-2-55)

BOULDER

The small city of Boulder (approximate population 95,000) lies entirely within the Ute Sector. Historically, the Sioux, Arapaho, Ute, Comanche, and Cherokee inhabited the area until the mid 1800s, when the gold rush drew settlers and troops. Boulder was officially founded in 1859, and within a century had grown into a small but surprisingly cosmopolitan city.

In the latter half of the past century, Boulder gained a new reputation as a college town. It was home to the University of Colorado, and students comprised a third of its population. It was also common knowledge that Boulder served as home to many flakes, crystal wavers, and other eccentrics. Perhaps it was this reputation that saved so many (relatively speaking) of Boulder's Anglo residents from being ousted when the Ute Nation took over the territory.

>>>>(The Awakening put lots of people living in Boulder in touch with the magical realities of the Sixth World. Call them flakes and crystal wavers if you want, but by 2020 many of them shamans and proto-shamans called the place home, many of whom had no Amerind blood in their veins at all.)<<<<<<
—Gowan (23:57:58/6-1-55)

>>>>(No wonder, really. Boulder's located at the mouth of Boulder Canyon, in the shadow of Flatiron Mountain—two sites of power. The Arapahos and Cheyenne had always considered the entire area holy. No wonder, with that kind of spiritual grounding, that the area gave rise to so many shamans.)<<<<<<
—Timian (22:04:51/6-2-55)

The University of Colorado closed in 2019 as a natural outgrowth of the Treaty of Denver. The campus never re-opened. When the Ute Nation took control of the area, there was some talk of opening a satellite campus to Brigham Young University, but the problems created by the Front Range Free Zone's political and logistic situation seemed to outweigh any advantages of such a venture.

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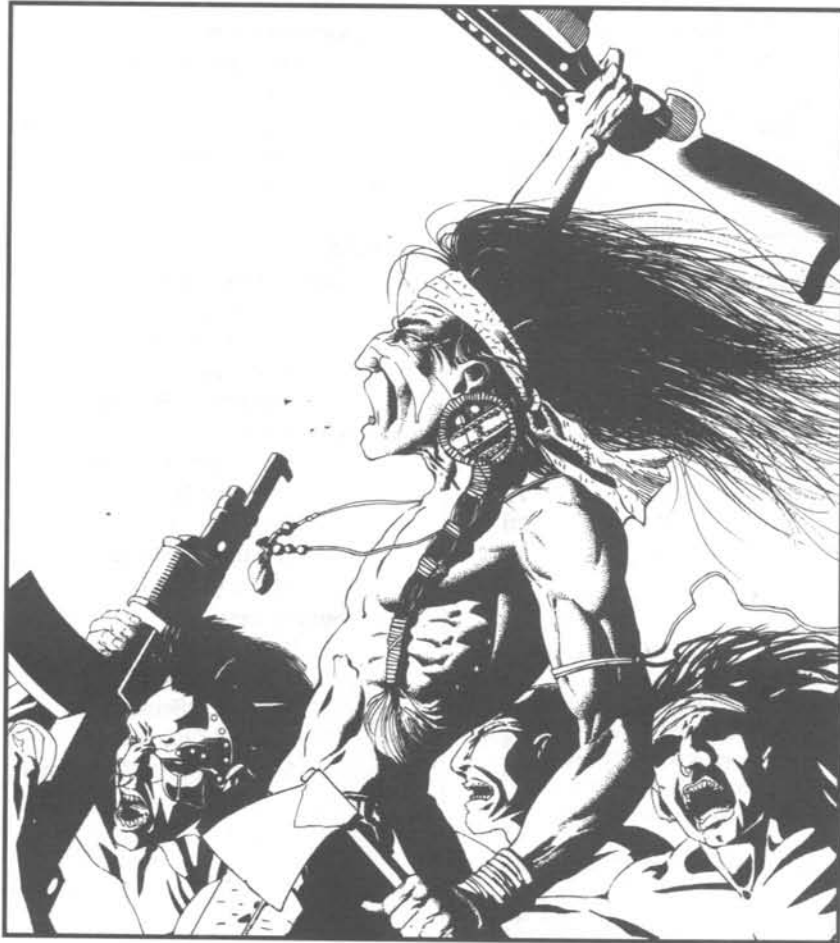
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DENVER
-GAMEMASTER BOOK-

DENVER™

GAMEMASTER BOOK



FASA CORPORATION

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Author Dedication: To all my friends on America Online ... including the ones I haven't met yet. And to anyone else who wants to come visit online. Drop me a line at NigeldF@AOL.COM.
Special thanks to Bill Lenox (LEN LEO@AOL.COM) for helping me bring the Front Range Free Zone to life. Here's to you, chummer.

Dedication: To the Howling Mongol Horde, particularly Piers Brown, for his suggestions about the spirit of Denver. You're twisted, chummer. Keep it up.
And to Bill Lenox again, for his background on NORAD.

FASA Corporation can be reached on the GEnie computer network (E.Mail— FASA.SUPPORT) on SCORPIA's Roundtable (page 805) and on America Online (E.Mail— FASATom (Shadowrun), FASALou (Earthdawn), or FASABryan (Battletech) in the Online Gaming area (Keyword "Gaming"). Via InterNet use <AOL Account Name>@AOL.COM, but please, no list or server subscriptions. Thanks!

INTRODUCTION

Listen up, gamemasters. We know that surprises and uncertainties are an essential part of creating a satisfying **Shadowrun** adventure. But we also know how difficult it is to keep your players on their toes when they know as much as or more than you do about a **Shadowrun** environment because they read all the same books. This book is designed to remedy that problem.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

We wrote **Denver** to read pretty much like most other **Shadowrun** sourcebooks—the intriguing, confusing combination of facts, suspicions, guesses, rumors, and lies that you’ve come to expect. Some mouthy slag from the shadows contradicted just about every “fact” the authors stated—called them tin-pot liars, offered an alternative interpretation, or asked a leading question that cast doubt on, or at least slanted, the authors’ versions of the facts.

The **Denver Gamemaster Book** takes the concept of unconfirmed information one step further. It offers additional information on the people, places, and events discussed in the **Denver** book, plus three different versions of background information that your players don’t know. These three contradictory, mutually exclusive explanations for what’s really happening behind the scenes in the Treaty City give you the opportunity to decide for yourself what the truth is in your game.

INTRODUCTION



As you scan this book, choose the version of the truth that most appeals to you, that best fits what you want Denver to be for your players and player characters. So who cares if your players read the **Denver Gamemasters Book**? Unless they can read your mind, they'll never know what choices you made from the dozens that we provide, and so they'll never be certain just what's going on in the deep dark shadows of Denver. Of course, as always, we encourage you to make completely different choices if none of ours appeals to you.

The first section of this book describes the spirit of Denver, an aspect of Denver to which most people remain completely, blissfully oblivious. The fact of its existence might never appear, or even be hinted at, on a public databoard. If your players read this book, they'll know more about this and other little twists than their characters should, but we've tossed in the "one from column A, two from column B" option to let you keep them guessing. The **People** and **Locations** sections do the same for Denver's who's who and where it's at.

Sound like fun? Yeah, we thought so.

CHOICES, CHOICES

In general, we've stacked Options A, B, and C for each topic in increasing order of "drek value." Option A usually offers a pretty straightforward explanation of events. Option B makes matters more complex and represents greater risk—and opportunity—for the player characters. Option C usually puts the player characters into neck-deep drek—these are the really twisted stories.

If you're feeling ambitious, you can use the option system to rate your version of the Front Range Free Zone. We suggest the following scale: for each Option A you use, assign your Free Zone 0 points. For each Option B, assign it 1 point, and for each Option C you use, assign it 3. Total the result and consult the Free Zone Rating table.

RULES

For all the reasons stated in the **Denver** book and more, Denver represents a unique campaign setting in the **Shadowrun** world. Running this city requires a few new rules, a few twists and updates to the existing rules, and a whole set of rules relevant to situations specific to conditions in Denver. Because of these requirements, and because we recognize the possibility that new players may choose Denver as their first campaign setting rather than Seattle, we chose to make the rules section of the **Denver Gamemasters Book** as complete as possible. We decided to print in one place all the rules we considered necessary for running Denver effectively and efficiently.

Experienced players may recognize some of the rules in this book as having been previously printed in the **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life**, the **Street Samurai Catalog**, the **Rigger Black Book**, **Shadowtech**, and other **Shadowrun** publications. Some of those rules provide basically the same information; we altered others slightly so that they more accurately reflect the atmosphere and economic-political style of the Treaty City. Still other sections simply provide appropriate information for you to consider when deciding whether or not your player characters succeed in the tasks they set for themselves. In all cases, you must decide if the rules as presented (or slanted) fit with your group's style of play. If the answer is no, adjust them until the game flows the way you want.

GAMEMASTERING DENVER

Politics and economy drive Denver to a greater degree than they drive any other locale described in the **Shadowrun** world. The intricate workings of the Front Range Free Zone are difficult to understand and treacherous to negotiate, requiring a cool head, cold cash, and solid contacts. The Free Zone is a high-stakes environment where nuyen and adventures are plentiful, but the prices demanded are steep and all too often lethal.

Megacorporations may offer characters work, but they can't match the political game for risks and rewards. And be assured that everything a runner does becomes common knowledge throughout the Zone within hours—all actions affect some other plotter's plans. The naive and careless don't stand a chance in Denver.

POLITICS

The rivalries of the six sector governments and the major players in the shadow economy drive the Front Range Free Zone's shadow world. Most shadowruns center on some sort of espionage, from data thefts to surveillance to extractions.

More so than even in Berlin, these not-always-violent opportunities abound because the unique nature of the divided city allows no room for direct confrontation or open warfare. Literally, no room—no buffer zones, no inner-city sprawls, no abandoned, unguarded areas exist to allow third parties to remain uninvolved in such conflicts. Power struggles become games in which individuals and institutions make small, deliberate, covert moves against their rivals, rather than large, sweeping actions. The scope of events is narrowed, every move counts, and every action means serious risks.

The sector governments, acting as proxies for their national governments, initiate and fuel the action. Who can

FREE ZONE RATING

Points	Interpretation
0-20	Denver's a nice place to vacation.
21-50	The Chamber of Commerce should issue warnings.
51-80	This makes Seattle look tame.
81-96	Well, go to it—but we don't want to play in your campaign.

INTRODUCTION

be implicated in what? Can plans be revealed or intercepted? Blackmail and manipulation form the primary tools that allow the interactions of the Zone governments to mirror the international scene.

MEGACORPORATE POWER

Most megacorporations minimize their presence and power in the Front Range Free Zone. While many of the major megacorporations maintain the assets they built in the Denver area before the Treaty (mostly research and development facilities in the Colorado Springs area), the volatile nature of the Free Zone discourages most corps from investing further resources in these facilities.

However, many megacorporations actually built or bought fairly extensive data research offices (read: espionage) in Denver even after the Treaty. Its proximity to the Data Haven and easy access to outposts of six nations makes Denver a prime location for corporate espionage. Because these are necessarily very low-key facilities, we briefly described only a few corporate sites in the **Denver** book to allow you to develop the rest as you see fit.

THE WEB

While it is true that nothing ever happens in a vacuum, that aphorism truly applies to the Free Zone. In Denver, everyone knows everything, and every action is likely to affect something else. To reflect this slice of reality, create existing relationships between non-player characters, governments, and corporations as demonstrated in the first few sections of this book. Some associates will be allies, some enemies. And someone always has the assets others need. Everyone living or working in Denver relies on someone for something, caught up in a web of inter-reliance. Favors represent currency as real as nuyen and must be honored at full value.

Determine who is dealing with whom, why they seem to be doing that deal, and then their real reasons. The black market in corporate, consumer, and military data and goods make a prime motivator for all types of relation-

ships. No one controls enough of the city to entirely dominate the political or economic scene, and the subdivided state of the city ensures this condition will continue into the foreseeable future. For now, to live, deals have to be struck, arrangements made. And these things have a way of going bad—real bad.



HIGH-STAKES LIVING

The Front Range Free Zone is unforgiving. No one, especially the professionals, tolerates an amateur. Those in the black and shadow markets gladly take the time and effort to teach a lesson to a reckless, inconsiderate, unmanageable, or just plain stupid runner. Everyone playing the big game in Denver understands the costs and risks of doing business. And when minor players on the scene move without regard for the consequences of their actions, the pros unceremoniously remove such dangerous individuals. Professionalism is the key: shadowrunners who leave unfinished business behind or attract unwarranted attention find themselves quickly out of work, and fatally out of luck.

Few locales in the **Shadowrun** world rely as heavily as Denver on political machinations and shadow operations to accomplish the tasks of daily life. Denver greatly resembles the Berlin described in the **Germany Sourcebook** in the way it is politically driven and deeply submerged

in the intricate negotiations and other dealings required to do the most innocuous biz.

This section summarizes the plots, counterplots, weaknesses, strengths, traps, and back doors offered for your consideration in the **Denver** book. It ties them all together and suggests ways this information might affect the Denver campaign setting and the player characters. We think that this book alone provides plenty of twisted explanations and drek-tossing opportunities, but we encourage you to use these ideas as a springboard for your own interpretation of this messy little corner of the **Shadowrun** universe.

SPIRIT OF DENVER

Chambers of commerce, tourism bureaus, and other civic cheerleaders often claim “Our city has spirit!,” running ad campaigns based on tag lines of, “Experience the Spirit of [fill in your city’s name here]!” For most cities, such slogans are mere boosterism. In Denver, it’s the truth, though few people know it and fewer admit it.

(See pp. 76–83 in **The Grimoire, Second Edition**, for more information about free spirits.)

HISTORY

Long before the Treaty of Denver, a free great-form city spirit lived there. Some magicians even contend the city and the spirit were somehow one. According to the few investigators who have successfully researched the matter, the spirit most likely took up residence in the area during the gold rush of the 1850s. By the time “Denver City” became the capitol for the Colorado Territory in 1867, the spirit already wielded considerable strength and influence and would continue to grow during the next century and a half. Some researchers believe the spirit somehow took responsibility for the city, protecting it from outside influences that might work to the detriment of the city and its growing population.

SPIRIT OF DENVER



At the Awakening in 2011, certain self-proclaimed occultists in the Denver area consciously recognized the existence of the spirit and made contact with it. The spirit grew immensely powerful over the years, offering an incredible advantage to anyone capable of binding or influencing it. Though many tried, some dying rather messily in the attempt, no one bent the spirit to their will. Contemporary analysts rate the great-form spirit at a Force Rating of 18, and a Spirit Energy of 11 in the early 20-teens.

The spirit, known to those aware of its presence as Zebulon, sensed the dynamics that would lead to the Indian Wars long before the city's mortal inhabitants. Though Zebulon made what efforts it could to defuse the growing hostilities within the city itself, it apparently could not extend its influence beyond the municipal limits. Its influence covered more area then, as the Denver metroplex included the sprawl of development that swallowed Boulder and Colorado Springs, but Zebulon realized that it could do very little to affect the course of events. As Denver sank into the center of the conflict, Zebulon began to despair.

In early 2017, things changed forever. As the Indian Wars reached a crescendo, two individuals managed something all other magicians had long believed impossible—they discovered Zebulon's true name, through individual astral quests. One of these individuals was Robert Greene, an Amerind shaman, a soul mate to and follower of Daniel Howling Coyote. The other was Ursula Mahr, a hermetic mage performing contract work for the U.S. military. Predictably, Greene wanted Zebulon to support the NAN forces in their battle with the oppressors. Mahr wanted the spirit to repress the "rebels." Both magicians prepared their materials, drew their circles, constructed medicine lodges, and used the true name they'd learned to summon Zebulon as the first step in binding the mighty spirit to their separate wills.

THE FRAGMENTATION

Both magicians issued their summonses at *precisely the same instant*, despite the astronomical odds against such an occurrence. The powerful magic of its true name forced Zebulon to respond to both summonses.

To answer two calls simultaneously, Zebulon fragmented into two distinct spirits—each free, each now with a different true name that was a portion of the complex astral formula making up Zebulon's true name. Each spirit displayed a portion of the Force Rating and Spirit Energy of Zebulon, and each appeared to be borderline insane. The two magicians—Mahr and Greene—each found themselves facing an angry free spirit, far less powerful than the original Zebulon but impossible to control, since neither was bound by the true name the magicians had gone to such great lengths to discover. The inevitable outcome: neither magician survived the experience. Those who discovered his body found Greene dead of overwhelming fear, and the largest chunk of Mahr's body recovered would have fit in a matchbox.

The two resulting spirits—Zeb A and Zeb B, some wag dubbed them—both manifested as great form, allowing them to freely cross domain boundaries. Each was believed to retain a portion of the original Zebulon's memories and some facets of the spirit's personality. While Zeb A showed behavioral patterns similar to a guardian, Zeb B acted more like a shadow. One magician suggested that the spirit had split along lines that in (meta)humans might be labeled "conscious" and "sub-conscious."

Though this split represented a significant magical event, most citizens remained ignorant of the powerful spirit's existence. A few particularly astrally sensitive individuals felt a disturbance, perhaps a dozen magicians recognized the presence of a powerful spirit (or two), but only six or so people had identified Zebulon and were aware of the incident.

Before those aware of its presence had the chance to understand what had happened to Zebulon, the situation became even more complex. When the Treaty of Denver divided authority over the city between the six signatory nations, Denver changed symbolically in a way no other city had since Berlin in 1961. And symbolic changes often affect spirits more profoundly than do physical changes.

Nobody knows whether the Treaty of Denver would have affected Zebulon if the spirit hadn't already been split in two by the actions of Greene and Mahr. Perhaps that schism had somehow "destabilized" the spirit, making it more vulnerable to symbolic changes. Or perhaps the split simply foreshadowed coming events. In any case, the spirit of Denver fractured still further, becoming at least six distinct spirits. All possessed some portion of Zebulon's Force Rating and Spirit Energy and kept some portion of Zebulon's memory. Some investigators claim that each spirit manifests at least one facet of Zebulon's personality. Each spirit's true name retains a fragment of the true name of Zebulon.

IMPLICATIONS

Because true names are actually made up of complex astral formulae that define a spirit's essence, the "fragment" of a true name is a fragment of that formula, not necessarily a fragment of the verbal *manifestation* of that formula. When Zebulon split in two, the division didn't leave one spirit with a true name of "Zeb" and the other with a true name of "Ulon." True names just aren't that simple. The verbal manifestations of the spirit's "split" true names could just have likely become "Little Butterfly" and "Gormenghastly." Any magician who wants to bind one of the six known "sub-spirits" must perform a full and complete astral quest to find its true name. And these sub-spirits still wield enough power and influence to make such a quest worthwhile. It should come as no surprise that various metaplanes often seem as busy as rush hour downtown.

Each of the spirits resulting from the split may increase its Force Rating and Spirit Energy using the means available to all free spirits.

CONSEQUENCES

At least six (maybe more) powerful and influential free spirits, with their own motives, needs, and profound psychological problems, now wander around Denver. Relatively speaking, more people are aware of these “sub-spirits” than the original Zebulon. Still, probably no more than 50 individuals are aware of the sub-spirits.

The psychological and emotional distance between the various spirits seems roughly proportional to the level of antipathy and animosity between the different sectors. Certain sub-spirits associate themselves with certain sectors more closely than others. The symbolic “atmosphere” of each sector affects that spirit’s outlook, motivations, and even its abilities and powers.

Some magicians believe that the sub-spirits can and should be reunited into a single great-form city spirit. They believe that a single magician or team of magicians need only find the true name of each sub-spirit and then summon all the sub-spirits to a single place at the same time, where the sub-spirits would merge due to close proximity, thereby healing the schism. The more spiritual of these magicians also believe the magical “Law of Congruity” means that this merging will also “heal the breaches” between the sectors and the signatory nations. The vast majority, however, consider these optimists to be fuzzy thinkers. Unfortunately, nobody knows exactly how many sub-spirits exist. It seems reasonable to assume that those sub-spirits most closely associated with areas razed by the relocation teams simply ceased to be—and no one is willing to postulate the implications of these “deaths” for the proposed “reunification.”

THE SPIRITS

The following brief descriptions of four of the more influential and/or well-known sub-spirits of Denver include three options that provide alternative backgrounds and/or motivations for each spirit fragment.

We left two of the spirits undefined to allow the gamemaster latitude to develop unique sub-spirits with diverse and interesting powers that fit his version of the Front Range Free Zone.

GRAY SKY (Great Form)

Force Rating: 7

Spirit Energy: 5

Powers: Astral Gateway, Aura Masking, Human Form

The sub-spirit that calls itself Gray Sky watches over the Pueblo Sector and occasionally involves itself in sector politics.

Option A

Gray Sky is a trickster that enjoys assuming the guise of a mortal, usually an itinerant or homeless person, and slotting with the guards and sensors watching the sector demarcators. You know all those false alarms keeping the



watch commanders from getting their sleep lately? Gray Sky’s having a bit of fun.

Option B

Gray Sky’s a trickster, all right, and its humor will just “slay” you. In this version, the sub-spirit still targets demarcator security. But it tends to get off on assuming the guise of a corrupt demarcator guard and luring would-be border crossers into trouble. Last week a runner got herself geeked when her physical mask spell spontaneously collapsed in front of a truckload of trigger-happy guards. Gray Sky apparently laughed itself insubstantial.

Option C

Gray Sky’s a shadow rather than a trickster, and really has it in for anyone who wants to enter the Pueblo Sector illegally. The spirit often impersonates a connected, well-known local and leads people into ambushes that it has set up by impersonating watch commanders among the security forces. Few walk away from these ambushes, but if they do, Gray Sky doesn’t mind. They’ll just tell all their friends about how the local they hired fragged them over. Definitely the end of the local’s career and probably his life, too. Gray Sky couldn’t be happier.



NIGHT (Great Form)

Force Rating: 8

Spirit Energy: 3

Powers: Aura Masking, Human Form, Possession, Wealth

The sub-spirit known as Night chose an appropriate name. The darkest of the spirit-fragments in Denver, Night revels in pain and suffering and constantly plots and plans and manipulates to bring a large share of the world to that state. Night is most often associated with the UCAS Sector but can cross sector boundaries. It prefers to appear as a tall, lithe man or woman with dark hair and eyes and pale skin. He/she is always beautiful and very dangerous.

Option A

Night is the master of the BTL den called the Twisted Heart. Patterned after the historical, nearly forgotten opium dens, the Twisted Heart consists of a maze of rooms, large and small, scattered with pillows, cushions, and lounging pads and enough freestanding and anchored room dividers to give all clients privacy. After paying an entry fee, the customer may sample the darker BTL delights the den offers. Night can often be found walking slowly among the chipheads, basking in their despair. In this form, Night is a player.

Option B

Night wanders the city seeking pleasure and experience, switching between male and female forms as circumstances require. Simple pleasures do not satisfy it: Night must entice an unwitting victim into performing terrible acts of pain, death, and betrayal, particularly to an innocent or loved one. In this form, Night is a shadow stalking the decadent fringes of society.

Option C

Glennis Shand, leader of the Unity policlub, is actually Night in its physical manifestation. Night wants the entire Front Range Free Zone to erupt in a racial blood bath. This intelligent spirit, however, knows that the foundation for this violence must be built carefully for it to explode with the greatest impact and damage. Night carefully considers and plans all of Unity's actions, leaving very little room for random violence. The group members frequently masquerade as other races and groups to incite hate, and Night often assumes metahuman forms to commit the group's most terrible acts.

SMOKE (Great Form)

Force Rating: 8

Spirit Energy: 6

Powers: Animal Form, Astral Gateway, Aura Masking, Dispelling, Possession

Smoke maintains close associations with one of the council chiefs responsible for managing the Sioux Sector, Lucinda Gray Arrow. A powerful and influential Cat shaman, Lucinda is accompanied everywhere by a huge gray cat, an animal some suspect is an ally spirit, or "familiar." In fact, this cat is the sub-spirit Smoke, concealing its true nature with its aura masking ability. Depending on its mood, Smoke's aura looks like that of a normal cat or of a bound spirit of some low power. The question is, does Lucinda know just what is sitting on her lap?



Option A

Lucinda knows her cat's true nature, and she and Smoke willingly work together to protect the Sloux Sector against those who would harm it. She'll do whatever it takes, within certain moral and ethical limits, to ensure that nobody harms the people of the sector. Her actions seem arbitrary only because she acts on information unavailable to anyone else, information provided to her by Smoke.

Option B

It came as quite a shock to Lucinda when she discovered last year that her ally spirit is actually a free city spirit powerful enough to suck the marrow from her bones at a moment's notice. Still, Smoke assures her that they are working toward the same goal: the protection and advancement of the sector's inhabitants. Lucinda's influence in the council continues to increase as a result of Smoke forewarning her of attempts by other chiefs to back-stab her. She's even been turning their machinations back on the schemers.

In those long, dark nights of the soul, Lucinda sometimes worries that she and Smoke do not really share the same goals. That possibility is so unpleasant to consider, however, that she forces those worries out of her mind.

Option C

Lucinda believes her cat "Smoke" is actually a very minor ally spirit, Force Rating 4 at most. Lucinda figures she's been lucky lately. She's never considered herself particularly astute when it comes to reading the intentions of others—not without magical intervention, that is—but recently her "instincts" have been working overtime, warning her when several of her colleagues on the council were plotting to undercut her influence. Lucinda's even been able to devise clever ways to counter those plans and even turn them back against their perpetrators. She assumes she's simply been playing this political game long enough to learn the moves.

But not everything's sweetness and light. Lucinda's been feeling immense stress recently: how else should she explain those "incidents" where she loses minutes or hours at a time, then learns from others that she's been functioning "normally" during those times?

ROJO (Great Form)

Force Rating: 9

Spirit Energy: 5

Powers: Astral Gateway, Aura Masking, Dispelling, Human Form, Personal Domain, Sorcery, Wealth

Rojo (pronounced *RO-ho*) is closely associated with the Aztlan Sector, especially the Civic Center region (its personal domain).

Option A

A guardian, Rojo seems to concern itself with the well-being of the entire population of the Front Range Free Zone. Physically, the spirit is most strongly linked with the Civic Center and the Aztlan Sector, and feels uncomfortable ranging



away from that area. Rojo understands that the real power in the Free Zone lies with the administrative branch, the bureaucracy. Rojo often assumes the form of Gervaise Brooks, a harmless, bumbling hermetic mage, to "keep an eye" on the administrative branch. The spirit applies influence when and where appropriate to keep the bureaucracy acting in the best interest of the Free Zone's populace.

Option B

Rojo assumes the form of Gervaise Brooks and freely influences individuals and groups in the administrative branch in a mostly benign fashion. Rojo's something of a trickster and seems to enjoy making fools of individuals within the bureaucracy, and the administrative branch as a whole. And Rojo fostered much of the corruption, inefficiency, and incompetence riddling the administrative branch.

Option C

Rojo's a player with an insatiable appetite for power and influence. The spirit quickly realized the council isn't worth a pile of warm drek, and so it focused its attention on the administrative branch. Rojo succeeded in raising the art of bribery to heights rarely seen, and now more or less runs the bureaucracy—and thus the entire Front Range Free Zone. So far, Rojo seems content to relish power for its own sake. It simply enjoys the fact that when it croaks frog, the bureaucracy jumps. Of course, the day may come when the spirit figures out it can do much more with its influence and begin changing the Free Zone drastically.

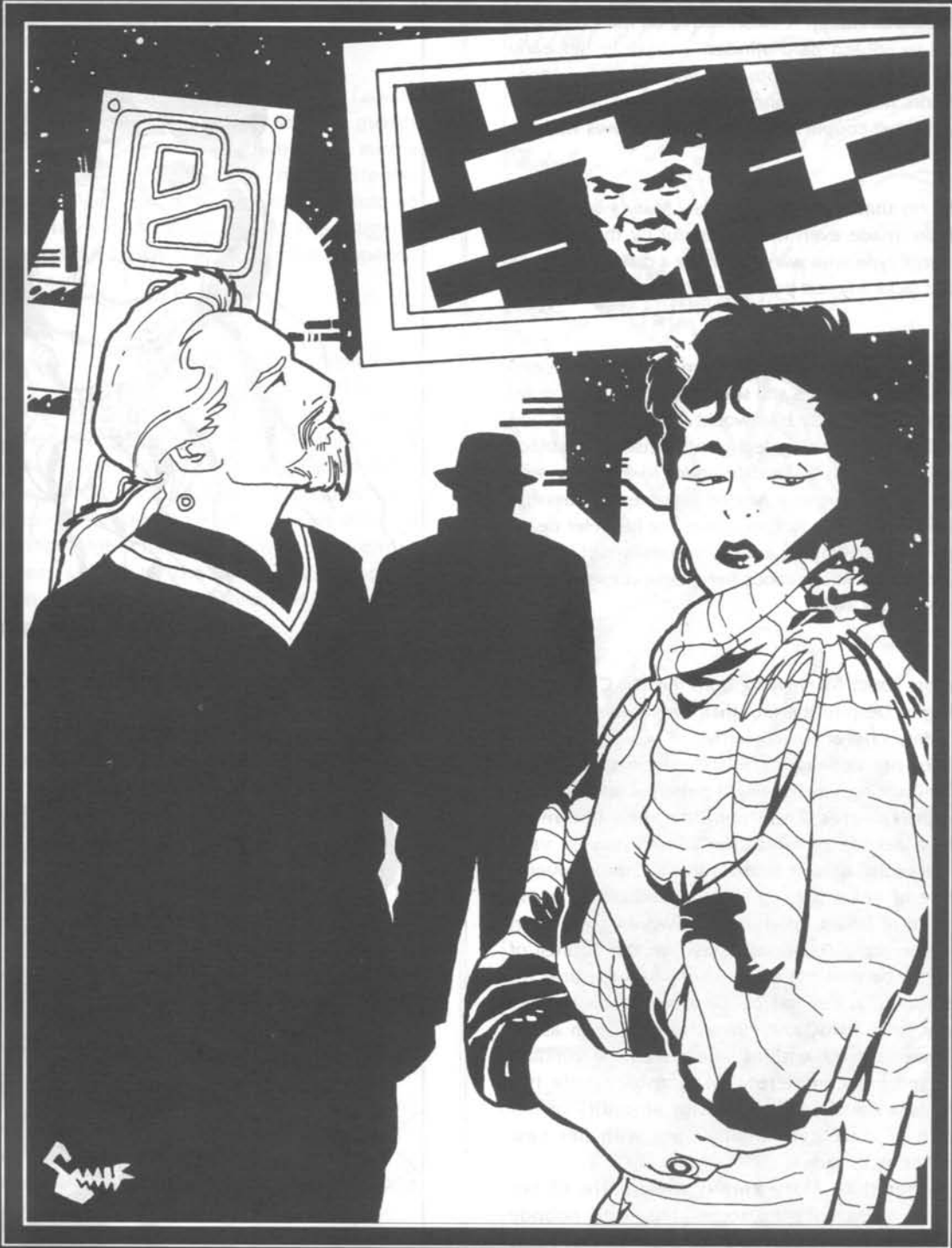
PEOPLE

The descriptions of most of the non-player characters in this section suggest an appropriate archetype from the **Shadowrun, Second Edition, (SRII)** rulebook. Rather than providing a fully defined character for each option and risk putting such sensitive information into your players' hands, we chose to give you a guideline, a "hook" to hang the character on. Using the archetype, you can refine the character and stats to fit the option you choose, and make each Denver character truly unique and idiosyncratically yours.

The players in this section are grouped according to their affiliation: government, sector, Data Haven, and miscellaneous associations.



PEOPLE



GOVERNMENT

MARY CAT DANCING

Use the Tribal Chief archetype (p. 212, **SR11**), but add Magic 6 and appropriate spells and associated skills.

Mary is the Sioux Nation representative on the Council of Denver, a hard-faced and hard-minded woman in her early 50s who looks as though she's pushing 90. As various shadow commentators mentioned, she seems to have aged prematurely over the last couple of years. No one knows why.

Option A

Stress will do that to you, chummer. Mary's in a high-pressure position, made even more stressful by the fact that she's a take-charge type who wants to make a difference, stuck on a council that lacks any real power.

Option B

Mary's on her way out. Even with modern medicine and magical healing, some diseases still spell *THE END* in big, quivering, capital letters. Anybody else would be in a hospital bed popping painkillers and slotting feel-good simsense to block the pain. Mary's too tough to knuckle under to *anything*, and she's probably going to be in a heated argument across the council table when the Grim Reaper comes for her. Her death will prompt some epic infighting among various would-be successors, and most who know about her illness dread the day when Mary finally fades away.

Option C

Those rumors about Mary dying from the Big C? Rumors, *omae*, all of them. Despite the fact that she looks like death warmed over, Mary's never been healthier.

Unknown to her colleagues/rivals around the council table, Mary Cat Dancing wrestles with personal and political problems that make Free Zone conflicts look like mere bagatelles. For a decade or more, she's been playing various megacorporations against factions in the Sioux government. A couple of years back she realized that the game was on the verge of falling apart and she would soon be in deep drek. So she wangled herself a seat on the Council of Denver, hoping to be well out of the way when the drek hit the fan. Unfortunately, several of the people she slotted with have very long arms, and powerful friends in astral space. Well aware that the entities who'd soon be gunning for her outclassed her completely, Mary took a little trip into the metaplanes and cut a deal with an entity of her own. The strain of merely communicating with her new "patron" aged her by decades.

Nobody other than Mary knows the nature of her patron, and even she's not sure sometimes. And nobody knows the details of her side of the bargain, though Faust could probably guess.

This experience, by the way, makes her an initiate. Decide what grade of initiate represents "kick-butt" in your **Shadowrun** campaign and modify all stats and abilities appropriately.



JEREMY FALLOON

"Falloon the Buffoon" is the council's UCAS rep. A charismatic family man in his 40s, Falloon plays the political game like an expert. Recent rumors of a thrill-gang that made a fatal mistake by targeting Falloon imply that he's carrying a lot of cyber.

Option A

Use the City Official archetype (p. 204, **SR11**). Falloon didn't tear up those gangers. His personal security guards took care of it, a couple of ex-commandos who keep such a low profile that few people even suspect their existence. Falloon didn't know he was in trouble until half the would-be muggers found their faces in the gutter. As for the gangers? Just a bunch of kids out for a little bloody fun who happened to pick the wrong pigeon.

Option B

Use the Bodyguard archetype (p. 49, **SR11**), but replace Air Filtration with Retractable Spurs and adjust Essence to 0.4.

Everyone knows Falloon worked with the Justice Department, but very few know in what capacity. The fact is, he was an undercover op trained to respond in high-threat environments. When the gangers came after him, long-dormant reflexes kicked in and the attackers died. In retrospect, he wishes he'd handled things differently, because the rumors set off by the event are attracting unwanted attention. The gangers were just kids who chose the wrong victim.

Option C

Use the City Official archetype (p. 204, **SR11**).

Falloon didn't take down the gangers. Many people wonder just who did the job—Falloon among them!

The entire situation has become a bit surreal. The "gangers" were more than just thrillers out for a little midnight mayhem. Though Falloon didn't recognize them, even he could sense something menacingly professional about his attackers when they made their move. After the fact, he learned they were a hit team sent by the Red Dragon Triad. When the figures moved toward him from the shadows, he knew he was dead.

Then *more* figures materialized out of the dark street around him, tore the triad hit team into bloody ribbons, and vanished back into the night before he could identify or thank them.

Now several questions keep Falloon awake nights. Why did the Red Dragons want him dead? Who were his mysterious saviors? And what vested interest did they have in keeping him alive? Falloon finds it difficult to get a good night's sleep lately.



ELIZABETH KALHEIM

Use the Mr. Johnson archetype (p. 210, **SR11**), but increase internal memory to 300 Mp, add four skillsoft slots, and add the special skill Politics 6. As the CAS representative on the Council of Denver, the young, attractive Betty Kalheim wields political clout but very little real influence outside the council chamber.

Option A

All the rumors describing her as a talking head whose smarts trickle out of her skillsofts are nothing more than the typical badmouthing that follows politicians of all stripes. She's as competent as she seems, and the fact that many people consider her drop-dead gorgeous doesn't diminish her intelligence and drive to succeed.

She is not affiliated with Ares Macrotechnology.

Option B

Betty's smart as a whip. But her political and managerial skills lie more in the realm of tactics than strategy. She doesn't need a lick of help when it comes to dealing with a back-stabbing underling or a political land mine on the council agenda, she's just not that hot when it comes to "the vision thing." That's why she's got a team of political strategists and advisors—all on the Ares Macrotechnology payroll—that feeds her policy and long-term planning information. Betty's job, as she sees it, is to manipulate things in the Free Zone to improve the business climate for Ares, while throwing as many stumbling blocks in the way of the corp's competitors as possible.

Option C

Betty started off as a good little Ares "plant" on the council, following the scripts that Uncle Damien's strategists provided for her. Recently, however, she's started to lose it; Damien apparently hasn't noticed yet, and neither have the politicos in CAS who appointed her. These days, Betty keeps her four chipslots full all the time—three with policy briefings, and one with simsense. (Her rather strait-laced uncle would be shocked speechless by the type of program she prefers.) For those times when simsense just doesn't cut it, she heads off to a rather specialized fixer in the depths of the CAS Sector. Nicknamed Sappho, this fixer also supplies Betty's simsense and BTL chips—sometimes throwing in a few interesting subliminals with the program just for good measure.

Betty's habit is expensive. The kinds of chips and other "diversions" she favors don't come cheap, and she's deeply in debt to Sappho. Recently, Sappho suggested that Betty might consider paying her back via "favors." Though the nature of those favors has yet to be revealed, it's unlikely that Betty will refuse them, whatever they are.



AZTLAN SECTOR

FRANCISCO "PACO" VALDEZ

Use the Mr. Johnson archetype (p. 210, **SR11**), but add Firearms 3.

Valdez is a dark-haired, dark-skinned man apparently in his 40s. From a distance, his smooth-skinned face appears strikingly handsome, but closer inspection reveals a glossy, plastic look to his skin, and his features somehow don't fit together quite right. Valdez is more than 70 years old, in fact, maintaining his relatively youthful looks through extensive cosmetic surgery and magical intervention.

Born in Colombia in the 1980s, "Paco" began working as a courier for the Medellín cocaine cartel as a young boy. A naturally ruthless individual, he quickly rose to the upper echelons of the organization. His climb up the cartel ladder eventually stalled, leaving him high in the ranks but not at the top. The VITAS epidemic eventually claimed many of his rivals for the top spot, and Valdez's bullets removed the remaining competitors.

Option A

The Medellín cartel provided one of the driving forces behind the formation of Aztechnology. As the cocaine cartels merged with respectable businesses, Valdez seized the opportunity to clean up his act and leave his criminal past behind. Though his ruthlessness and killer instinct remain intact, he's spent the past thirty years or so channeling these talents into proxy fights and hostile takeovers rather than assassinations. Today, he's as respectable a businessman as you'll find anywhere in the Aztlan/Aztechnology organization. Of course, that doesn't make him a safe man to slot around.

Option B

Though Valdez no longer maintains official associations with the Medellín cartel and its drugs-and-chips business, he counts many close friends in its upper echelons. He drew on his contacts for help in climbing the Aztechnology ladder, intending to carve himself out a little "personal empire" to provide the comfort and power he craves without the stress and competition of the corporate mainstream. The Front Range Free Zone seems to satisfy his definition of such a little empire, and he apparently has no desire to climb any higher up the corporate ladder. May the spirits help anyone he thinks might threaten his cozy position, however.

Option C

Officially speaking, Valdez severed his ties with the Medellín thugs long ago. In practice, however, he's still part of the crime network and does not hesitate to use cartel resources to further his own career. He's been climbing the Aztlan/Aztechnology hierarchy ruthlessly for decades, with his eye on the top spot—CEO of the entire megacorporation. The current CEO, Juan Aztcapotzalco, saw him coming and shuffled Valdez off to Denver to cool his heels for a few years.

That didn't go down too well with Valdez, but Paco saw the dangers of bucking Aztcapotzalco's orders. He went where



he was sent, but he's working overtime to build up influence throughout the Aztechnology corporate structure. When he returns to Mexico City, he intends for Aztcapotzalco to be following *his* orders. Meanwhile, Valdez views the Free Zone as a combination prison and training camp.

Valdez has let his healthy, necessary paranoia get out of hand. He suspects Aztcapotzalco of sending assets to spy on him, and is quick to eliminate any employees he suspects of acting as the CEO's operatives. So far he's eliminated four real spies and more than a dozen innocents who happened to trigger his paranoia.

ZACUALTIPÁN

Zacualtipán is a very powerful dracoform feathered serpent who lives in a specially designed penthouse atop a huge condominium tower near the corner of Inca Street and West 13th Avenue, overlooking the river. The dracoform represents a major "player" in the economy of the Aztlan Sector and much of the Denver metropolitan area. Directly and indirectly, she owns scores of businesses, though her best-known holding is the restaurant, The Serpent's Feather. Though Zacualtipán believes in a "hands-off" style of management, leaving day-to-day affairs to the discretion of her manager, Ricardo Valdez (who just happens to be a distant relation to Francisco Valdez, sector manager), the serpent takes a profound interest in goings-on at "the Snake."

Option A

Zacualtipán recognizes the amount of money that floods through the shadow economy and uses the Snake as a way to siphon off some of it into her own bank account. The restaurant makes a good place to meet a fixer, and Zacualtipán earns a healthy income by arranging for more private, secure sites for biz meetings. Zacualtipán has outfitted the place with bugs and recording devices, which enable her to eavesdrop on business transactions there. If you manage to reach her directly, Zacualtipán offers an excellent resource for finding a fixer with any specialization you require at the moment.

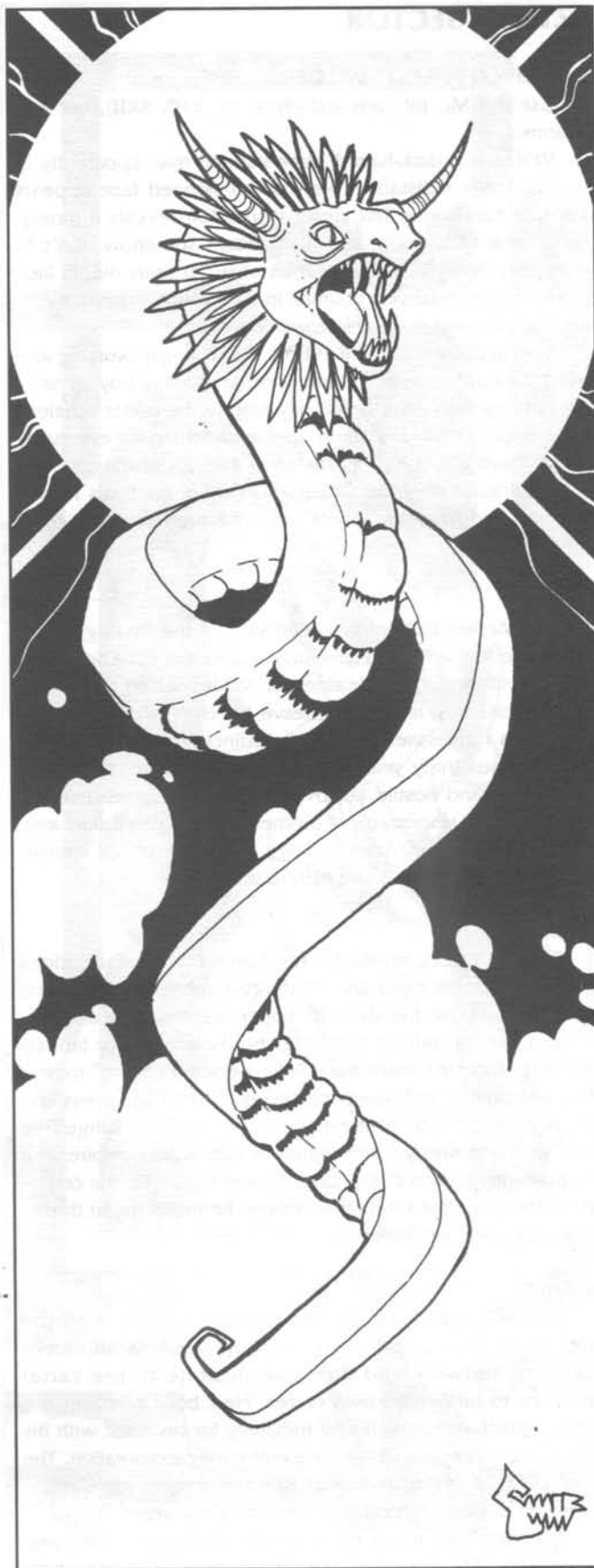
Option B

Zacualtipán is locked in a very long-term rivalry with another feathered serpent who calls himself Dzitbalchén. Dzitbalchén holds a position of great power and influence in the corporate structure of Aztechnology in Mexico City, similar to the position Zacualtipán held in Aztechnology some years ago, according to unconfirmed rumors.

For reasons unknown to mere mortals, Zacualtipán and Dzitbalchén hate each other, despite—or perhaps because of—the fact they're siblings. Despite their mutual animosity, neither intends to kill the other or allow the other to be physically harmed. Such actions are simply "against the rules" of feathered serpent vendettas. They make herculean efforts to hurt each other indirectly, however. Zacualtipán constantly organizes runs against her brother's holdings and those Aztechnology operations he holds most dear, while Dzitbalchén does much the same against his sister's personal holdings. If a player can convince her that a planned run will hurt Dzitbalchén's finances or his pride, then Zacualtipán can be the best resource imaginable. However, if Dzitbalchén learns that a player has cozied up to his sister, that player is in deep, deep drek—particularly because vendetta rules do not prohibit the killing of a rival's friends or colleagues.

Option C

See Option B, except that both Zacualtipán and Dzitbalchén are great dragons.



CAS SECTOR

SAPPHO

Use the Fixer archetype (p. 207, **SR11**).

Sappho (Katrina Brahe) is a hard-faced dwarf in her mid-40s. A fixer with an interesting specialization, Sappho caters to rich, powerful clients throughout Denver who suffer from unique recreational needs. Sappho trades in just about anything these people will pay big nuyen to acquire: chips (BTL, 2XS, "Black Beetle" snuffware, you name it), women, men, farm animals—you get the picture. At the moment, Sappho's most famous—or notorious, depending on your point of view—client is Betty Kalheim, the CAS rep on the Council of Denver.

Sappho has cultivated an extensive network of suppliers and recently begun to develop "downstream channels" as well to expand the market for her goods and services.

Option A

Sappho is nothing more sinister than a very efficient procurer. She's an independent, not directly linked with any organized crime entity or corporation. Over the past few months, Sappho's realized that Betty Kalheim's ever-growing debt (see p. 18) offers her an opportunity to wield significant influence over the council rep. Problem is, Sappho never needed to think this big before, and she's not sure how to go about using that influence. Sappho has started slipping simple subliminals into some of Betty's goodies just to see if Kalheim notices. By the time she can tell whether these subliminals affect the representative, she might think of some way to use that control to her benefit.

Option B

Sappho represents one of the best procurers the Denver yakuza ever fielded. In fact, the yakuza influenced Betty Kalheim into trying Sappho's services in the first place, and the local *oyabun* is rubbing his little hands with glee over how much influence the procurer now has over the CAS rep. Despite what some people think, slipping subliminals into a completed simsense program isn't something you can do on a home deck. It requires sophisticated tech, which, of course, the yaks possess in spades. Sappho doesn't know what subliminals the yaks are adding to Betty Kalheim's goodies, or what they plan for the council representative. And she doesn't want to know.

Option C

Sappho's in tight with the local yakuza, who supply her with the goods and services clients like Betty Kalheim pay big nuyen to acquire. The local *oyabun* considers the dwarf a loyal subordinate. What he doesn't know is that Sappho recently accepted a new "boss."

No one knows that Sappho is actually a shaman. Another, more sinister spirit recently seduced Sappho away from her old totem. She serves Mantis now, not Coyote. As an insect shaman, Sappho follows the orders of Mantis, diligently working toward some goal that her slipping sanity cannot grasp.



The subliminals Mantis asks her to add to Betty Kalheim's chips make no sense whatsoever to Sappho—why should anyone care about Cheyenne Mountain anyway? Regardless of their rhyme or reason, the dwarf follows the instructions of Mantis and uses her considerable powers to keep the totem's secrets.

For this option, remove Sappho's cyberware and give her Magic 6. She is a Grade 2 initiate, with the metamagical ability of masking. She has a Threat Rating of 2, and is often body-guarded by one or more flesh-form mantid spirits.

PUEBLO SECTOR

DUTCH

Use the Fixer archetype (p. 207, **SR11**), but replace the archetype's special skill with Aztlan Zone Procedures 6 and Aztlan Zone Geography 6.

A handsome, soft-spoken human in his early 30s, Dutch willingly plays up his reputation as a novahot coyote. He offers a highly specific specialty: he handles only single individuals, and he agrees only to get them into the Aztlan Sector—not out again, and not across any other demarcator. Despite the narrow focus of his services, many people demand his considerable skills and willingly pay his 10,000-nuyen base price.

All initial contacts with Dutch must be made by phone, through complex, multi-node LTG relays to prevent anyone from tracing the call to Dutch's location. Only after certain negotiations are complete and Dutch scopes out the bona fides of his client will he agree to a face-to-face meet. And even then the meeting must take place on his turf (i.e., somewhere he knows gives him an advantage). Most of these meets take place somewhere in the Pueblo Sector, which implies that Dutch calls that sector home.

Option A

Dutch is a successful player in a difficult game. He's a complete independent as he claims, and he handles all contracts with the utmost professionalism.

Option B

Dutch is a professional and always deals fairly with his clients, but he's not the complete independent that he claims. Only the cooperation of the Red Dragon Triad allows him to achieve the impressive results for which he's known. In return for that cooperation, he supplies the Triad with data learned from the background searches he conducts on each of his clients. He also informs the Triad leaders of when his clients will be slipping the sector. Dutch neither knows nor cares to know what the Red Dragons do with that information. The Red Dragons simply use the information to watch Dutch's clients, to cash in if they get involved in anything that the Triad might find interesting.

Option C

Dutch's success rate for slipping people into the Aztlan Sector looks too good to be true—and it is. Dutch is actually an obedient member of Aztechnology corporate security. He never leads his clients into ambushes, because that would destroy his reputation and end his usefulness to his superiors. But his information allows Aztechnology to put a close tail on every client he sends inside the sector. Naturally, *some* operations go wrong and Dutch's clients die, but these unfortunate tragedies can always be blamed on circumstances beyond the fixer's control.

With Dutch's help, Aztechnology continues to develop extensive dossiers on many runners, smugglers, and others who demonstrate inappropriate interest in the Aztlan



Sector. Needless to say, the corp keeps a close eye on these shadowy types.

In this case, play Dutch as a hermetic mage, a Grade 2 initiate with the metamagical ability of masking. (See **The Grimoire**, p. 46.)

SIoux SECTOR

HENEQUEN

Henequen is a feathered serpent, small for his species at no more than 10 meters in length, a wingspan of 8 meters, and weighing less than 3,000 kilos. Though his size leads some people to assume that Henequen is an immature member of the species, the serpent is actually fully grown.

Henequen presents himself as a shaman following the Rain Forest totem, but most people cannot decide whether to believe him. The serpent is also an initiate of an undefined grade. He frequently shifts his true form to that of a human—usually a staggeringly handsome Hispanic youth—when he leaves his home in the Thornton district and masks his aura to conceal his true nature.

On the surface, the feathered serpent lives as a lighthearted bon vivant, frequently displaying a strong and unpredictable sense of humor. Those who've done business with Henequen, however, suspect for good reason that this is a facade he maintains to conceal his true motivations.

Henequen runs a small but very profitable import/export operation called Henequen Enterprises, Inc. He deals exclusively in luxury items and other high-profit goods. To everyone's surprise, he refuses to deal in illegal goods or services. And he counts as one of his greatest amusements watching the security forces from the Sioux Sector and various corporations sweat to find his "hidden" illegal operations—operations that simply don't exist. Henequen seems to know everyone living in the Sioux Sector and will make introductions for a nominal payment or promise of future favors.

Option A

Henequen constantly hears rumors describing how he fled from Aztlan and took refuge in the Sioux Sector. He finds these tales rather amusing and does nothing to debunk them. In fact, he moved to the Sioux Sector simply for a change. He's still on good terms with important individuals throughout local Aztechnology operations and in the Aztlan Sector government. He's not an "agent in place" by any means, but if he learns something the Aztlan government or Aztechnology might find useful, he'll pass it on as a favor to his friends back home.

Option B

Henequen and Aztlan did not part on good terms. The dracoform always spoke a little too plainly about environmental and civil-rights issues for the Aztlan government and Aztechnology, and a few years ago they made it clear to him that his life would be far more comfortable—and longer—if he emigrated voluntarily. He chose to move to the Sioux Sector for two primary reasons. First, he considered the Denver area to be a pretty happenin' place. Second, the Sioux Sector constituted one of the few nations willing to accept a political dissident who happened to be a feathered serpent.

Henequen despises the Aztlan government and everything it represents. Though he still speaks his mind freely with trusted friends, he knows all too well how little his life would be worth if he began working actively against Aztlan's inter-



ests. Though he won't take action himself, he possesses valuable knowledge of how things actually work within Aztlan and Aztechnology, and he passes this intel to people he trusts or owes a debt.

Option C

Henequen does nothing that violates Sioux law, and he prides himself on that fact. Of course, plotting to foment insurrection in a different nation is not illegal in the Sioux Sector.

The feathered serpent heads a shadowy organization named *La Venta*, dedicated to overthrowing the Aztlan government. Henequen founded the organization more than a decade ago and built it into a powerful force before he was forced to flee Aztlan. He chose the Free Zone as his new home base because it provided an excellent communications nexus. *La Venta* uses a cell organization, and so Henequen knows only the two other members of his cell. The feathered serpent is constantly on the lookout for information that will further his ambitions of ousting the hated Aztlan government.

Aztlan would like to see Henequen eliminated, and Aztechnology hit squads have tried to kill him on a dozen occasions. Because he expects such attempts, the dracoform maintains nearly impenetrable security. In fact, his security detail seems to include several ex-Wildcats, a fact that makes some observers wonder just what investment the Sioux Nation has in Henequen's plans.

UCAS SECTOR

JOHN BLOCHER

Use the Dwarf Technician archetype (p. 206, **SR11**), but increase Computer Theory to 9, Etiquette (Street) to 4, and add Etiquette (Matrix) 7. And John's a human, not a dwarf.

Many people say the ranks of professional decking lost their biggest player when Big John Blocher decided to end his days punching deck. Of course, it wasn't really his idea. A particularly nasty bit of Fuchi-coded black ice actually made the decision for him. The ice did not kill him, but it did put him in a coma for three weeks. When he finally woke up, he suffered from an extreme phobia of the Matrix. Even seeing a two-dimensional representation of the Matrix on a terminal screen makes him twitch and gibber, and the idea of jacking into anything triggers acute schizophrenic flashbacks. Still, the big, red-haired decker remains one of the hottest slots when it comes to decking theory, code-bashing, and turning a nowhere cyberdeck into a fully juiced icepick from hell.

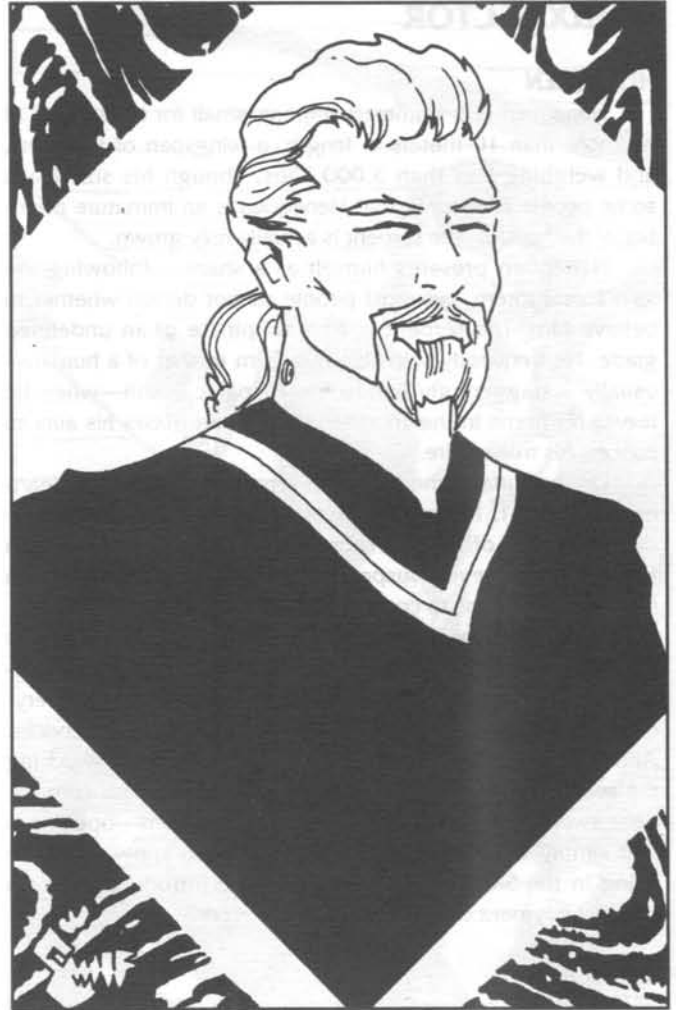
John works out of his home, a 16-square-meter doss in the Warrens. He doesn't need any more space than that—actually. Since he left the hospital he's been a bit twitchy about wide-open spaces. He keeps up on all the literature disseminated over the Matrix about decking, computer theory, and AIs, which is his favorite topic to rant on after a liter or two of beer. Of course, he doesn't dig into the Matrix himself for this stuff—he just writes the sweetest search demons you'll ever see and sends *them* into the Grid to do it for him.

Option A

John only works with people he knows personally and trusts, because much of his work is highly illegal. He charges the going rate for his services, but quickly drops his price if you can convince him the run will hurt Fuchi. (He holds a grudge against Fuchi Industrial Electronics, for obvious reasons.)

Option B

Though he certainly doesn't talk about it, John emerged from his coma with three strong mental quirks. Besides his Matrix phobia and agoraphobia, he suffers from very occasional, very acute paranoid episodes. During those episodes, he becomes convinced that just about everyone's out to get him—or, more precisely, that everyone's working for Fuchi, and *Fuchi's* out to get him. When he's in this state, he "knows" that Fuchi's too tough and dangerous, and so taking direct action against their "agents"—like shooting them—won't do the job. So, instead of doing something direct, John figures it's best to use his talents to harm his enemies. If you're unlucky enough to have John working on a job for you when he decides you're a Fuchi snitch, best check your deck after he's done working on it. He's an expert at planting logic bombs and viruses in utilities, and can even rig your MPCP chipset to slag itself down at the worst possible time. Very, very few people know this about John, and most of those still deal with him simply because his work is so good.



Option C

John's full-blown, over-the-edge gonzo paranoid—but he's also a genius, which enables him to conceal his paranoia from *everybody*. Even though Fuchi cooked his brain, John knows that Fuchi is only a minor player in the great conspiracy bent on dominating the world. John glimpsed the fringes of this conspiracy, which necessitated Fuchi's attempt to kill him. (That's how he reconstructs events, anyway.) Now it's payback time, and he's using the people who come to him for services to get back at the shadowy "Masters" behind Fuchi and the other megacorps.

John is nothing if not subtle. He rarely booby traps people's decks and software; Fuchi might not catch on to that, but the Masters certainly would. He has to be much, much more subtle and sly than that.

Basically, John's stratagems are so intricate and subtle that nobody could understand them even if they detected them. For example, would you interpret the fact that the keycap for the END key on your modified deck had a slightly different texture as an attack on a global conspiracy?

In other words, gamemaster, this is an opportunity for you to throw some amusing and very twisted dreck at your players. Feel free to get as out there as you like.

UTE SECTOR

THE GUIDE

The Guide is the mysterious fellow who wanders the Ute Sector's schools, somehow choosing those children with the talent, the ability to become shamans. As he finds them, he arranges for each one to have a shamanic mentor, someone who can instruct them in a magical path. If their talent is particularly strong, he takes them under his own wing as apprentices.

The Guide—nobody knows his real name—is a tall, almost cadaverously thin Amerind human with long, flowing hair and piercing eyes. His appearance is ageless—he could be anywhere from 20 to 60.

Option A

Use the Shaman archetype (p. 60, **SR11**).

The Guide is a Raven shaman whose real name is Davis Dry Valley, an Arapaho in his early 30s. When he was younger, he fell into a lake and stayed under water long enough to be declared dead. Somehow he revived, and he claimed that Raven spoke to him while he was out of body. He told all who would listen that Raven gave him a task and a special gift that allowed him to perform it: finding new shamans, and the ability to sense potential shamanic abilities in others. The Guide reveres, respects, and cares for the "proto-shamans" he finds on his quest and does whatever he can to ensure they receive the best possible training. The mentors he finds for these children follow different totems, but all are caring, dedicated individuals like the Guide himself.

Option B

The Guide is one of the fragments of the original Spirit of Denver (Force Rating 7, Spirit Energy 4. Powers: Astral Gateway, Aura Masking, Human Form). This spirit long ago forgot most of what it knew when it was intact, but it feels an incompleteness and longs to reunite with its lost aspects. Somehow, it concluded that it must increase the number of magically active (meta)humans in the Free Zone before such a reunion would become possible. The Guide treats the children it finds with great respect and provides them with the best tutors and mentors it can find. Still, the Guide works for its own personal purposes, not solely for the betterment of its fledglings.

Option C

Use the Shaman archetype (p. 60, **SR11**). The Guide, whose real name is Davis Dry Valley, is a Toxic Dog shaman with Threat Rating 3 who leads a network of like-minded maniacs. He seeks out children with the potential of becoming shamans and attempts to turn them into Toxic Dog shamans like himself. As soon as he creates a large enough network of followers, he plans to use them to reduce Denver to a blasted, toxic desert. For every 100 children he finds and connects to toxic mentors, his Threat Rating increases by 1.



DENVER DATA HAVEN

BASH

Bash is the mysterious rival of Shiva and one of the Nexus's two most influential sysops. No one has ever seen him in the flesh. Or if they did, they didn't realize it or aren't talking about it.

Option A

The decker who calls himself Bash is actually a drek-hot icebreaker by the name of Andrew Loewes. He's never seen in the flesh around Denver because he lives in a long-term care facility in Québec. Loewes is a "high quadriplegic," thanks to an unfortunate accident involving a motorcycle and a low ceiling. The accident left him with profound neurological damage that renders him blind and unable to interact with the real world. Bash is addicted to the Matrix and almost never leaves it. He uses various handles and icons to conceal his identity behind false fronts.

Option B

Bash, as an individual, does not exist. Bash is actually the second personality of the sysop known as Shiva, who suffers from a profoundly split personality. The direct neural interface of the Matrix and the power of the computers in the Nexus enable Shiva to manifest both facets of his personality simultaneously. This explains why Bash sometimes seems to know more about Shiva than anyone else, Shiva included.

Option C

No one in the Nexus wants to talk about this, but it seems disturbingly likely that Bash is not a (meta)human, or even mortal. Though nobody can prove or disprove it, most Nexus inhabitants suspect that Bash is actually a free spirit—perhaps a fragment of Zebulon that somehow gained access to the Matrix.



EWING
WWW

MISCELLANEOUS

ABEND

Use the Decker archetype (p. 51, **SR11**), but replace Bike 4 and Firearms 3 with Negotiation 2 and Special Skill: Etiquette (Otaku) 6. For gear, remove all weapons and bike.

Abend's a weasely little frag of a human, fourteen years old at the outside. He's scrawny enough to look malnourished, with hair so pale blonde it could be white and bright blue eyes that bug out slightly. He always looks and smells like drek. The only part of his body that's clean is the skin surrounding his four gleaming datajacks.

Abend is one of the hottest warez doodz in the Free Zone. He's a drek-hot decker, but his main skill lies in figuring out where to find the information people want, not in getting it himself. In fact, he often subcontracts out the actual datasteals to colleagues in the intel brokerage underground.

Abend grew up as an otaku inside the Denver Data Haven. He got his first datajack when he was eleven and soon added three more to maximize the "I/O bandwidth" of his brain. For rather obvious reasons, he prefers to meet prospective clients virtually rather than in the meat. Still, his abrasive personality and lack of couth comes across the Matrix loud and clear.

Option A

Abend is one of the many otaku who simply outgrew the "tribal" culture and moved out of the Nexus into the real world. He still has close contacts with some otaku, and several owe him favors.

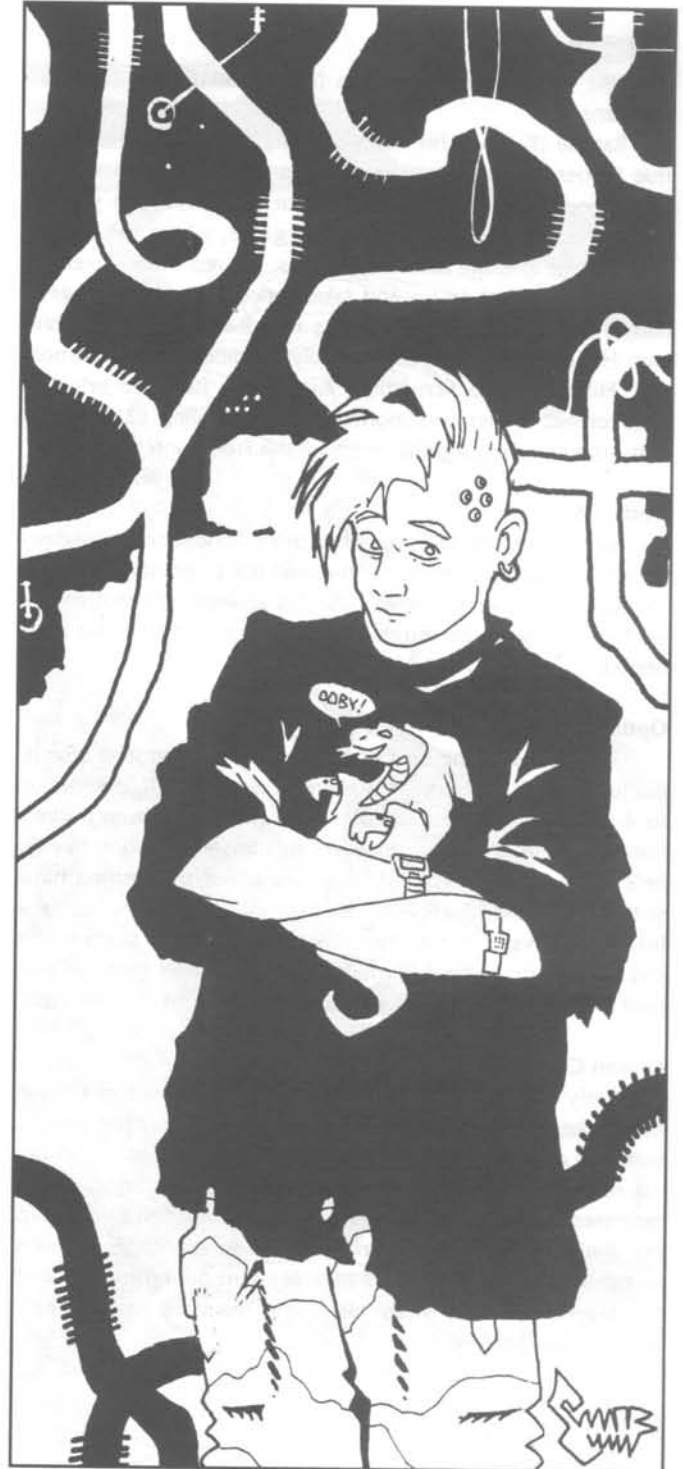
Option B

The young warez dood didn't leave the otaku on good terms. Even before he got his first datajack, he was locked in a deadly rivalry for status in the "tribe" with another otaku. The rivalry became particularly nasty during Abend's last days in the Denver Data Haven, as the combatants exchanged targeted viruses designed to crash each other's headware. Abend "won"—in that his sanity wasn't as badly affected as his rival's—but he's not a particularly stable individual anymore. Not that he ever was. Abend's rival still haunts the Matrix, apparently spoiling for another run at the young decker.

The rival recently realized that going directly after Abend himself might not be the most efficient way of bringing him down. Instead, the rival began targeting Abend's intel brokerage operation, scrambling paydata files before Abend gives them to his clients or infecting them with killer viruses. Anyone who deals with the warez dood risks being drawn into this bitter, dangerous struggle.

Option C

Before leaving the Denver Data Haven, Abend scrapped it out with his long-term rival and flatlined him with a nasty ice virus. Unfortunately, the rival's post-mortem counterstroke struck home and scrambled what served for Abend's sanity. Today, the warez dood remains frighteningly effective at what he does, but is totally sanity-blasted. He's a schizophrenic with



frequent paranoid episodes and a tendency to lash out at his supposed "tormentors" with some very nasty viruses. He examines every contract through the warped lens of his insanity and accepts only those that match some overweening goal that burns in his mind. Abend feels no inclination to discuss this goal with anyone—not that they could understand it if he did—but it drives all his decisions and actions. This combination of undeniable genius and mind-blasted insanity makes Abend very valuable and very dangerous.

RAT-TAIL

Use the Rigger archetype (p. 59, **SR11**), but increase Charisma to 6.

Rat-tail (Ratty to his many friends) represents one of the true heroes of the t-bird jamming game. He's a wily old fox who's been running the Autobahn for more than ten years—and that's damn near forever in this game, where the players measure the average career in months. His rep makes fixers all over the continent sit up and take notice. Like many riggers, Ratty's physically small, and he has a thick shock of bone-white hair. His cybereyes are cosmetically modified to look almost real. His LAV—the *Screaming Rat Frag*, a Banshee bristling with combat drones and sporting a death-dealing 125mm rail-gun—is a common sight throughout the Free Zone.

Option A

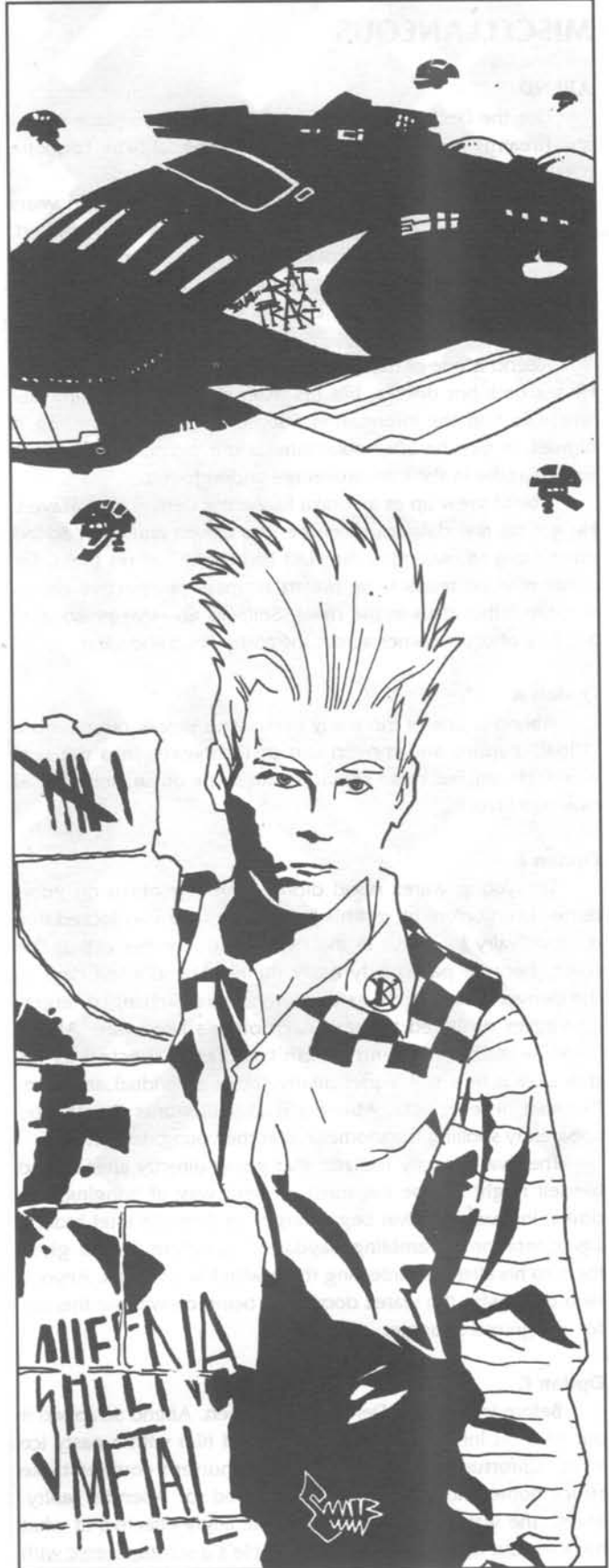
Ratty deserves his rep as the most honest and conscientious of jammers. As he says, "the mail has to get through." He always prefers stealth, speed, and maneuverability to firepower, but if things get tough he's not afraid to use the hard option.

Option B

It happens to the best of them: Ratty's starting to lose it. His judgment's slipping, as is his reaction time. (Drop Reaction to 4 (6) and Initiative to 4 (6) + 1D6 (2D6).) He won't admit the inevitable, though, not even to himself. Unconsciously, he's compensating for his failing capabilities by pushing himself, his bird, and his crew harder than ever before and taking a lot more risks. Only a few close friends have sensed the change in Ratty so far, but more people will soon come to suspect that contracting him for a run puts the cargo at grave risk.

Option C

Ratty's losing it (make the changes suggested in Option B), and he knows it. Pride won't let him fade away just yet: he wants to cling to his superstar status a little longer. To bolster his rep, he's sold out to a major megacorporation. Ratty promises future favors and provides full information to the corp on all his employers, runs, and cargoes. In exchange, the firm arranges things so he can still jam his t-bird on through, bailing him out of situations where his slower reactions would otherwise get him geeked.



ZAK

Use the Rigger archetype (p. 59, **SR11**), but decrease Intelligence to 5 and Charisma to 2.

Zak's one of the up-and-comers in the jamming biz. He's got a hot rep, though it's nowhere near as hot as Rat-tail's. During the four years or so he's been running the pipeline, he's handled some pretty sensitive cargoes and slid his way through some tight spots. He's an aggressive son-of-a-slitch, a 24-year-old, short, stocky elf with bright red hair. And he's dead set on dethroning Ratty as "king of the jammers" before he's 27. He's stripped down his t-bird, the *Gray Ghost*, to the bare essentials, removing much of its armor and gaining a frag of a lot of speed in the process.

Option A

Some people interpret Zak's aggressiveness as overconfidence, even drek-headed arrogance, but they're wrong. He conducts careful threat analysis, and he doesn't take any unnecessary risks. The older jammers like Rat-tail disagree with some of his ideas (stripping off armor?), but they have to admit he gets the job done.

According to pervasive rumors, Zak's an unprincipled fragger who'll sell his competitors to the authorities at the drop of a hat, but most of those rumors started with competitors who are losing much of their business to the boy wonder.

Option B

Zak's a little overaggressive. He's seriously into rep and pride, and he's made the occasional bad decision for the sole purpose of bolstering his image. His arrogance turns a lot of jammers against him and makes them eager to believe the worst about him. So far he's been lucky and avoided any "official entanglements" that would put an end to his career. But how much longer can he stay lucky?

Option C

Zak's aggressive and totally ruthless. He'll do whatever it takes to claw his way to the top of the heap. He's ratted competitors out to the authorities, he's spread disinformation that has gotten other riggers killed, he's even hired street scum to sabotage other jammers' t-birds. He plays fair with his employers, but only if he doesn't think he can get away with fragging them over. If he can screw an employer and be confident the word won't get out and tarnish his image, he'll do it without a second thought.



LOCATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

This section provides information about important locations in each sector, a discussion of the defunct NORAD compound, and offers a breakdown of the most influential criminal and other organizations in the Free Zone and those organizations' important players. Each of these people and places offers three optional truths of increasing drek-level. See **Sprawl Sites** for detailed descriptions of the suggested location archetypes.

LOCATIONS



AZTLAN SECTOR

NUYU

Body Shop archetype/Umatilla Street and 12th Avenue/Dr. Marcia "Corky" Corcoran, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 2303 (43-0090).

On the surface, NuYu appears to be a licensed "personal enhancement clinic." In other words, a place to come for cosmetic surgery and superficial bodmods such as bodysculpts, aesthetic scarification, and skin texturing. But body shops go in and out of fashion like restaurants. NuYu was "in" in 2052 and saw a dozen or more of the sector's "beautiful people" come through the sliding doors to achieve "this year's look." By the beginning of 2053, however, the doyens of personal modifications had moved on to another hot spot. The only exception was Francisco Valdez, sector manager, who demanded and received "outpatient service" from Dr. Corcoran for a second facelift. Reportedly, "Corky" Corcoran will perform procedures that are not quite authorized under Aztlan law. If you know how to ask nicely and are willing to pay, of course.

Option A

"Corky" (Street Doc archetype, p. 211, **SR11**) will install cyberware without requiring any of those sticky legal complications like licenses. She insists on two caveats, however. First, she only performs illegal procedures on clients she knows and trusts or clients personally referred by someone she trusts. Second, the client must supply the gear, because she does not have the contacts to acquire the hardware itself. The cost for installation is 25 percent of the total cost listed in **SR11** for any mod. For example, Corky charges 250 nuyen to install a data-jack, and you provide hardware. Corky doesn't savvy bioware or gene-tech (see **Shadowtech**); sorry, chummer.

Option B

Corky maintains contacts on the street that let her acquire cyber hardware if you cannot get it yourself. This is the Aztlan Sector, she's quick to tell you, and prices are high. Hardware you acquire through Corky typically will cost 10 percent more than the street price listed in the Aztlan Sector cost of living table and will be secondhand (see the rules for cheap cyberware, p. 100, **Street Samurai Catalog**). But, naturally, the doc's not going to mention that fact unless she's pressed *real* hard. If you know this about the doc's business, you can persuade her to go for the brand-new stuff, but it's going to cost you 40 percent over the street price.

Option C

Corky's got *good* contacts. She can lay her hands on some wiz hardware, and it's not going to cost you an arm and a leg. In fact, if you talk to her *real* sweet, she might even be able to cop Alpha-class cyberware, custom chrome that's particularly essence-friendly and damage-resistant. (See the rules for **Cyberware Damage** and **Custom Cyberware**, pp. 93, 98, in **Street Samurai Catalog**.) Sounds great, huh?

Not so great, really. Corky is unofficially on Aztechnology's payroll. They offered to let her live if she

agreed to do each and every little thing they ask, which includes installing a little something extra in each piece of cyberware she implants. The details are up to the gamemaster, but the following ideas should get your fertile brain percolating—a location transponder (triggered by an external signal); an acid or poison capsule triggered by a coded radio signal (acid kills the cyberware, poison kills the user); a timed-release acid capsule that incapacitates the cyberware after a certain length of time; or a small explosive charge.

CAS SECTOR

LIVIN' ON THE EDGE

Medium Store archetype (ground floor), Medium Weapon Store Archetype (basement)/South Ulster Street and East Belleview Avenue, Denver Tech Center/Garth Wallace, Owner/Strong Bias against Amerinds/LTG# 4303 (00-0909).

Livin' On The Edge appears to be a rather aptly named tech-toy store that's seen *much* better days. The shop features last year's trendy technology displayed with a good dose of hype and flash, apparently in the hopes that customers won't notice that it's last year's drek. Livin' On The Edge is located in a drek-kicked old building, and the few existing members of the bored-looking sales staff look as though they'd faint in shock if they saw more than one customer a day. The locals fondly dub Livin' On The Edge as "Clinging By The Fingernails."

Anyone watching the place would quickly conclude that the typical customers who walk into Livin' On The Edge don't fit the tech-flash type. These people are hard-bitten types, many of them bulging with dermal armor and muscle augmentation. And they seem to disappear once they go inside.

The secret of the store's continued existence is the weapon store in the basement. It doesn't need to advertise, word-of-mouth was enough to make it the hottest weapons shop in the entire sector.

Option A

Garth Wallace, the owner, doesn't handle restricted weapons or ammunition. He simply doesn't have the supplier network or the guts when it comes right down to it. But the quality of the merchandise he does sell keeps the clientele coming back, and it doesn't hurt that Wallace never insists on such legal niceties as licenses or waiting periods or even credit checks. Wallace refers people looking for a little more bang for the buck to appropriate fixers, but will not involve himself in such deals.

Option B

As long as you're willing to pay, you can pick up anything you want at Livin' On The Edge—assault rifles, sniper rifles, even medium machine guns. No heavy weapons, though. Wallace also supplies all the wizzer types of ammo you can't buy legally, including APDS and explosive rounds. Again, Wallace can give you names and LTG relay numbers if you want something a little heavier than he stocks.

Option C

No matter what you want, chummer, Livin' On The Edge is where you find it. Mil-spec gear, heavy weapons up to and including AVMs, even missile racks for your t-bird—ask, and Wallace can deliver. For a price, of course. Because Wallace never asks his suppliers where they obtain their wares, however, you always run the risk of that wizzer minigun's previous owner looking for it some dark night.

PUEBLO SECTOR

HARGREAVES GERONTOLOGY CLINIC

Hospital archetype (3 floors)/Cheyenne Boulevard and 21st Street, Colorado Springs/Dr. Jonathan Cold Springs, Manager/No Racial Bias/LTG# 8303 (54-1142).

This spartan, long-term care facility for the aged does conduct some research into gerontology. But most of the clinic's resources fund the depressing yet profitable service of providing old people a place to wait for death. Originally funded by the Hargreaves family to find a "cure" for the premature aging of trolls, the family established the Hargreaves Clinic shortly after its heir, Lucas Hargreaves, goblinized into a troll. The clinic's manager, Dr. Cold Springs, continues to publish intriguing insights into the different aging processes shown by the metasppecies, but, unfortunately, he could do nothing for Lucas Hargreaves, who passed away in 2051 at the age of 40.

The Hargreaves Clinic enjoys well deserved fame throughout the world for its work in gene-tech.

Option A

Though Dr. Cold Springs would fire them in a moment if he learned of their activities, several doctors at the clinic make a few extra nuyen by treating patients suffering from wounds inflicted in ways they'd prefer to not describe. This service proves as popular as ever with shadowrunners, because the doctors do not file the required reports to the authorities and do not require their patients to produce a SIN or other identification. Some of the more enterprising surgeons also perform cyberware and bioware repairs.

Option B

Dr. Cold Springs himself feels no aversion to making a little money on the side, and he's not overly concerned with legal niceties. As a result, the Hargreaves Clinic is currently the place to go for illegal bioware and gene-tech (see **Shadowtech**), and Beta-class cyberware (see **Street Samurai Catalog**).

Option C

As well as performing bioware, gene-tech, and cyberware procedures on shadowrunners, Dr. Cold Springs—an elf, by the by—enjoys indulging his taste for highly illegal gengineering research, conducted on humans. (Drop by his secret lab in sub-basement 4 sometime—but only if you've got a strong stomach.) He frequently publishes data on the clinic's research into the aging processes of the different metatypes, though he slants all the material on elves just enough to throw off other

investigators interested in determining the life span of *Homo sapiens nobilis*.

SIOUX SECTOR

THE PHOENIX

Small Talisman Shop archetype/Logan Street and East 56th Avenue/Kara Jay, Owner/Slight Racial Bias against Non-Amerinds/No LTG.

A small, run-down store, The Phoenix caters to retro New Agers and crystal wavers. Even to a magician blind in one eye and speeding past on an Electraglide, it would be immediately obvious that the vaguely cabalistic-looking symbols painted on its grimy front window represent nothing more than meaningless decoration. The wares on display in the dusty cases and cluttered shelves follow suit: vaguely intriguing at first glance, but next to fragging worthless from a real mana-tossing point of view. The pretty crystals are too flawed for use in any real ritual. Someone bashed the "fetishes" and "talismans" together to look wiz, but they couldn't channel the power in a million years. The books, with titles like *Necronomicon* and *Lesser Key of Solomon* were written by hacks to cash in on the New Age craze of the 1980s and 1990s. And the numerology software couldn't balance your checking account, let alone generate the Nine Billion Names of God. The Phoenix has nothing to advertise, so it doesn't. It does have regular clients, but the locals firmly believe that these regulars are too brain-fragged to know better.

Option A

Little do these locals know that The Phoenix is actually the place to pick up fetishes, talismans, and general magical supplies if you don't want to pay the Sioux Nation's ridiculous surcharges on such things. Kara Jay somehow managed to tap into the "magical underground" that smuggles ritual supplies and such drek through the Free Zone. Her sources make it possible for her to knock at least 20 percent off the regular price of simple magical supplies. She wisely chooses not to display these wares, instead keeping them in a private storage room downstairs. She invites a very select few clients down for a look.

Kara realizes her profits would increase dramatically if she included hermetic libraries on optical chip, more powerful foci, and even magical weapons in her inventory, but she just doesn't have the contacts for such expansion.

Option B

If Kara does not distrust you on sight, she'll confide in you her little secret: she can actually sell you simple magical supplies and low-grade foci. If you manage to earn her trust, Kara shows you her *real* inventory—killer foci, state of the art hermetic library op-chips, and magical weapons. She keeps these wares in a magically sealed vault downstairs. And she can knock at least 20 percent off the going price for this kind of thing.

All serious practitioners of the art in the Sioux Sector know Kara or know of her. This makes her an excellent contact for

locating magicians of various disciplines and abilities. She arranges for these connections too rarely to be considered a fixer, but she sometimes enjoys doing favors for a friend.

Option C

Nobody knows where Kara gets her supplies, but *frag* are they good! She keeps her on-site inventory small, but given a day or two can track down just about anything a magician could want. You've got to pay through the snout for this kind of service, but when you *really need* that magical katana—and need it *now*—price isn't much of an issue anyway.

Kara also runs a small trade in "special finds." On rare occasions, she'll show her most trusted customers something truly unique that she acquired, Spirits knows from where. A couple of months ago it was a nickel-iron ax head, pitted and corroded but *writhing* with mana. A couple of months before that she had an idol of some kind, carved from deep red stone in the shape of a mythical demon holding a pink spherical crystal to its chest. Both artifacts gave off a palpable sense of overwhelming age, almost as if these things had been ancient when the first Roman legions marched into Europe.

All these special finds have incredible power, and therefore incredible value. But something always seems strange about them, as though the type of magic used to create them was somehow different from what people work with today.

Still, these items usually exude such great potential for power that people willingly face whatever vague-sounding risks and warnings Kara describes.

UCAS SECTOR

THE TENDER FENDER MENDER

South Waco Street and East Easter Avenue, Aurora/M'tembe Mobasa, Owner/Slight Bias against Non-Riggers/LTG# 8303 (44-5573).

The Tender Fender Mender is the place to bring your car after it's collided with lampposts, other unyielding objects, or high-velocity chunks of lead. M'tembe Mobasa, known to his friends as Slats, is one of the best auto mechanics and body men in the sector, and he can get your car back on the road faster and in better shape than any of his competitors.

Option A

Slats Mobasa also owns the sector's premiere chop shop. His gangs of car thieves sweep the sector every night after dark, bringing a dozen or more stolen vehicles back to the shop by midnight. By dawn, they reduce those vehicles to unidentifiable parts, either to be sold to reputable dealers or reassembled in completely new forms.

The shadow underground knows Slats as *the man* for handling hot getaway cars. Let's say you knocked over a weapon store and peeled off in your electric blue Chrysler-Nissan Javelin—a car various bystanders undoubtedly spotted. Just take it to Slats, and in less than an hour your car will look as much like a javelin as a javelin.

Slats also has the top rep for adding performance mods to cars and bikes. He doesn't have the contacts to acquire armor or weapons, but if you want to bolt heavy-duty suspension, extra fuel tanks, and a turbocharger into your Jackrabbit, see Slats.

Option B

Slats' chop shop can slap any kind of armor you like onto your vehicle. He can also install hardpoints and firmoints, as long as the basic structure of the vehicle can take it. And he can mount weapons on those points. Unfortunately, you must supply the weapons—Slats doesn't deal in that drek. For more specialized work such as microturrets, missile racks, and the like, Slats will recommend shops that he trusts.

Option C

You name it, Slats can do it. Concealed turrets, autocannons, missile racks—with *missiles*—it's all in a day's work. The t-bird jammer community knows and reveres Slats, and Rat-tail himself will gladly explain how Slats saved his sorry hoop by replacing the combat drone system in the *Screaming Rat Frag* in two hours flat.

UTE SECTOR

MIKEY'S CHIPS 'N' DREK

Small Simsense Store archetype/Tennyson Street and Stuart Place/Mike Western Sky, Owner/No Racial Bias/LTG# 4303 (67-0022).

This small, run-down store looks exactly like countless other simsense dealers scrambling to stay in business despite ever-growing competition and ever-eroding profit margins. In fact, Mikey's Chips 'N' Drek does booming business, and Mikey does well for himself financially. The store thrives as an outlet for BTLs and the occasional 2XS chip—not that Mikey actually sells anything that illegal over the counter. Instead, he uses the store as a "mail drop" to communicate with the dealers, suppliers, smugglers, and gray traders who make up his distribution network. This side of his business prompted him to upgrade his store's computer system to Red-5, Barrier 5, Blaster 5.

Mikey also owns a warehouse (use the warehouse from the Dock archetype, p. 22, **Sprawl Sites**, but slap on whatever wizzer electronic security strikes your fancy) located a block north on Tennyson. Mikey stores his stock of "California hots" and other legal chips (legal in the Ute Sector, at least) here. He makes most of his nuyen peddling beetles to the locals, but he also turns a healthy profit brokering Cal hots to other sectors and to smugglers for transfer to the UCAS market.

Option A

Mike Western Sky—"Mikey"—conducts his business in a calmly immoral fashion, pleased to have found himself a business that combines good profits with minimal personal risk. He's an independent, rather like a fixer who brokers his own biz to an amorphous group of smugglers, sectors, and jammers he knows personally and trusts.

Option B

Mikey likes to pretend he's an independent, free-enterprise kind of guy, but he never feels comfortable doing business with anyone he doesn't have a tight hold over. His "stable" of jammers and smugglers consists of people foolish enough to do something embarrassing or illegal, and unlucky enough to have Mikey find out about it and gather incriminating evidence. As long as everyone plays the game his way, Mikey's happy. Any time he perceives a challenge to his position—and Mikey's perceptions sometimes fail to match reality—he responds quickly and often violently to end the problem. Mikey claims his incriminating data connects to a kind of "dead man's switch," rigged so that within a day of his death or disappearance, everyone on his "string" will be scooped up by the badge. Members of his stable don't know whether to believe that claim, but they're afraid to find out for sure.

Option C

For all his claims of independence, Mikey's actually snug with Fuchi. The megacorp supplies his BTLs, Cal hots, 2XS, and a drekload of even nastier chips. Fuchi decided early on that the UCAS Sector represented an excellent "test market" for some of its more experimental (and potentially mind-fragging) "recreational optronics." And Mikey's provides a cheap, low-exposure way of getting the goods into the chipslots of its "experimental subjects." Technically, Fuchi does not employ Mikey, but they allow him a limited Fuchi expense account and maintain an LTG number to call in case of trouble. This past year he called that number three times. And three times, a member of his stable—and that member's immediate family—sadly died in an incident of the "tragic and random violence" so common today. The message came through loud and clear to the other members of his stable.

THE HOLE

In the early days of the Cold War, the U.S. government built the command center of the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) in the bowels of Cheyenne Mountain, southwest of Colorado Springs and west of Ft. Carson. The command center was designed to survive a direct hit from a nuclear warhead, and it showed. The designers built the main doors of reinforced metal, more than a meter thick and secured by bars as thick as a human's wrist, and included a series of tunnels and doors to "cofferdam" blast effects. The buildings inside the great caverns rested on coil springs as tall as a man, designed to absorb and dissipate the shock wave of a nuclear detonation. A self-sustaining environmental system enabled its inhabitants to seal off the center from the outside world to protect the occupants from heat and contamination. And, of course, the entire center sat inside a *mountain*, with hundreds of meters of solid granite overhead.

Despite all these features, some very real doubts eventually arose over whether the center could remain intact and functioning after a direct hit by one or more ICBM warheads. After all, the Soviets knew about Cheyenne Mountain. And scores of Soviet weapons designers spent all their time busily whipping

up new warheads tailor-made to crack Cheyenne Mountain like an egg. Still, "the Hole"—as it became known—remained the NORAD operations center into the 21st century simply because no better site existed.

People were still going inside (you could *hear* the capital letter) when the Indian Wars flared up. NORAD felt little concern about the antics of Daniel Howling Coyote and his friends, because the Amerinds had no nuclear capability. But the danger that some geopolitical enemy *du jour* might consider lobbing a couple of missiles at America while the military was involved with internal problems was very real. As a result, the Hole remained fully staffed throughout the duration of the conflict.

When the Indian Wars ended, America no longer owned Cheyenne Mountain. The Treaty of Denver stated that the mountain and everything it contained belonged to the Pueblo Corporate Council. The followers of Daniel Howling Coyote immediately began pestering NORAD to get the hell out and hand it over to its new owners.

As the American military entreated the Pueblo government to be patient, they moved out everything not nailed down and wiped the memory and mass storage of all the non-portable computer equipment. Then they methodically filled the place with explosives and destroyed it, in much the same manner they had allegedly handled the U.S. Air Force Academy and the facilities at the Rocky Mountain Armory. As the Pueblo government screamed in outrage, the American government bemoaned the "impetuousness" of the military personnel who had "acted without orders." No one believed this, of course, but what could anyone do? The Hole was gone, collapsed by a detonation whose total yield was effectively measured in kilotons.

Almost immediately, doubts arose over what actually happened. Seismographs across the continent detected the detonation, but the shock wave seemed too small for the amount of explosives used. Observers speculated that some of the charges did not detonate, or perhaps somebody lied about how many devices were used.

For a few weeks, the U.S. and NAN media hashed over the little available information about the Cheyenne Mountain "incident." Then the news dropped off the front page of the datafaxes, and nobody seemed interested in talking about it anymore. Nobody in the U.S., Pueblo, or in any of the other NAN nations. Some shadowsnoops suspected a cover-up, but keeping editors and audiences intrigued by stories in which nothing ever happens is always difficult, and sometimes impossible. Within a year, everyone forgot about the Hole. Cheyenne Mountain remained, of course; hikers and campers still roamed its slopes. But it began to seem as if nothing ever existed underneath those slopes at all.

That situation remains in effect today, more or less. Once in a while somebody tries to drum up interest in what happened to the Hole, but nobody seems to care. Rumors about the facility arise periodically, one telling of an underground stream running underneath Cheyenne Mountain that should make it possible to travel astrally to the Hole—were it not for an incredibly powerful astral barrier that blocks passage. But these rumors invariably die for lack of follow-up.

Option A

The U.S. military *did* blow the drek out of the place. All the bombs installed detonated, and they brought the roof down. Certainly, the shock waves detected by seismographs across the continent lacked the power people expected, but the problem lay in those expectations. After all, nobody had blown up a mountain from the inside before, and the theories projecting how the shock waves should propagate were just plain wrong.

Most of the wild rumors concerning the mountain also are exaggerated or just plain wrong. Traveling astrally through Cheyenne Mountain *is* more difficult than one might expect, but the difficulty results from the area's high astral background count, which operates like a weak medicine lodge. This phenomenon is the legacy of Cheyenne Mountain serving as a "holy site" or "place of power" for various ancient tribes and has nothing whatsoever to do with NORAD.

Option B

The inheritors of the U.S. military machine, the UCAS military, still grind their collective teeth over this one. The seismographs told the true tale: not all the bombs detonated, and so parts of the facility probably survived in a usable form. (The fact that the U.S. seems to have fragged up so often at blowing drek up makes certain people wonder whether Amerind shamans influenced the high failure rate.)

Though the blast permanently blocked the center's main entrance, Pueblo easily drove another route into the heart of the mountain within a year, then moved forces and gear into the Hole to use it as its own command bunker. Not for strategic missile defense, of course—that threat no longer exists. But other conceivable uses for a secure, underground control center do exist, and those possibilities alone give the UCAS brass cold sweats at night.

Option C

Okay, so all the bombs did not detonate. But all the access ways to the Hole itself were blocked, and driving a new route down into the heart of the mountain—without destroying what was left of the Hole in the progress—lay beyond Pueblo's engineering capabilities. A nice, pristine bunker may still exist in there somewhere, but nobody can get to it.

Not physically and not astrally. Those rumors about astral barriers are right as far as they go. Curious shamans and hermetics who follow the subterranean stream hit the barrier and come back with their minds scrambled, if they come back at all. Shamanic commando teams sent in with spirit support run into similar problems. Obviously someone, or something, is going to great lengths to keep people out.

The questions remain: "Who controls the Hole?" "How did they get into it without drilling a tunnel?" "What the frag do they plan to do with it?"

ORGANIZATIONS

DREAMLAND SYNDICATE

The Dreamland Syndicate operates a new version of the world's oldest profession in the Aurora Warrens and other



parts of the UCAS Sector. Dreamland offers "companions" of all races, genders, sexual orientations, preferences, and "special talents," and charges whatever the market will bear. In other words, "bare bones services"—no pun intended—might cost anywhere from 10 nuyen to 1,000 nuyen, while "special events" might start at 750 nuyen and go way up. Upon request, Dreamland supplies plain-vanilla escorts as well, glamour-boys and -girls who provide a cultured line of conversation and look suitably stunning on the arm of a visiting dignitary or corporate suit.

Option A

The Mafia runs the Dreamland Syndicate and skims most of the organization's profits. The mob boys give the manager, a middle-aged human named Rob Shields (use the Fixer archetype, p. 207, **SR11**), plenty of freedom to run things the way he sees fit.

In a business not traditionally known for concerning itself with the health and happiness of the "talent," Shields treats his people surprisingly well. He provides them with a reasonable cut of the money they generate, supplies medical coverage, and allows them to turn down any "transaction" they feel uncomfortable fulfilling. If necessary, Shields sends a discreet leg-breaker or two along on a call to protect the talent or less subtly "deliver a message" to a client who treated one of his employees badly. All the workers are free to leave the biz whenever they like.

Lone Star knows of the syndicate's operation, but leaves Shields alone because closing down Dreamland would create a vacuum to be filled, possibly by something much worse.

Option B

Shields might like to treat his people better, but his boss, Dean Ruocco (use the Company Man archetype, p. 204, **SR11**), keeps Shields on a very short leash. Ruocco views the talent as nothing more than "production units" whose output should be maximized by whatever means possible.

The syndicate "recruits" new talent by various means, including outright intimidation. Ruocco recently took a page from history and began importing "indentured" individuals from Fourth World countries, no doubt luring them with promises of a new, better life. He then garnishes their wages to pay the cost of bringing them over and training them. These virtual slaves may leave the syndicate as soon as they've "paid off" the outfit's investment in them, a day that, in most cases, never comes.

Lone Star knows the syndicate exists and turns a blind eye to its operations for fear that something worse would take its place. But that attitude might change if the Star ever learned more about Ruocco's business practices.

Option C

Life in Dreamland is pure, unadulterated hell. Most of the "talent" use chips heavily to escape the misery and degradation of their lives. Shields and Ruocco work together to recruit new workers, often addicting new "acquisitions" to chips to keep them under control. Suicides, murders, and disease-caused deaths are common. Various unscrupulous simsense producers who deal in "snuffware" ("black beetles") often recruit their lead players from the ranks of the Dreamland Syndicate.

Lone Star knows exactly how Dreamland does business, but frequent donations to "the Lone Star benevolent fund" persuade the organization to focus its attention elsewhere.

THE FRONTS

The Fronts gang operates throughout the CAS and UCAS Sectors. Their most influential "set," or chapter, though not the largest, goes by the name of the BBs. The BBs operate out of the Warrens in the UCAS Sector.

Amy Steur

Use the Gang Boss archetype (p. 207, **SR11**), but add Negotiation 5, Psychology 4 and Etiquette (Corporate) 4.

Amy Steur is slender and long-limbed, with muscles like steel cables under her tanned skin and spiked red hair, and ruthless as she is beautiful. Amy leads the BBs "set" of the Fronts. She doesn't say much, but when she talks, people listen. Rather than swagger or threaten to accomplish her goals, she simply eliminates obstacles with a cold efficiency that would make a corporate hitman shiver.

Option A

Steur worked her way up the gang hierarchy by building a solid rep, taking calculated chances and waiting to be noticed



by the gang leadership. As soon as she earned a position of some influence within the BBs set, she figured out a way to influence the set leader to run the set the way she visualized it. Under her influence, the set started dealing in small amounts of chips and the occasional hot weapon. When the old boss died in a scrap with the Cutters, Steur found herself in a position to take over leadership of the set.

Other gangs and dealers now recognize the BBs as an effective independent business organization with a strong network of suppliers. Steur envisions increasing the set's market penetration and profits, but does not entertain any territorial ambitions. She favors a strategy of letting other sets and gangs carve out turf and bleed and die to protect it. She believes that within a few years, the BBs will have enough cash to *buy* the turf they want.

Option B

Steur climbed the gang hierarchy faster than anyone before or since. Several gang members suspect she indulged in a little freelance assassination to clear her path, but no one can produce any proof. And no member is foolish enough to indulge in such speculation within Steur's hearing.

ORGANIZATIONS

The BBs function as an effective independent business organization that is doing exceptionally well for itself, thank you very much. Still, Steur wants more than greater market penetration and cash flow. She intends to expand the BBs turf and influence, both, she figures, best gained at the expense of the other sets of the Fronts. She is planning the final stages of her campaign, and only a handful of trusted lieutenants know when she will make her move. She ultimately seeks to unite the gang, end interset rivalries and turf wars, and to put herself at the head of this powerful force.

Option C

Steur climbed the gang hierarchy through a combination of good judgment and lucky breaks. Though perfectly willing to eliminate a rival or two to achieve her goal, her competition for the top spot took themselves out of the race, mainly through incompetent attempts to back-stab Steur politically. She soon found herself leader of the BBs, and promptly turned the set into the effective business operation she knew it could be. The BBs began trading in chips, weapons, and just about anything else. Under her leadership, the BBs even started dabbling in the fixing biz, brokering information and shadow contracts.

Then one day the fixing biz got her in deep drek. A run that the BBs put together ended up costing an Ares subsidiary big-time, and Ares somehow found out who brokered the deal. Some hard-hooped gentlemen and ladies from the megacorp found the time to visit Steur and inform her that they figured her little gang had cost their corp some billion nuyen and that the corp would like her to make reparations. She could pay off the damage, pay with her life, or do every little thing Ares asked of her for the next, oh, four decades or so. So far, Ares' requests remain reasonable, but the "favors" get bigger all the time.

THE GODZ

A predominately elven go-gang, the Godz tear up the highways throughout the Pueblo and Ute sectors, west of Denver. The gang's primary chapter contains approximately a hundred members, and is based in Boulder.

Rex Paquette

Use the Gang Boss archetype (p. 207, **SRII**), but add Bike 6.

Paquette leads the Godz's Boulder chapter. He is a whip-slender, dark-haired elf in his early 20s who exudes the swaggering machismo typical of so many gangers. Paquette also possesses a cool and sharp intellect, as well as the loyalty of the chapter members.

Option A

Paquette may be a good gang leader, but that's all he is, with the limited world view that implies. The Boulder battalion runs protection services for smugglers and sectors, but lacks organization. Defending his turf and influence against the incursions of other Godz battalions based elsewhere in the Free Zone occupies most of Paquette's time.



Option B

Paquette may be a lowly gang leader, but he shows the business smarts of a successful entrepreneur. Since he took over leadership of the Godz, he overhauled their protection and bodyguard services and turned those ops into a well-paying business. Paquette also understands that sometimes the best way to get paid is not in nuyen and now occupies the admirable position of having many influential shadowrunners, smugglers, sectors—even official megacorp operatives—indebted to him. Paquette maintains good communications with the other Godz battalions and uses them as "bargaining tools" when negotiating large contracts. (Nothing works better than an attack by a "rival gang" to bring the importance of protection to the attention of a smuggler.)

Option C

Paquette appeared out of nowhere a couple of years back and clawed his way to the top of the Godz's hierarchy with amazing speed. And no wonder—he'd been trained in infiltration, tactics, and personal combat by the best in the business: Tir Taimgire's Special Forces. Recently, Paquette's lieutenants began suffering from an unusual rate of attrition, and the gang leader replaced his fallen men with colleagues from outside the Free Zone. The rank and file does not know it, but the entire

upper echelon of the Boulder battalion now consists of Tir undercover operatives. Paquette's original mission ordered him to become gang leader and entrench his position. Now he awaits new orders, and the buzz through his communications channels seems to indicate he might not have long to wait.

NATURAL LAW

The Natural Law polyclub made a name for itself in a small way back in the 2020s. Like Unity, Natural Law came into being on a tide of focused resentment felt by many residents moved from their homes as a result of the Relocation Clause of the Treaty of Denver. When the terrorism and war of direct retaliation triggered by the "harmonization" of the Front Range Free Zone died down, Natural Law more or less faded into the background. Like many polyclubs, however, it still exists, operating quietly in the CAS Sector. Strictly speaking, the group has no legal standing because Natural Law's leaders refuse to fill out the appropriate forms in quadruplicate. But the CAS Sector security forces more or less turn a blind eye to the group, which they consider fairly harmless. The poli runs a "meeting hall" of sorts in the basement of a sporting-goods store near the intersection of East 14th Avenue and Ivy Street. (Use the Polyclub Meeting Hall archetype, p. 32, **Sprawl Sites**.) No sign hangs out front, but anyone who's interested can easily find out that Natural Law holds monthly meetings here. The discussions at these meetings never cover any illegal topics because undercover operatives from various security forces attend all meetings.

Natural Law maintains other meeting places as well. If your version of this group uses weapons, illegal propaganda, and other "sensitive" material, they keep the locations of these storage sites secret.

Option A

The Natural Law polyclub now casts a mere shadow of its former substance. Its leaders spend most of their time reminiscing about the glory days when they actually fought back against the "savage occupation," but those days are long gone.

Natural Law is "associated" with Alamos 20K and the Humanis polyclub, but the only thing these groups really share is their hatred for Amerinds and metahumans. These polyclubs sometimes send Natural Law hard-core propaganda materials—usually only after the minor club pesters them unmercifully—and once in a *long* while they punish a representative by sending him or her to speak at private meetings. All in all, however, Alamos 20K and Humanis scorn Natural Law and find its continued existence vaguely embarrassing.

Option B

The leaders of Natural Law long ago abandoned the ideals that led them to fight against the Amerindian "takeover" of Denver. Now they draw their inspiration from profit. The group may claim to be a polyclub and even occasionally hold meetings and distribute broadsheets, but Natural Law really represents a well-organized association of smugglers and shadow traders. Natural Law's leaders laugh over the sector security



forces' tolerance of their "subversive" political activities. How would the sec forces react if they learned that Natural Law's "political" activities serve as a front, an excuse to meet with a wide range of people who might otherwise attract unwanted notice from the powers that be?

The members of Natural Law belong to the class of people known as hard-core criminals and will kill to protect their secrets.

Option C

The leaders of Natural Law rather enjoy playing the role of bumbling, would-be polis. They willingly portray themselves as a has-been organization left behind by the tide of history, all of which provides an excellent cover for their real purpose. Actually, Natural Law is not one group, but two. The outer "shell" organization, with its disillusioned leadership, tired rhetoric, and ineffective members, makes up the first group.

Hidden behind this shell are a dozen, perhaps as many as twenty true believers. These individuals "apprenticed" in the Humanis polyclub, then "graduated" to the action teams of Alamos 20K. Now they form the elite of the Alamos organization, agents provocateurs and assassins with skills honed to a lethal edge. Because the higher ranks of Alamos consist of cells, only a handful of the key Alamos leadership know of the Natural Law strike force. The Natural Law team successfully performed several assassinations among the leadership of the Amerind sectors recently, then dropped out of sight. Their current low profile prompts many observers to suspect that something important is headed down the pike for Natural Law in the near future.

UNITY

Unity is a rabidly xenophobic, anti-metahuman polyclub organized and run along the lines of Humanis and Alamos 20K. Like Natural Law, Unity came to the fore during the chaos that followed the signing of the Treaty of Denver and continued to advocate its agenda of hate from that point on. Analysts believe that Unity forged links with and receives partial funding from Alamos 20K. This arrangement might lead one to believe that Unity and Humanis, also closely linked to Alamos 20K, would make close allies. Actually, the two organizations seem to hate each other with a passion.

Glennis Shand

Use the Bounty Hunter archetype (p. 203, **SR11**).

Glennis Shand is a cold but attractive, dark-haired human in her late 30s. The undisputed leader of the Unity polyclub rarely talks about her background, but most observers agree that she once worked for a sector security force—probably CAS, but nobody knows for sure. Shand runs Unity with military-style discipline and gives serious attention to security. Various organizations have tried to infiltrate agents into Unity in the past, but all such operatives returned home in a large number of very small boxes.

Shand seems to harbor a special hate for the Humanis polyclub, and the rivalry between the two groups recently escalated into high-intensity guerrilla warfare.

Option A

Shand truly believes in racial and cultural purity. Though she once admired the Humanis polyclub, she believes the other organization "betrayed the cause" by backing away from the "cleansing fire of race warfare." By abandoning its confronta-

tions with the "savages" of Chinatown, Shand feels Humanis proved itself unworthy to exist, and she has declared the elimination of the other polyclub to be a "holy cause."

Option B

Despite her frequent accusations of Humanis "betraying the ideals of the movement," Shand's dreams of personal power are her true motivation. The ongoing feud between Unity and Humanis is not about beliefs or philosophies. Shand is angling to eliminate the leadership of the local Humanis chapter to absorb its membership into her own organization and emerge as the most powerful and influential polyclub leader in the sector.

Option C

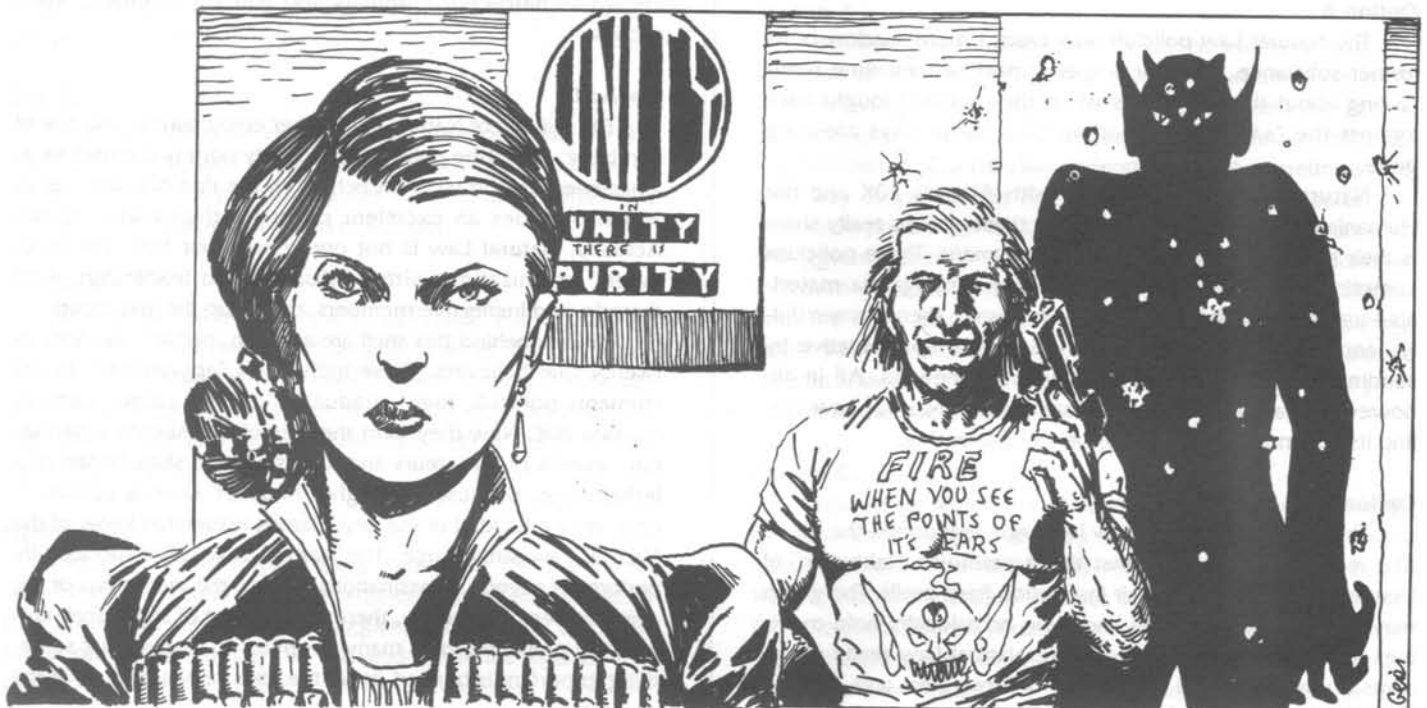
Glennis Shand is actually the free spirit Night. (See p. 12 in the **Spirit of Denver** section.)

YAKUZA

Kasigi Toda

Use the Yakuza Boss archetype (p. 213, **SR11**).

Kasigi Toda is a soft-spoken man in his early 50s who possesses an intuitive sense for people's needs and wants. During business negotiations, he often seems to know precisely what the other side wants, even before the opposing negotiator figures it out. He serves as the president of Divine Wind Enterprises, a small import/export firm based in the UCAS Sector. Toda enjoys long-standing "frequent traveler" agreements with all signatory governments and spends considerable time visiting friends and business colleagues or attending the opera in the various sectors. Toda possesses considerable





wealth, but defuses much of the hostility traditionally directed toward the rich by donating generously to charity and the arts. He lived in a lavish house in the Montebello district, west of Stapleton, with his wife and children until it and they were blown to pieces on the night of June 5, 2054.

Option A

Kasigi Toda is the oyabun of a minor yakuza clan, the Yamato. The Red Dragon Triad orchestrated the bombing that killed his family after yakuza hitters assassinated several triad leaders. Unfortunately for Toda and his family, the bombers misidentified the assassins. The Yamato clan was not involved in the triad hits, and Toda had no connection whatsoever with the murders.

The loss of his family broke Toda's spirit. The oyabun goes through the motions of his responsibilities as president of Divine Wind and leader of the Yamato, but most knowledgeable observers agree he won't be holding either position much longer.

Option B

Toda is the oyabun of the Yamato, the most influential yakuza clan in the Front Range Free Zone. Toda plotted the assassinations of the triad leaders and was absolutely horrified when those "barbarians" ignored the unwritten rules of business and killed innocents—his family. He immediately dedicated himself and the considerable resources of clan Yamato to

wiping the Red Dragon Triad from the face of the earth. Observers believe that his personal loss affected the perspective and objectivity that made Toda such an effective leader and earned the Yamato clan its influence—but nobody dares mention this to the vengeful oyabun.

Option C

Toda is oyabun of the Yamato, the most influential yakuza clan in the Free Zone. Toda and the Yamato are locked in a long-standing rivalry with the Naito clan. Though the hostility between the feuding clans has always been intense, neither ever stepped beyond the bounds of acceptable business behavior, always limiting their attacks to clan assets or official yakuza members.

Until now. The Red Dragon Triad *had* been a minor thorn in the side of the Yamato, and Toda did order the assassination of three of their leaders. But the destruction of Toda's house and family was not triad retaliation.

Toda quickly realized the Naito clan planted the bomb, hoping to launch Toda and clan Yamato on a vendetta against the Red Dragons and freeing the Naito to expand its influence while its old rival was distracted. Toda plans to stage a few minor raids against the triad to persuade the Naito he's fallen for their ploy, but his main focus is on gathering his resources in preparation for a full-scale, open war against the Naito. Such a war might well split the underworld of Denver wide open.

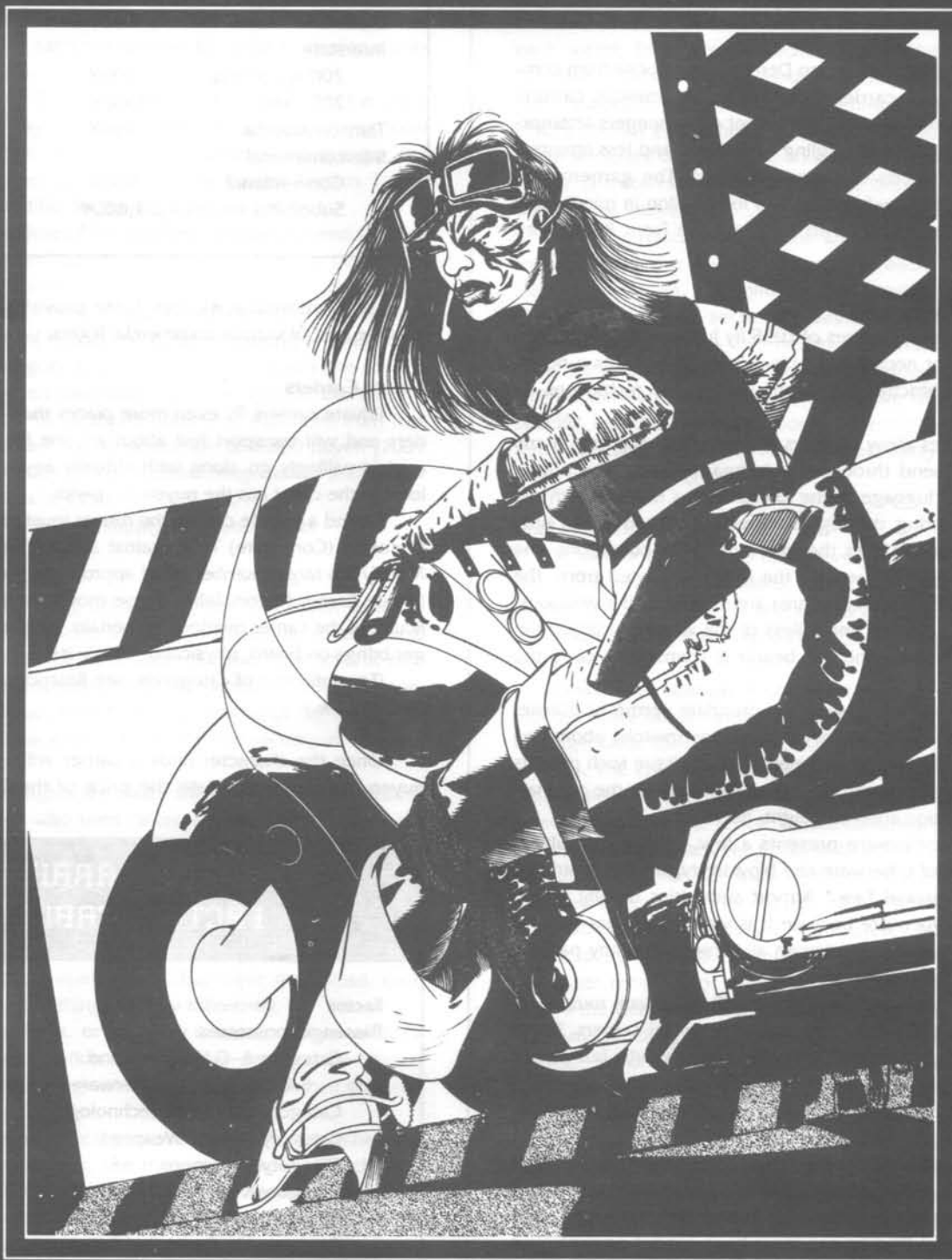
RULES

The **Rules** section discusses the specifics of getting into and around in Denver, including air/ground travel, travel passes, and all aspects of border security. This section also provides rules for how to survive life in the Front Range Free Zone; defines monetary units; compares costs for goods across sectors; and defines the classifications of crimes, punishments, and restricted weapons and other equipment. This information expands on and provides specific rules for issues discussed in the **Denver** book. As always, feel free to massage the rules and other information presented to best suit your campaign.

Because we recognize that new players may use Denver as their first campaign setting, we reprinted certain previously published rules in order to provide all the rules required to run this locale in one, convenient place.

GETTING INTO DENVER

The **Denver** book describes the Front Range Free Zone in terms that make it seem as tightly secured as a bank vault. The sector governments would certainly like you to believe that hype and act accordingly, but the real situation is different. People are people and machines are machines, and both get old, tired, worn down, and sometimes simply lazy. Savvy player characters can exploit those weaknesses as long as they stay smart and sharp.



Air and ground routes represent the primary paths into the FRFZ. For the purposes of this discussion, consider rail travel procedures virtually identical to air travel procedures. Apply the same rules and guidelines to air and rail travel, but rail travel costs only 60 percent of equivalent air travel.

AIR TRAVEL

People traveling by air into Denver may choose from commercial or private carriers. Generally, commercial carriers charge lower fares, but are less tolerant of passengers attempting illegal activities or smuggling contraband and less attentive to the special needs of their customers. The gamemaster should keep the following rules and information in mind when his player characters travel to and from the Front Range Free Zone.

Commercial Carriers

The commercial carriers of 2055 fly just about everywhere, but they will not necessarily fly everyone who wants a ticket, and they must strictly observe regulations and restrictions on their cargo.

Most airlines allow travelers to transport weaponry in any luggage they send through the baggage check. The airline stores checked luggage in the aircraft cargo holds, which are inaccessible during the flight. However, a carrier will only transport weapons under the following three conditions: the weapons are legal in the area the flight originated from; the local police of the destination area are notified of the weapons' presence upon landing, regardless of the weapons' legality in the destination area; and the bearer is licensed to carry the weapons.

If the traveler possesses an appropriate permit or license, he legally may carry Category E Weapons (pistols) aboard an aircraft. The respective governments usually issue such permits only to security forces recognized as legitimate in the originating and destination areas of a flight, however.

Checking cyberware presents a few, special difficulties. (For definitions of cyberware and bioware types, see Restricted Items, p. 58, **Sprawl Law**.) Airport authorities usually ignore Category CA cyberware because it is virtually useless without the associated weaponry, though all carriers note any passengers wearing such cyberware.

Anyone equipped with Category CB cyberware must wear cyber-restraint cuffs to fly on most commercial carriers. These small, padded units clamp into place on each wrist but do not restrict movement.

Anyone carrying Category CC cyberware must have special permits.

Carriers make little effort to regulate bioware, because most detection and scanning equipment lacks the capability of detecting its presence. However, passengers equipped with Category BB and BC bioware must have special permits, and air carriers must require such documents if they learn a passenger carries such bioware.

Other bioware and types of transportable items are subject to local laws and restrictions.

COMMERCIAL AIRFARES TABLE

Distance	Coach	First Class
Intrastate	100¥	200¥
Interstate		
200 km or less	200¥	400¥
200+ km	300¥	600¥
Transcontinental	450¥	900¥
Intercontinental		
Conventional	900¥	2,000¥
Suborbital	1,600¥	4,000¥

The Commercial Airfares Table provides the suggested average cost of various commercial flights.

Private Carriers

Private carriers fly even more places than commercial carriers and will transport just about anyone for a price. Private carriers willingly go along with virtually any arrangements, as long as the client has the nuyen to spend.

To find a private carrier, the runner must make a successful Etiquette (Corporate) Test against a Base Target Number 3. Modify the target number by all appropriate modifiers from the Private Carrier Factors Table. These modifiers represent the difficulty of the carrier overlooking certain "baggage" the passenger brings on board, physical or otherwise.

(For definition of categories, see Restricted Items, p. 58 in **Sprawl Law**.)

Once the character finds a carrier willing to accept his nuyen, he must negotiate the price of the flight. To deter-

PRIVATE CARRIER FACTORS TABLE

Factor	Modifier
Passenger possesses:	
Category A-G Weapons and CA, CB, and CC Cyberware	—
Category CD Matrix Technology	—
Category H and I Weapons	+1
Category J Weapons	+2
Category K Armor	+1
Category L Ammunition	—
Category M1 Controlled Substances	+1
Category M2 Controlled Substances	+2
Category M3 Controlled Substances	+3
Passenger engages in criminal activity	+1

mine the base cost of a private flight, simply multiply the fare for a comparable commercial flight by 3 (see the Commercial Airfares Table, p. 44). Assume the pilot or private carrier has a Negotiation Skill of 3 or use the appropriate skill of a specific non-player character. Lower the cost by 5 percent for each net success the runner achieves. Raise the cost 5 percent for each net success the pilot or carrier representative achieves.

In addition to the negotiated price of the flight, the character must also pay an "arrival fee," the cost of bribing local officials. The arrival fee equals 100 nuyen per passenger per applicable category from the Private Carrier Factors Table, times the final modifier for finding a private carrier.

For example, Josey Moe and her companion need to book a 150-kilometer private flight from the Pueblo Corporate Council to the Pueblo Sector. Her companion is a completely unaltered human carrying Category M2 Controlled Substances (BTLs). Josey herself is also mundane and toting a Category H weapon and Category L ammunition. The base price for the flight is 1,200 nuyen (first-class intrastate flight at 200¥ x 3 = 600¥ per person). To whatever price she negotiates from that base fee, Josey must add an arrival fee of 1,200 nuyen [100¥ per passenger = 200¥ x 2 applicable categories (H and M2) = 400¥ x 3 (modifiers of +1 and +2) = 1,200¥].

Private carriers cannot supply suborbital flights.

AIRPORT SECURITY

Characters entering Denver may find it difficult to avoid crossing national borders. Keeping in mind that international flights entering the Free Zone suffer the most restrictions, runners may choose instead to enter the parent nation of the sector they wish to visit, then take an intranational flight into that nation's sector, thus avoiding the heaviest security of the sector airports.

International flights are those that cross national borders. (The **Denver** book also uses "international" to designate airports capable of handling suborbital and semiballistic flights.) International travelers face the most stringent security checks on arrival at the destination airport. These security checkpoints use the most powerful programs available to check identifications, and customs officials conduct the most aggressive questioning and physical searches. Within these guidelines, each nation/sector handles things slightly differently.

Intranational flight, or traveling between points within a nation or between a nation and its sector, requires the traveler to undergo far less stringent security procedures than do international travelers.

For specifics on typical personal and vehicle searches and other security measures, see those sections in **Checkpoint Realities**, p. 48. Citizens traveling between nations/sectors who are returning to their home nation pass through "international loose" security, while non-citizens entering a country must pass through "international tight" security. Citizens traveling between points in their resident nation undergo "local loose" security, while non-citizens are subject to "local tight" security. (See **Checkpoint Realities**, p. 48, for definitions of loose and tight security.)

BORDER SECURITY

The border surrounding the Front Range Free Zone represents a considerable stretch of land to be monitored and/or patrolled. The levels of border security within the Front Range Free Zone vary greatly, as noted in the **Need to Know** section of the **Denver** book and detailed in the sections describing each sector. For example, because the borders of the Pueblo Corporate Council and the Sioux and Ute nations directly abut their respective sectors, those governments feel less need to strictly control every meter of those demarcators. This makes these stretches of border the most logical entrance points for player characters who want to enter Denver without going through the hassles of security checkpoints.

Use the descriptions in the **Denver** book as guidelines to determine the level of security at each border in your Denver campaign. The following rules provide game statistics for the various security measures popular in the Free Zone, including walls and fences, sensors, mines, distinctions between the sectors' manned patrols, the genetically altered German shepherds popular in the UCAS Sector, and specific vehicles and other powered equipment. These systems appear in the order runners most likely will encounter them when crossing a border.

Walls and Fences

A wall or fence marks nearly every meter of border in the Free Zone. Walls have a Barrier Rating of 12, and fences have a Barrier Rating of 8. Walls and fences are typically five or ten meters in height, and may vary in thickness from one-half to one meter.

Electrified Fences: A character who touches a charged electric fence takes damage as from a shock weapon with a Damage Code of 4D Stun (see **Shadowrun**, p. 120, or **SRII**, p. 103). The character must also make a Willpower or Body Test against a Target Number 4 to remove his or her paralyzed hands from the fence. Failure to achieve any successes means that the character remains in contact with the fence and takes another 4D Stun attack in 10 Combat Phases. If knocked unconscious by the damage, the character takes a third 4D Stun shock before his muscles go slack and he drops to the ground. Regardless of how many shocks the character receives or when he goes unconscious, he still suffers the long-term stun effects of the shock.

Any shock-type damage the character takes may also damage his or her cyberware. (See **Street Samurai Catalog**, pp. 93–5, or **Shadowtech**, p. 39, for more information.)

Wire-topped Fences: Some security walls mount strands of monowire or razor wire along the top to discourage unwanted visitors from hopping the demarcator. To spot a trap consisting of taut monowire, a character must make a successful Perception (6) Test. Apply the visibility modifiers from the Visibility Table, p. 66, **Shadowrun**, or p. 89, **SRII**, in addition to the appropriate modifiers from the Additional Visibility Modifiers table.

ADDITIONAL VISIBILITY MODIFIERS

Situation	Modifier
Character distracted/running	+2
Illumination level changing	Add +1 to modifier of lowest illumination level

Characters that come into contact with a monowire while running take 11S damage. If walking, the character takes only 9S damage. A character who grabs a strand of monowire takes 7S damage. Impact armor offers one-half (round down) protection against this damage. Combat Pool dice cannot be used to supplement the Damage Resistance Test.

Razor wire is always easily visible and inflicts 7M damage to a character that fails a Quickness (4) Test to avoid it. Impact armor offers full protection against this damage.

Sensors

Player characters may steal across a border undetected by making a successful Stealth Test against a target number equal to the effective rating (see below) of any sensors scanning the area. Any character trying to cross a border in this manner may move no more than 1 meter for that Combat Turn. Gamemasters may also modify the Stealth Test target number to reward player characters for coming up with innovative ways to defeat a sensor system.

To determine the effective rating of a border sensor system, assume that the different sensor subsystems combine their effects into a single detector. The Sector Sensor Table suggests border sensor ratings for each sector. Because each sector's border sensors also vary from place to place, the Sensor Rating Modifiers Table provides a sensor-rating modifier. To determine the effective sensor rating, roll 2D6 and consult the Sensor Rating Modifiers Table, then apply the result to the appropriate sector sensor rating.

Patrols

Each of Denver's nations and sectors supplement their electronic security systems with physical patrols. The regular-

SECTOR SENSOR TABLE

Nation/Sector	Effective Rating
Aztlan	5 (across most of the border)
CAS	3
(only in sensitive areas)	
Pueblo	6 (across most of the border)
Sioux	3 (sporadic)
UCAS	4 (across most of the border)
Ute	2 (sporadic)

SENSOR RATING MODIFIERS TABLE

2D6 Result	Modifier
2	-2
3-5	-1
6-8	no change
9-11	+1
12	+2

ty, composition, and effectiveness of these patrols varies from sector to sector. To reflect this uncertainty, roll 4D6 whenever a player character or group attempts a border crossing. Consult the Sector Patrol Table for the target number and apply any appropriate modifiers from the Sector Patrol Modifiers table.

On a single success, a patrol is nearby. A greater number of successes indicates the patrol is more powerful than the standard patrol. For example, 4 successes might mean the player characters have run across a heavy patrol performing an intensive sweep of the area.

The patrols in each nation/sector also use a unique combination of personnel and gear. The following descriptions suggest various patrol compositions. Feel free to tailor the strength and composition of any patrol to the needs of your game.

Aztlan patrols consist of two- or four-man mundane units, occasionally supported by a paranormal animal and more rarely by a watcher or other spirit. Consider all Aztlan forces well trained, with Professional/Threat Ratings of 3/4.

CAS fields three-man mundane patrol groups accompanied by one or two trained attack dogs. These patrols rarely include magical personnel. Consider CAS forces to be moderately well trained, with Professional/Threat Ratings of 3/3.

In **Pueblo**, a "stealth" drone responds to any sensor disturbance on the border. Response team strength varies depending on the reported number and estimated strength of detected intruders. Magical patrols are almost non-existent. Consider Pueblo forces to be moderately well trained, with Professional/Threat Ratings of 3/3.

Sioux patrols generally consist of two- or three-man mundane teams that travel on foot or in light scout vehicles such as

SECTOR PATROL TABLE

Nation/Sector	Target Number
Aztlan	6
CAS	5
Pueblo	9
Sioux	6
UCAS	8
Ute	6

SECTOR PATROL MODIFIERS

Situation	Modifier
Urban area	-1
Rural area	+2*
Non-contiguous sector border	-1

*Do not apply this modifier for UCAS patrols.

the GMC-Beachcraft Patroller or Sikorsky-Bell "Red Ranger" Scout ACVs (see p. 48 for game statistics). The Sioux Sector and nation supplement their patrols with Sikorsky-Bell Microskimmer drones. Magical support is uncommon, but consider Sioux forces well trained, with Professional/Threat Ratings of 3/4.

Two-man mundane teams patrol urban areas along the UCAS borders on foot. Outside the urban centers, patrols often cover their territory in GMC Banshee LAVs and the current version of the Northrup Yellowjacket mini-chopper. UCAS forces are moderately well trained, with Professional/Threat Ratings of 3/3. The UCAS also protects its borders with specially trained attack dogs (see **Silent Killers**, p. 48).

The Ute patrols rely mostly on low-powered nature spirits, often supported by watchers or elementals. The likelihood of detection by these patrols reflects the odds of the local nature spirit noticing any approaching intruders. Any physical, mundane response depends on the reported number and estimated strength of any detected intruders. Ute forces are moderately well trained, with Professional/Threat Ratings of 3/3.

Sentry Gun Systems

"Smart" autonomous gun systems called sentry guns provide additional protection for many areas of the Zone borders. These weapons acquire and track targets selectively and engage them with the appropriate rate of fire. These systems incorporate sophisticated low-light, thermographic, and ultrasound targeting and tracking systems and advanced tactical-analysis data-processing systems. Built around an Ares MP-LMG mechanism firing at minigun rates, these weapons fire in burst or autofire modes as appropriate (gamemaster discretion) and feed at least 1,000 rounds of ammunition. The microturrets provide 7 points of Recoil Compensation and enable the system to engage targets in any facing. The weapons can pivot to a +20-degree inclination or down to a -10-degree declination.

These sentry gun systems have an effective Firearms Rating of 6 and an Initiative of 25 + 2D6. The system will automatically delay its action (p. 80, **SRII**) as appropriate. As minigun-rate firing mechanisms, these systems can fire up to 15 rounds an action, usually in five 3-round bursts. They can and will engage multiple targets within 1 action. These systems have an effective Intelligence of 8, and so can "mark" and track up to eight separate targets.

For more information on sentry weapons, see the gun systems entries in **Fields of Fire** and the **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life**.

Ares UAM

The sonic detector that fires the Ares underground-to-air missile has a base Intelligence Rating of 7. Decrease the detector's rating by 1 for each 10 meters of distance between the vehicle and the UAM detector unit. The firer must achieve at least 1 success against the signature of the vehicle. If the detector achieves 1 success, the missile fires.

The firing process takes 2 Combat Turns. If realism is an issue in your game, track how far the target moves in that time and in what direction to determine if the target somehow moves into or out of the missile's range or otherwise affects the missile's effectiveness.

The UAM uses the following stats.

Intelligence	Power Level	Weight
5*	Damage 8D	0.75
Cost 1,300¥	Reduction -6 per meter	Scatter 2D6 meters

*Because this is an autonomous system, roll this number of dice for the Success Test against a target number equal to the vehicle's Signature Rating.

The missile has an airspeed of 800 meters per Combat Turn, which means that some aircraft can just plain outrun it. It carries fuel for only 5 Combat Turns of flight. Again, gamemasters concerned about realism in their game should track the "geometry of the intercept," which could make all the difference between escape and disaster.

For obvious reasons, the UAM launcher uses an IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) subsystem that keys off official CAS vehicle transponders to avoid mistakenly firing at any vehicle with the correct code. Predictably, this code is a tightly held secret, but we trust that creative runners will find several innovative ways of acquiring it.

Land Mines

Land mines consist of explosives equipped with impact or acoustic triggers. Characters attempting to cross a minefield must make a Perception (6) Test, but apply a -2 target number modifier if the character is using some form of metal detector. If the test fails, secretly roll 4D6 against a Target Number 6. If this test succeeds, the character detonates a land mine in his path. Ouch.

If the character succeeds at the Perception (6) Test, he detects any mines in his path and must make a successful Stealth (4) Test to avoid detonating the mines. Apply a +1 modifier for every 2 points of natural Body the character has above 4. If the Stealth Test succeeds, the character avoids detonating the mines. If the test fails, the mines detonate.

Land mines inflict 8D damage. Reduce the blast/power of the mine by 2 for each half meter of distance between a detonating mine and any character.



Silent Killers

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R	Attacks
5	5x4	4	—	3/4	3	6	5*	8M

The so-called silent killers are attack-trained, genetically modified German shepherds that grow nearly 50 percent larger than their naturally bred cousins. The UCAS uses these animals extensively as part of their border patrols, but other sectors also use these dogs.

Silent killers receive 2D6 Initiative Dice.

AeroDesign Systems Condor LDSD-23

Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
5	20/60	1/0	10	1

Operational Duration: Daylight: unrestricted (solar powered). Night: 8 hours.

Weapons: 1 firmpoint-mounted SMG (SA/BF, Ammo 100 (belt), Damage 6L, 3 points of Recoil Compensation)

The Condor drone has an Intelligence Rating 7. To determine whether a Condor detects a vehicle, roll 7D6 against a target number equal to the target vehicle's signature. A single success means the Condor has detected the vehicle.

Sikorsky-Bell "Red Ranger" Scout ACV

Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
4	150/450	2/2	3	3

Seating: 1 + 1 single bucket seats

The Ranger ACV's arsenal includes a small turret (Vigilant autocannon) and two external missile racks (AVMs). This two-man scouting vehicle also features a unique dual motive system that enables it to run as a standard ACV or on powered wheels. For more details, see p. 75, **Rigger Black Book**.

Vigilant Rotary Autocannon

Type	Ammo	Damage
Cannon	Belt	12D/6D

Range

Short (4)	Medium (5)	Long (7)	Extended (9)
0-100 m	101-500 m	501-2,500 m	3,001-5,000 m

The Vigilant fires up to 5 rounds per action, using the auto-fire rules. The Recoil Modifier is 3 per round, but the turret includes 3 points of Recoil Compensation.

GMC-Beachcraft Patroller

Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
4	55/165	4/2	5	2

Seating: 2 + 2 bucket seats + bench

This small, nimble ACV features a 360-degree-traverse microturret (generic heavy machine gun) and forward-firing centerline mount (generic heavy machine gun), as well as a high-power engine and fully sealed cabin. For more details, see p. 74, **Rigger Black Book**.

Sikorsky-Bell Microskimmer

Handling	Speed	B/A	Sig	APilot
5	30/90	1/0	3	1

Operational Duration: 8 hours in stationary mode.

Armament: None **Sensor Package:** Standard (1)

The Microskimmer ACV drone can carry a full suite of standard sensors. Each minute of mobile-mode operation at cruise speed or less counts as 6 minutes of operational time. At greater than cruise speed, each minute counts as 12 minutes. For more details, see p. 83, **Rigger Black Book**.

UCAS Wasp/Yellowjacket

These versions of the Northrop PRC-42 Wasp and PRC-44B Yellowjacket rotorcraft feature the "F" series upgrade, which improves the choppers' Handling, Body, Armor, and Signature. Use the following upgrade stats and costs.

	Handling	Body/Armor	Signature	Cost
Wasp	-1	2/6	+2	74,000¥
Yellowjacket	-1	3/9	+2	110,000¥

For base Yellowjacket or Wasp statistics see pp. 70-71, **Rigger Black Book**, or p. 74, **Street Samurai Catalog**. For more information on the "F" series upgrade, see p.70, **Fields of Fire**.

CHECKPOINT REALITIES

As a standard part of doing biz in Denver, runners need to travel from sector to sector on a regular basis. This means they spend lots of time visiting checkpoints. Whether or not the officials decide to hassle any given runner depends on many factors beyond his control, but he can change the odds by being savvy to some of the ins and outs of checkpoint realities in the Treaty City.

Unless stated otherwise, the gamemaster must determine whether a checkpoint has "loose" or "tight" security. Base this decision on circumstances, the requirements of the story, the professionalism of the guards, whether the system is currently on alert, and any other factors that might reasonably affect the efficiency of the checkpoint guards and computer systems. The definition of loose or tight may also change between sectors; checkpoints within sectors, depending on the importance of the location; and the type of checkpoint—border, airport security, rail station crossings, and so on.

The **Denver** book distinguishes between various types of travel passes and the procedures required to obtain, keep, and use them. This section provides rules for acquiring or forging and using a frequent traveler/visitor pass, but the gamemaster should apply these rules to all types of travel passes. Characters' attempts to obtain or use a pass may result in various outcomes, at the gamemaster's convenience and discretion.

Frequent Traveler/Visitor's Pass

The frequent traveler or visitor's pass is the most common form of permission used to cross sector borders legally. Effectively, the frequent traveler/visitor pass is a limited-use access pass that allows the bearer to enter a sector for a limited purpose or duration. Each sector has different requirements and procedures for obtaining these passes. Consult the **Denver** book for relevant information.

To obtain a frequent traveler pass, a player character must submit a credstick or equivalent electronic ID to the sector into which he is traveling. Of course, possessing a valid credstick usually requires the character to have a SIN, which itself poses a special problem for most shadowrunners. For purposes of this discussion, assume the character has a valid credstick. (See **Forging Passes** for information on forging a pass and the appropriate ID.)

The sector verifies the credstick ID by cross-referencing the information with its own national databases and any international databases to which it has access. Assume these searches reveal any significant recorded information about the character. How a sector reacts to the result of that search depends on the nature of the character's background and the sector's laws. In general, a request for a frequent traveler pass elicits one of three responses.

- The sector declares the character persona non grata and rejects the request.

- The sector grants the character restricted access. The character may only visit certain areas, perform specific activities and must check in frequently with a government official during his stay.

- The sector grants the character unrestricted access to its borders. Unrestricted access usually means that the official tells the character, "Welcome to our borders. Enjoy your stay," while signalling a subordinate to initiate a tail on the character for the duration of his stay.

The approval process takes a certain amount of time, depending on the sector in question. To determine the required waiting time, roll 2D6 and apply the appropriate

APPROVAL TIME MODIFIERS

Sector	Modifier
Aztian	+2
CAS	-2
Pueblo	-2
Sioux	-2
UCAS	—
Ute	+2

modifier from the Approval Time Modifiers table, then multiply the result by 10. The final figure represents the number of minutes required to receive the request approval.

Because the Pueblo Sector has one of the best relational database schemes in the business, however, the pass approval process takes far less time in that sector. The modified 2D6 roll result represents the time in minutes a person must wait to be approved for a pass into the Pueblo Sector (do not multiply by 10).

Forging Passes

Shadowy people in every sector of the Front Range Free Zone conduct a booming business in forged passes. Prices for forged passes vary greatly, but rest assured that none come cheap, because creating a forged travel pass requires three things: time, money, and a valid ID for that pass. The pass, and even the credstick itself may be easy enough to rig. It's fabricating the necessary background identification files that requires considerable effort.

Player characters cannot apply for and receive a pass legally without presenting a valid credstick. If they choose to pay for a forgery, they must still produce a matching credstick at the border. For this reason, the process for forging a travel pass is virtually identical to that for forging a credstick/ID, because the supplier must often do both at once. The following information provides a good indication of the work and time involved. Price forged passes and credsticks in your game to reflect that effort.

During the verification process, the information contained in the pass and credstick is instantly cross-referenced and double-verified through a dozen or more channels. Such cross-referencing is a simple matter for the international computer grid of the Matrix, and so falsifying an identity involves an incredible amount of electronic manipulation. That is, someone must create and covertly insert into the world's data banks a suitable, appropriate, and credible "history" that appears to be a permanent part of the information net. To create a pass, the supplier must be intimately familiar with the procedures and current codes and such of the appropriate sectors.

An average Joe working at home on his legal cyberdeck has no hope of creating a usable false ID for a pass or the pass itself. Only an expert, and a well-connected expert at that, possesses the resources to pull off a scam of these proportions. Entire shadow organizations exist solely for the

CREATING A CREDSTICK TABLE

Credstick Rating	Cost	Availability	Street Index
1-4	Rating x 2,000¥	Rating/12 hours	1
5-8	Rating x 10,000¥	Rating/72 hours	1
9-12	Rating x 50,000¥	Rating/14 days	1
13+	Rating x 250,000¥	Rating/30 days	1

purpose of creating false identities and passes. These organizations, normally based in one of the world's data havens, maintain contact with the "real world" only through secret channels. By virtue of its local resources, Denver offers an unusual number of organizations and people engaged in this business, and the channels are less secret than elsewhere. Most reputable independent or corporate fixers know how to get in touch with a forger.

Creating the credstick background and the forged pass costs money. The greater the detail and reliability of the history required by the client, the more money it costs to produce.

The Creating A Credstick Table provides information on how much it costs to create a credstick, forged credstick availability, and the time required for a client to get a credstick from a topnotch forgery organization. Use the same numbers for pass creation, except a pass costs only 10 percent of the credstick cost. The client must pay at least half the cost of creating the credstick or pass to the fixer in advance. If the transaction is for a pass only, the client must supply to the forger a valid or forged credstick/ID so that the two pieces of ID can be linked. (For information on using Availability, see p. 101, **Shadowtech**, or p. 184, **SRII**.)

Once created, a character can use a forged credstick or pass just like the real thing. Under most circumstances, a good forgery will stand up to the verification process and be accepted as legitimate. As the pass or stick rating increases, the document will fool more sophisticated pass-verification systems.

Using A Forged Credstick/Pass

To use a forged pass, a player must make an opposed Success Test pitting the rating of the pass against the rating of the verification system. Both sides roll a number of dice equal to their respective ratings, using the opposition's rating as the target number. The side achieving the most successes wins. If both sides achieve the same number of successes, the verifying system instructs the operator to further "interrogate" the pass or credstick holder. The verifier's display screen will then flash a series of questions based on the holder's history which the character must answer correctly. If the pass holder answers any question incorrectly, the verifier rejects the pass and the validating credstick. A character forced to undergo further interrogation must make a successful Negotiation Test (p. 153, **SR**, or pp. 180-81, **SRII**), and the verifying official is automatically suspicious of the credstick/pass bearer from this point on.

Verification Systems

All pass checking and credstick/ID verifying systems are rated by how efficiently they comb the world's data banks to verify the ID or pass. The more efficient the cross-referencing, the higher the rating, and the longer the verification takes. Depending on the sector and the area of the demarcator in which the character is attempting to cross the border, the border crossing point may use a more or less powerful verification system.

A **Rating 1** verifier provides the most basic check. This system accepts only passcodes for verification, and the verification process is instantaneous. Only the rare, lonely, border crossing outposts use such low-power systems, as do certain high-traffic checkpoints that consider their chances of infiltration by forgeries unlikely.

Standard Rating 1 units are portable and cost 12,000¥.

The **Rating 2 or 3** system accepts both passcode and fingerprint identification and provides instantaneous verification. Security and law-enforcement vehicles commonly carry systems of this rating for on-the-spot pass/ID verification. These systems may be portable, but most are linked to the local computer grid either by hardline or cellular connection.

Installed Rating 2 or 3 units cost 45,000¥. Portable units cost 60,000¥.

Rating 4-5 verifier systems accept passcode, fingerprint, and voiceprint identification. The verification process takes 1D6 minutes. Corporate, private security and law enforcement offices use Rating 4 or 5 systems to make detailed ID checks. These systems require local computer grid access.

Available only by permit from special sources. Price range: 100,000 to 200,000¥.

Extremely sophisticated systems, **Rating 6 or 7** ID/pass verifiers accept passcode, fingerprint, voiceprint, retinal, and cellular print identification and can verify or reject a pass or credstick within 2D6 minutes. Elite corporate and private security firms, corporate "information" agencies, and government law enforcement and intelligence agencies favor this rating-level system. These systems require local computer grid access.

Rating 8-9 systems routinely break all but the most solid of forged IDs. They accept all forms of ID verification and approve or deny a pass within 3D6 minutes. Rating 8 or 9 systems require local computer grid access.

Many people on both sides of the law argue that **Rating 10** systems simply cannot exist. They claim that the enormity of the task of processing the vast amount of cross-checking

CHECKPOINT VERIFICATION SYSTEMS

Sector	System Rating
Aztlan	4
CAS	3
Pueblo	4
Sioux	3
UCAS	3
Ute	4

necessary to conduct such thorough searches makes systems of this rating impractical, if not impossible. No one can provide any details on the capabilities of Rating 10 systems, and only rumor postulates their existence.

Checkpoint Verification

Different sectors maintain different levels of verification systems at their checkpoints. To move through a checkpoint, the character must have both the pass and the credstick verified, but the player makes only one test, using the lower of the two ratings as the target number.

The rating in the Checkpoint Verification Systems table reflects the average operating performance of the system. The actual rating varies depending on momentary system load and other technical factors. To simulate this variable, roll 2D6 at the time of the verification and apply the appropriate modifier from the System Rating Modifiers table.

SYSTEM RATING MODIFIERS

2D6 Result	Rating Modifier
2	-2
3-5	-1
6-8	—
9-11	+1
12	+2

Additional Modifiers

International checkpoint	+1
Intranational checkpoint	—
"Loose" security	—
"Tight" security	+1
Time of crossing	
Rush hour: 8:00-9:30 A.M., 4:30-6:00 P.M.,	
11:30 P.M.-1:00 A.M.	-1
Dead of night: 1:00-3:00 A.M.	+1

HASSLE MODIFIERS TABLE

Situation	Modifier
Character has a Charisma of 2 or less	-1
Character is of the appropriate sexual orientation for the guard and has a Charisma of 5 or higher	-1
Guard harbors a prejudice toward the character's race	- Racism Points
Encounter occurs between 1:30-3:30 A.M.	-1
Encounter occurs during shift change (see the System Rating Modifiers table)	+2

Suspicion and Searches

If checkpoint guards become suspicious for additional reasons besides a failed travel-pass verification, they may want to physically search the individual and/or his vehicle. Ideally, role-playing should decide the checkpoint guard's action. But those who want to use a dice roll can follow the **Using Social Skills** procedure, pp. 181-82, **SRII**.

Assume the checkpoint guard is "Neutral" and the character's desired result is "Of No Value to the NPC." The player uses the guard's Intelligence as the target number for either a Charisma or Etiquette (Corporate) Test (most other etiquette skills won't help in this situation). The gamemaster should also determine if the guard is racist (p.182, **SRII**), and if sexual harassment comes into play. If the character is of the appropriate sexual orientation for the guard (gamemaster's discretion) and has a Charisma equal to or greater than 5, modify the target number by -1.

If the character generates at least one success and all other possibilities are equal, the guard generously decides to not hassle the character. If the character fails the test, the guard may decide to hassle the character just for the sport of it. Make an Intelligence (6) Test, applying the appropriate modifiers from the Hassle Modifiers Table, to determine if the guard hassles and searches the character.

If the test fails, the guard sends the character on his or her way with nothing more sinister than a sneer or a leer. If the test generates 1 success, the guard runs another verification on the travel pass/ID. If the test generates 2 successes, the guard conducts a standard search of the character and his vehicle (if appropriate). If the test generates 3 successes, the guard conducts a deliberate search. Four or more successes prompts the guard to conduct a strip search of the character and his vehicle (if appropriate).

Use the following guidelines to determine the effectiveness of personal searches. In addition to the relative ability of the individual conducting the search, two other factors are important: how much time the checkpoint guard spends making the search, and how badly the searcher wants to find something.

In all cases, make a standard Perception Test using a number of dice equal to the searcher's Intelligence against a target

PHYSICAL SEARCH MODIFIERS

Situation

- Searcher's level of professionalism:
 - Average/Amateur (Professional Rating 1*)
 - Semi-trained (Professional Rating 2*)
 - Trained or better (Professional Rating 3 or 4*)
 - Thoroughness of search:
 - Cursory (very quick pat-down, 1-2 seconds)
 - Brisk (fast pat-down, 3-5 seconds)
 - Standard (6-20 seconds)
 - Detailed (21-60 seconds)
 - Deliberate (1-2 minutes)
 - Practically a fraggin' strip search (3-5 minutes)
 - Strip search (6-10 minutes)
 - Searcher is:
 - Intimidated/Fearful
 - Working under normal conditions
 - In complete control
- (*See Professional Rating rules, p. 187, **SR11**.)

Modifier

- +2
- +1
-
- +2
- +1
-
- 1
- 2
- 3
- Weapon found automatically
- +2
-
- 2

number equal to the Concealability of any weapons in question. For contraband without a stated Concealability Rating, assign a rating based on rated items of the same approximate size and mass. For example, a cold pack containing that strange biological goo you found in the Aztech lab is about the same size/mass as a pocket computer and so would have a Concealability Rating of 3 or so. Modify the target number as appropriate according to the Physical Search Modifiers table.

Determine the results of vehicle searches in the same manner as for personal searches, but make a Perception Test for each border official conducting the search. Apply the same modifiers as for personal searches to the searchers' Perception Test target number, except use the Thoroughness of Search modifiers provided in the Vehicle Search Modifiers table.

LIVING IN DENVER

Certain peculiarities of living and working in the Front Range Free Zone make life there just a little more exciting

than most people expect or want. Visiting characters must learn to live with the physical effects of being in the Denver area, and must learn to live without the kind of medical and law enforcement service they are accustomed to. While Denver's idiosyncrasies could easily add some spice to your player characters' lives, your group might just as easily find a way to use this information to their characters' advantage.

DECREASED TOLERANCE

Newcomers to Denver resist diseases and toxins with a Body Rating of 1 less than its actual value. This increased susceptibility lasts for 10 + D6 days (the Rule of Six DOES apply to this roll). Characters equipped with the extended-volume bioware modification (p.31, **Shadowtech**) do not suffer from this decreased tolerance.

INCREASED DRAIN

Magicians unaccustomed to the altitude of Denver resist Drain from spellcasting with a Willpower Ratings of 1 less than its actual value. This increased susceptibility lasts for 12 + D6 days (the Rule of Six DOES apply to this roll). Characters with the extended-volume bioware modification (p. 31, **Shadowtech**) do not suffer from this decreased resistance to Drain.

RESPONSE TIMES

Denver's unique divided nature means that medical and police response times can vary widely between the Free Zone and the rest of the world, and between sectors. The following guidelines suggest ways to determine the speed of medical and police response to emergency calls.

VEHICULAR SEARCH MODIFIERS

Thoroughness of Search	Modifier
Cursory examination (1 minute)	+2
Standard search (3 minutes)	—
Detailed search (8 minutes)	-3
Deliberate search (15 minutes)	-6
"Strip it to the frame" (40+ minutes)	-10

DOCWAGON RESPONSE TIME

Situation	Modifier
Sector:	
Aztlan	-4
CAS	—
Pueblo	-1
Sioux	-1
UCAS	+1
Ute	-2
Other areas:	
Non-contiguous sector	+8
Denver metropolitan area	-2
Boulder or Colorado Springs	-2
Outlying or rural area	+3
Corporate territory	*
Relative danger:	
Heavily patrolled/very safe area	-2
Extensively patrolled/safe area	-1
Patrolled/normal area	—
Under-patrolled/slightly dangerous area	+1
Minimal patrols/dangerous area	+2
Unpatrolled/hazardous area†	+3
Type of Response:	
Standard Response Team	—
Critical Response Team	+1
High Threat Response	**
Ground vehicle responding	—
Air vehicle responding	-2

*DocWagon will not respond to calls made from extraterritorial corporate territory or any sovereign territory of a foreign government without first obtaining express permission from that corporation or government. Normally, this means that if a call stems from an action against said corporation or government, service is denied unless the corporation or government feels particularly benevolent or (more likely) the response is somehow to their advantage. Obtaining permission usually increases the base response time by 4D6. The gamemaster makes the final call in all matters of extraction from extraterritorial areas and permission to provide service in these areas.

**If a High Threat Response (HTR) team is dispatched immediately upon receiving a call, reduce the response time by 1. If a Standard Response Team responds to a call and then calls for HTR back-up, calculate the response time normally. The ten-minute-response service clause is waived in such cases.

†The ten-minute-response clause is automatically void for calls originating in a hazardous area, such as the Warrens.

DOCWAGON LOOPHOLE TABLE

Situation	Modifier
Unusual social disturbances	-4
Excessive number of service calls simultaneously	-4
Customer involved in an active combat situation	-2
Dangerous area	-2
HTR called for by Standard Response Team	Clause waived

DocWagon™

The following guidelines represent average DocWagon response times to specific calls in the Denver area. (For more details, see the DocWagon section in the **Neo-Anarchists' Guide to Real Life.**)

Denver's DocWagon service is provided by one franchise that operates thirteen response stations—six in the Denver metro area (one in each sector) and seven scattered around the outlying areas of the Free Zone. Three factors determine DocWagon response time: the availability of ground or air units, the physical location, and the relative danger of the area from which the call originates. The farther away the available unit and the more dangerous the area, the slower the response time.

Whenever DocWagon receives a call for assistance, first determine the type of unit available to respond by rolling 1D6. On a result of 1–4, the responding DocWagon vehicle is a ground vehicle of the appropriate type. On a result of 5–6, an air vehicle of the appropriate type responds. High Threat Response (HTR) units respond to a call for their special type of service with a ground vehicle on a result of 1–3, and an air unit on a 4–5 (Stallion) or 6 (Osprey II).

To determine the response time, roll 3D6 and modify the result using the DocWagon Response Time table. Apply all applicable modifiers, which are cumulative. The final result is in minutes. The minimum response time is 4 minutes.

Whether or not DocWagon picks up the tab if they arrive late on the scene depends on the existence of any extenuating circumstances that release the firm from its ten-minute-response guarantee. The gamemaster first decides whether the circumstances surrounding the response should be considered standard or unusual. Under standard conditions, a result of 10 or less on a 2D6 die roll means DocWagon picks up the tab. If the gamemaster decides that unusual circumstances surround the call, he should consult the DocWagon Loophole Table, apply the appropriate modifier to a target number of 10, then roll 2D6. If the result is greater than the modified target number, DocWagon has found a legal contractual "out" that invalidates the ten-minute-response clause.

Law Enforcement

Determine response times for various law enforcement organizations in much the same manner as for DocWagon.

RULES

VEHICLE TYPE MODIFIER TABLE

Situation	Modifier
Gunfire reported	+1
Outlying or rural area	+1
Denver metropolitan area	-4

When local law enforcement receives a call for assistance, first determine the type of response unit available by rolling 2D6, modifying the result according to the Vehicle Type Modifier table, then consulting the Law Enforcement Vehicle Availability table.

LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLE AVAILABILITY

Sector	Ground Vehicle	Aircraft
Aztlan	2-11	12
CAS	2-8	9-12
Pueblo	2-9	10-12
Sioux	2-7	8-12
UCAS	2-8	9-12
Ute	2-9	10-12

Law enforcement commonly uses ground vehicles such as modified (armored) Ford Americans or Chrysler-Nissan Patrol vehicles. Common aircraft are Hughes WK-2 Stallions or Northrop Wasp/Yellowjacket craft. (See the **Rigger Black Book** for vehicle stats. For a selection of Lone Star vehicles appropriate to other forces, see the **Lone Star Sourcebook**.)

To determine the response time, roll 3D6 + 2 and modify the result using the Law Enforcement Response Times table. Apply all appropriate modifiers, which are cumulative. The minimum response time is 5 minutes.

PLAYING THE MARKET

Though **Shadowrun** is not a game of black or shadow market trading, the player characters may want or need to deal with Denver's black and shadow markets at some point. Use the following information as guidelines to simulate black market activity in Denver.

Cost of Goods Comparisons

The sections describing each sector in the **Denver** book provide costs for various goods as a percentage of the cost for those goods in Seattle. The Comparative Costs Table offers all that information in a single location for the gamemaster's con-

LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE TIMES

Conditions	Modifier
Location:	
Aztlan	-5
CAS	-3
Pueblo	—
Sioux	-2
UCAS	+1
Ute	-1
Non-contiguous sector or	
Denver metropolitan area	-2
Boulder or Colorado Springs	-2
Outlying or rural area	+5
Relative Danger:	
Heavily patrolled/very safe area	-3
Extensively patrolled/safe area	-1
Patrolled/normal area	—
Under-patrolled/slightly dangerous area	+2
Minimal patrols/dangerous area	+4
Unpatrolled/hazardous area	+6
Type of Response:	
Ground vehicle responding	—
Aircraft responding	-2

venience in running the black and shadow markets for his players. To determine the base cost of an item, simply find the cost of the item in Seattle (see pp. 278-81, **SRII**) and apply the appropriate multiplier, then adjust the result to reflect the Street Index (see **Availability**, pp. 184-185, **SRII**). Assume all prices are expressed in nuyen unless otherwise noted. For equipment and items not listed in **SRII**, simply estimate the "real world" cost of such an item (circa 1994) and convert the price from dollars to nuyen at a 1:1 ratio, then adjust the result to fit your game.

Getting the Goods

There's never a lack of demand in Denver for goods, and that means the economy is driven by supply—what's available, and what will people pay for it? All items can be assigned an Availability status that reflects how common those items are in the black or shadow marketplace. Most items that player characters will want to buy have published Availability values, though some values change according to the price of the item.

If his players want to spend a lot of time dealing in the black and shadow markets, the gamemaster must determine what items are available in his game, and in what quantity. We suggest that the gamemaster create his own rules for availability and acquisition, using a base price adjusted for the sector cost of living. Determine the base price/availability according to the following considerations.

- The originating nation. (Use the modified cost for the item in that region.)

COMPARATIVE COSTS TABLE

	Aztlan	CAS	Pueblo	Sloux	UCAS	Ute
Weapons and Armor						
Ammunition	1.05*	.75	.95*	1.05*	1.25	1.1
Armor	1.2*	1.65	1.1*	1.65*	1.15	1.2*
Explosives	1.1*	1.1	1.1*	1.2*	1.6	1.0*
Firearm Accessories	.95*	.85	.95*	.9*	1.25	1.0*
Firearms	.95	.9	.95	1.1	1.25	1.0
Melee Weapons	1.05	.85	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.1
Projectile Weapons	1.0	.9	1.05	1.05	1.0	1.1
Throwing Weapons	1.0	.85	1.0	1.0	.95	1.0
Surveillance and Security						
Communications	.95	2.2	.9	1.0	1.2	.9
Security Devices	.9	3.3	.9	1.0	1.6	.8
Surveillance Countermeasures	—*	3.3	1.0	1.0	.85	.9
Surveillance Equipment	1.05	2.25	1.0	1.0	1.35	.9
Survival Gear	1.1	1.35	1.1	2.0	1.05	1.1
Vision Enhancers	.9	1.1	.9	.75	1.3	1.0
Lifestyle						
Lifestyle	1.2	.85	1.0	1.35	1.5	1.2
Cybertech and Electronics						
Biotech	1.5*	1.1	1.1	1.35	1.1	1.1
Bodyware	1.5	3.35	1.05	1.0	1.2	1.2
Cyberdecks	—	4.5	1.0	.75	1.6	.9
Headware	1.5	3.5	1.0	1.0*	1.2	1.0
Electronic Equipment	.98	2.2	.9	1.0	1.3	.9
Internals	1.5	2.25	1.0	1.0	1.15	1.0
Programs	—	2.75	.95	1.0	2.25	.9
Magical Equipment						
Hermetic Library	.9	2.0	1.45	2.25*	1.35	1.35
Magical Supplies	.9	2.75	1.2	2.0	2.2	1.2
Magical Weapons	—*	2.0	1.25	3.5	2.2	1.2
Power Foci	1.0	2.35	1.1	1.65	1.65	1.2
Ritual Sorcery Materials	2.0	2.75	1.25	2.25	1.9	1.25
Spell Foci	.9	2.25	1.1	1.65	1.65	1.2
Vehicles						
Aircraft	1.5	2.25	1.1	1.45	1.2	1.0
Boats	2.5	.85	1.2	2.0	1.4	1.45
Ground Vehicles	1.5	.85	.9	1.6	1.35	1.1
Military Vehicles	—*	1.5	5.0*	2.0*	2.75	1.1

*Restricted item. See the appropriate sector in the **Denver** book for details.

•The level in the production/distribution chain at which the items were acquired. For example, items can be acquired directly from the manufacturer at 60 percent of the retail price, though most manufacturers will only deal with distributors—unless they consciously intend to deal with the black/shadow market. Items can be acquired from a distributor at 50 percent of the retail price.

•The laws and attitudes of the sector/nation where the goods are purchased and produced.

Beginning with the base price, determine the availability, then factor in whatever you consider an appropriate

amount to represent the street dealer's cost of doing business (operational costs, bribes, transit, and so on). Allow the players to negotiate for goods using the **Fencing the Loot** rules, p. 188, **SRII**, except that the base price for the loot is 30 percent of the price modified for local cost of living and Street Index.

ACTIVE CURRENCIES

We've always played fast and loose with economies and currencies in **Shadowrun**. We continue to do so by adding a little more confusion into the mix—currency instability.

All currencies exchange at a relative rate to each other. In **Shadowrun**, we have always provided a value for the exchange rate and simply told you that it fluctuated. This section offers a few rules for actually managing the fluctuation of the currency market. What this means in the game is that the absolute value of that cash in the runner's pocket (or on her credstick) will vary from exchange to exchange, from conversion to conversion. Just so everyone's using the same terms in the same way, we provide a quick review of the currencies used in Denver and their base exchange values. Because some groups may be running intercontinental travelers, we've included the currencies of other nations we have published sourcebooks for: Germany, Great Britain, Tír na nÓg, and Tír Tairngire.

This section also provides a shorthand notation for each currency type, which gamemasters may find useful in developing props for their game.

Nuyen (¥)

The nuyen is the international standard of exchange. The value of nuyen is based on a complex series of calculations revolving around the value of a specific multi-corporate stock portfolio monitored by the Gemeinschaft Bank on the Zurich-Orbital. Some of the newer nations use the nuyen as their primary currency, but many still base at least the consumer portion of their economy around a national currency (the UCAS dollar, for example).

In the Denver area, the Pueblo, Ute, and Sioux Nations all use the nuyen as their standard currency.

UCAS Dollar (u\$)

The United Canadian and American States use the UCAS dollar as its national currency. The UCAS dollar is a "hard" currency, directly convertible to the nuyen and other currencies. Most consumer transactions in the UCAS are made using the UCAS dollar, but the majority of business transactions are conducted with nuyen.

CAS Dollar (c\$)

The CAS dollar also represents a hard currency directly convertible to the nuyen and other currencies. Most consumer transactions in the CAS are made using CAS dollars, but the majority of business related transactions are conducted with nuyen.

Aztlan Peso (aP)

The Aztlan peso is a non-convertible currency. Converting the standard Aztlan peso to any other currency without the brokerage of the Aztechnology Corporation or the Aztlan government is illegal. Therefore, all individuals or corporations wishing to conduct business with an Aztlan company or corporation *must* use Aztechnology as an intermediary (and pay a fee for the service, of course). Technically, Aztechnology itself converts the standard peso to a convertible peso, then further converts that peso into the requested currency (but only they can do this). Convertible pesos exist as a real currency, but rarely circulate outside of Aztechnology's purview.

EXCHANGE RATE TABLE

Currency	Exchange Rate (currency unit:nuyen)
UCAS dollar (u\$)	5:1
CAS dollar (c\$)	4.75:1
Aztlan peso (aP) (official)	500:1
Aztlan peso (black market)	800:1
British pound (b£)	2.5:1
Tír na nÓg (t£)	2.2:1
Tír Tairngire (¥)	1:1
German deutsche mark (DM)	2:1
European Currency Unit (EC)	1:1

At this time (June, 2055) the official exchange rate is 500:1 (five hundred pesos for each nuyen). This differs significantly from the tracked exchange rate of 1,000:1, which is calculated based on real market value. But because Aztlan retains the sole legal right to convert pesos, individuals cannot obtain pesos at the 1,000:1 rate.

Convertible pesos can be traded on the black market. Despite the increased risks and costs involved, the black market rate generally offers a better deal than the official rate at approximately 800:1.

British Pound (b£)

The pound sterling is the national currency of the United Kingdom. The pound is a hard currency, directly convertible to nuyen and other currencies. Only the very largest stores will accept nuyen.

Tír na nÓg Punt (t£)

Tír na nÓg uses the Irish punt, a hard currency that is directly convertible to the nuyen and other currencies. Larger stores or institutions accept either the nuyen or the British pound sterling as well.

Tír Tairngire Nuyen (¥)

Tír Tairngire uses the international nuyen as its currency.

German Deutsche Mark (DM)

Germany uses the deutsche mark, a hard currency directly convertible to the nuyen and other currencies. However, in many areas of the German economy the deutsche mark, nuyen, and EC are used almost interchangeably.

European Currency Unit (EC)

Many nations of western Europe use the ecu or the EC (European Currency Unit) as a common unit of exchange between the member nations. Most of these nations, in addition to the EC, use a national currency as well. The value of the EC is indexed to that of the international nuyen.

RATE FLUCTUATION TABLE

2D6 Result	Degree of Change*
2	+0.25
3-4	+0.1
5-6	+0.05
7	—
8-9	-0.05
10-11	-0.1
12	-0.25

*For the Aztlan peso, multiply the degree of change by 100.

Currency Exchanges

Characters who need to exchange one currency for another must figure in three factors: the current exchange rate, rate fluctuations, and the conversion surcharge. Because most of these factors lie beyond the players' control, the gamemaster should track these factors and alter them randomly according to the appropriate tables. The Exchange Rate Table provides the base exchange rate between the nuyen and all other currencies.

The exchange rate fluctuates periodically, based on codependent and independent economic factors. To simulate exchange rate fluctuations, roll 2D6 and consult the Rate Fluctuation Table once during every 12 hours of game time.

Conversion Surcharges

Almost every broker charges a fee for conducting currency exchanges. This fee can vary by as much as 2 to 5 percent, depending on the institution conducting the transaction. If the buyer uses a credstick or cash to purchase currency, add the surcharge to the conversion. If an individual uses a credstick registered and formatted in the nation where he is purchasing currency to pay for the transaction, no fee is added. The Conversion Surcharges Table lists the standard surcharge charged by various exchange institutions.

It is easier to convert to and from nuyen for non-nuyen exchanges (i.e., UCAS dollars to nuyen to pounds sterling for conversions from u\$ to b£), but apply only one surcharge for the entire exchange.

The Verification value represents the rating of the verification system used by the institution for checking credsticks (see **Checkpoint Realities**, p. 48, for more information on credstick/ID verification). The Max. Amount figures represent the highest amounts each institution will exchange for customers. The first value is the limit for someone who is not a regular or known customer. The second is the limit for regular customers.

SPRAWL LAW

Because the chances of a character getting caught at some point (and probably many points) in their career ranges right up there at 100 percent, we provide the following rules to let them know the nature and severity of their offense, and the most likely way they will be restrained on their way to the hoosegow.

RESTRAINTS

Most security and corporate forces operating in the Front Range Free Zone use some variation on the following special restraint systems.

Cyber-Restraint Cuffs

Cost: 750¥ **Availability:** 10/5 days **Street Index:** 2

Each pair of cyber-restraint cuffs (CRCs) contains a special set of sensors designed to detect and react to the use or activation of certain pieces of cyberware. Note that this cyberware must have been detected before the perpetrator was cuffed and the CRC custom-programmed for the specific devices.

Whenever a character wearing CRCs uses or activates a cybersystem the restraints have been calibrated to neutralize, roll 6D6 against a Target Number of 2. A single success means the CRCs activate. A player character can expend Karma to neutralize successes from the test.

Characters possessing wired reflexes or the like may make a Willpower Test against the CRC system rating *before* rolling Initiative. A success on the test prevents the CRCs

CONVERSION SURCHARGES

Type of Exchange	Surcharge	Verification	Max. Amount
Street Machine/Currency Exchange			
Casual customer	2D6 x .5%	1-3	2,000¥/2,000¥
Regular customer	2D6 x .5%	1-3	5,000¥/10,000¥
Bank			
Casual customer	2D6 x .25%	2-4	5,000¥
Regular customer	2D6 x .25%	2-4	10,000¥+
Black Market	2D6 x 2%	NA	Gamemaster discretion
Store (at the time of purchase)	2D6 x 1%	1-2	Varies with store

from activating. The Willpower Test must be repeated every Combat Turn before Initiative is rolled for that turn. If the CRCs activate, resolve their effects during the character's first action, before he takes that action.

The most common CRC device consists of a TASER restraint system. High-voltage capacitors are built into the CRC and discharge into the flesh of the wearer when activated, inflicting 8D Stun damage. Normal and dermal armor *do not* protect against this damage. Each TASER system can deliver only three shocks before the capacitors are expended.

Nastier versions of this device exist, but are rarely used outside prison or law-enforcement restraint situations. These versions include shaped-charged micro-explosives that detonate on each wrist (only conduct one attack) and cause 12D damage. Armor does not offer protection here. Again, these devices are used to restrain only the most vile and dangerous villains.

Containment Manacles

Cost: 500¥ **Availability:** 8/4 days **Street Index:** 2

Designed for the wrists or ankles, containment manacles create the same effect as heavy wrist or leg irons. They incorporate a mechanism designed to clamp down with agonizing pressure on tendon and bone if the prisoner extends razors, spurs, or similar cybermods.

Each turn that the cybermod is extended, the user must resist 5S damage to the manacled limb. Damage is Physical, but only affects the use of the limb, not the entire body. To account for the pain these devices cause, the wearer must also resist 4M Stun damage each turn the manacles are clamping down.

Headjammer

Cost: 250¥ x Rating **Availability:** Rating/24 hrs **Street Index:** 2

The headjammer is a headset that can be equipped with straps to "lock" onto the victim's head. This device jams signals from an implanted cellular phone, radio links, or Matrixware. It also heterodynes feedback to such implants, causing severe pain.

The headjammer causes (Rating)S Stun damage each time the wearer tries to use the implants.

Jackstopper

Cost: 20¥ **Availability:** 4/12 hrs **Street Index:** 1

The jackstopper is a dummy plug, formatted to fit into a chipjack or datajack, that injects the jack with a quick-bonding epoxy on insertion. Law enforcement officers often use jackstoppers on captured deckers. Clearing the jack requires the attention of a biotech and a dose of resin solvent (10¥ in most hardware or convenience stores).

To clear the jack, make a Biotech (6) Test. Using a base time of 90 minutes, divide the time by the number of successes to determine how long clearing the jack will take.

Magemask

Cost: 40¥ **Availability:** 4/12 hrs **Street Index:** 1

The magemask is a simple plastic hood that fits over a prisoner's head. The magemask blocks vision and is equipped with a gag-tube that allows a prisoner to breathe but not speak. The mask also has a white-noise generator that can deliver up to 90 dB of white noise to the wearer's ears.

Skiltwitcher

Cost: 500¥ **Availability:** 8/6 days **Street Index:** 3

Formatted like a standard skillsoft, a skiltwitcher sends a jamming signal into skillwires. The jamming lasts only as long as the skiltwitcher soft is plugged in, but can be combined with the technology of a jackstopper to make removal difficult.

A skiltwitcher imposes a penalty to *all* active skill use (whether from a skillsoft or not) equal to the victim's Skillwire Rating.

Removing Cyberware Restraints

Removing cyber-restraints or containment manacles from a cyberlimb requires two steps. First, the player character must disable the anti-tamper circuit by making a successful Electronics B/R (8) Test. If the test fails, the restraint's micro-charges detonate and damage 1D6 subsystems of the cyberlimb (see **Cyberware Damage**, p. 93, **Street Samurai Catalog**) and inflict 5L damage on both the owner of the cyberware and the person trying to remove the restraint. (If the person trying to remove the restraint doesn't know about the anti-tamper circuit, this step automatically results in a failure. Boom.)

In the second step, the person removes the restraint and returns the affected cyberware system to full operation. Both tasks require a single successful Cybertechnology (4) Test. If the test fails, the ham-fisted repairman has damaged the affected cyberware system while making the repair (see **Cyberware Damage**, p. 93, **Street Samurai Catalog**).

RESTRICTED ITEMS

All restricted items are divided into categories representing similar types of items. Each category is assigned a letter code. Each category also includes examples of items that typically fall into that category, but see the descriptions of weapons fines and punishment for each sector in the **Denver** book.

Category A: Small Bladed Weapon

A small bladed weapon is any sharp-edged, hand-held weapon (including impromptu weapons) with a cutting edge less than 18 centimeters long.

Category B: Large Bladed Weapon

A large bladed weapon is any sharp-edged, hand-held weapon (including impromptu weapons) with a cutting edge more than 18 centimeters long. Large bladed weapons include axes, polearms, and cybernetic blade weapons (hand razors and spurs). A permit to possess a large bladed weapon costs 100¥. A permit to transport such weapons costs 250¥.

Category C: Blunt Weapon

A blunt weapon is any non-edged hand-held weapon (including impromptu weapons). Blunt weapons include clubs, batons, and all shock weapons.

Category D: Projectile Weapon

A projectile weapon is any weapon designed for throwing and any muscle-powered or mechanically powered ranged weapon (spears, bows, and crossbows). Possession permits for projectile weapons cost 125¥. Transport permits cost 300¥.

Category E: Pistol

Pistols include any revolver or semi-automatic pistol, regardless of caliber. Possession permits for pistols cost 200¥. Transport permits cost 500¥.

Category F: Rifle

Rifles include any single-action rifle or manual-action shotgun, regardless of barrel length. Possession permits for rifles cost 300¥. Transport permits cost 600¥.

Category G: Automatic Weapon

Automatic weapons include any weapon whose rate of fire exceeds one projectile per pull. Automatic weapons include all assault rifles, machine pistols, and submachine guns. Special licenses to possess and transport automatic weapons are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category H: Heavy Weapon

Heavy weapons include all cannons, machine guns, and other heavy-caliber weapons. Special licenses to possess and transport heavy weapons are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category I: Explosives

All explosives, propelled (HE rounds), and demolition charges are considered explosives. Special licenses to possess and transport explosives are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category J: Military Weapon

Category J weapons include any military-grade/issued weapon not specifically covered by other categories. Special licenses to possess and transport Category J weapons are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category K: Military Armor

Category K armor includes any partial or full armor designed for law enforcement, military, or security work. Special licenses to possess and transport Category K armor are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category L: Military Ammunition

Category L ammunition includes any special-purpose ammunition (APDS, FL, and such) designated for law enforcement, military, or security use. Special licenses to possess and transport Category L ammunition are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category A Bioware (BA)

Category A bioware includes all regulated bioware, such as damage compensators, orthoskin, pain editors, and trauma dampers. Only possession permits are required for Category A bioware.

Category B Bioware (BB)

Category B bioware includes all bioware designated for law enforcement, military, or security work. This includes adrenal pumps, muscle augmentation, suprathyroids, synaptic accelerators, and toxin exhalers. Possession permits for Category B bioware are available for 10 percent of the cost of the bioware item.

Category C Bioware (BC)

Category C bioware includes all military-grade bioware, including adrenal pumps rated at 2, muscle augmentations of 3 and higher, and synaptic accelerators of 2. Special licenses to possess Category C bioware are avail-



able to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category CA: Class A Cyberware

Category CA cyberware includes all regulated cyberware. This includes bone lacing (plastic), crypto-circuit HD, dermal plating, internal voice masks, smartgun links and vehicle control rigs. Possession permits for Class A cyberware are available.

Category CB: Class B Cyberware

Class B cyberware includes all cyberware designated for law enforcement, military, or security work. This category includes bone lacing (aluminum), boosted reflexes, muscle replacements, program carriers, scramble breaker HD, Level 1 tactical computers, and wired reflexes. Possession permits for Class B cyberware are available for 10 percent of the cost of the cyberware item.

Category CC: Class C Cyberware

Class C cyberware comprises all military-grade cyberware, including bone lacing (titanium), cortex bombs, cranial cyberdecks, cyberweapons, Level 3 and higher muscle replacement, Level 2 and higher tactical computers, and Level 3 wired reflexes. Special licenses to possess Class C cyberware are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category CD: Class D Matrix Technology

Class D Matrix technology includes all unregistered cyberdecks and Matrix program software. Special licenses to possess and transport Class D Matrix technology are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies.

Category E1: Class A Equipment

Class A equipment includes all regulated equipment such as jammers and laser microphones. Only possession permits are required for Class A equipment.

Category E2: Class B Equipment

Class B equipment comprises all equipment designated for law enforcement, military, or security work, including data codebreakers, dataline taps, maglock passkeys, and voice identifiers. Possession permits for Class B equipment are available for 10 percent of the cost of the equipment.

Category E3: Class C Equipment

Class C equipment includes all military-grade equipment. Special licenses to possess and transport Class C equipment are available to legitimate, registered security and law-enforcement agencies only.

Category M1: Class A Controlled Substances

Class A controlled substances include all controlled chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

Category M2: Class B Controlled Neural Electronics

Class B controlled neural electronics comprise BTLs and hyper-sim.

Category M3: Class C Controlled Biological Agents

Class C controlled biological agents include all microbiological-warfare agents.

CRIMINAL OFFENSES

Weapons and equipment-related offenses in the Free Zone vary from simple possession to use with intent. Each offense is assigned a number. When an individual is charged with a weapons/equipment offense, the code used to designate the offense is the weapon or equipment classification (see above) followed by the offense number. For example, use of an assault rifle would be a G4 offense.

Possession (1)

Possession of a restricted item comprises owning or carrying the item.

Transport (2)

The act of carrying or transporting restricted items, either on one's person or in a vehicle, constitutes transport.

Threat (3)

The act of brandishing a weapon in public, regardless of whether the weapon is used intentionally to threaten is considered a threat. Under this definition, the mere act of carrying a weapon in plain view—wearing a gun slipped through a belt, for example—constitutes a threat.

Use (4)

The use of a weapon denotes utilizing the weapon against living targets, public or private property, and any usage in the general vicinity of living targets, public or private property.

Intent to Cause Harm or Damage (5)

Use of any weapon against living targets, public or private property, and any use in the general vicinity of living targets, public or private property intended to cause physical injury or property damage is considered intent, regardless of whether any real injury or damage occurs.

CRIMINAL CHARGES

Law enforcement agencies rarely file charges for weapon and equipment-related offenses without adding other, more serious criminal charges. Never let it be said, however, that law enforcement officers hesitate to take the time required to charge an individual armed with an assault cannon. The following list describes some of the most common non-weapon or equipment-related criminal charges.

The offense with which a criminal is charged may be reduced to a lesser offense through plea-bargaining or through the consideration of events surrounding the criminal act. For any of the following offenses, criminals may be charged as an

accessory (the individual did not participate in the actual crime, but in some way aided the perpetrators) or with conspiracy (the individual helped plan the crime).

Arson

Intentionally setting fire to a building or other property constitutes arson.

Assault

Assault comprises any threat to cause physical harm or an unsuccessful attempt to do so.

Battery

Battery comprises any illegal beating or touching of another person, either directly or with an object.

Extortion

Using threats or violence to acquire goods, money, or services constitutes extortion.

Forcible Confinement

Imprisoning or restraining an individual against his will constitutes forcible confinement.

Fraud

Intentionally deceiving a person to persuade him to surrender property or some legal right constitutes an act of fraud.

Illegal Entry

Intruding on property without rightful access, whether overt or clandestine, constitutes an act of illegal entry.

Kidnapping

Using force or fraud to seize, hold, or carry off an individual against his will constitutes kidnapping.

Larceny

Seizing another's property without consent and with the intention of depriving the individual of that property constitutes larceny. Larceny is divided into two categories. If the stolen property is worth 1,000 nuyen or less, the offense is considered petty larceny. If the stolen property is worth more than 1,000 nuyen, the offense becomes grand larceny.

Murder 1

Murder 1, or first-degree murder, comprises any premeditated homicide. To prove a charge of Murder 1, prosecutors must convince a judge or jury that the suspect planned and conspired to kill the victim.

Murder 2

Murder 2, or second-degree murder, comprises unpremeditated homicide with intent to kill. For example, if a bar patron suddenly gets angry, pulls out a gun, and shoots the man sitting next to him, prosecutors will likely seek a Murder 2 charge. The intent to kill is obvious, but no evidence of premeditation exists.

Murder 3

Murder 3, or third-degree murder, comprises simple manslaughter—any action that results in the accidental death of an individual. To obtain a Murder 3 conviction, prosecutors do not have to prove premeditation or intent to kill.

Negligence

Negligence is defined as the failure to exercise a reasonable amount of care, resulting in the injury or death of another.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault comprises any act of forced sexual intercourse. Statutory rape denotes sexual intercourse with a minor.

Reckless Endangerment

Reckless endangerment denotes any deliberate or accidental action that may cause serious injury or harm to another.

Solicitation

Solicitation is defined as enticing another individual into wrongdoing.

Trafficking

Trafficking constitutes the purchase or selling of illegal or restricted goods.

Treason

Any act that results in the betrayal of allegiance, including the levying of war, adhering to the enemy, or providing the enemy with aid and comfort constitutes treason.

Vandalism

The malicious or ignorant, willful destruction of property constitutes vandalism.

SENTENCING AND PUNISHMENT

Sentencing and punishment varies between local and federal courts.

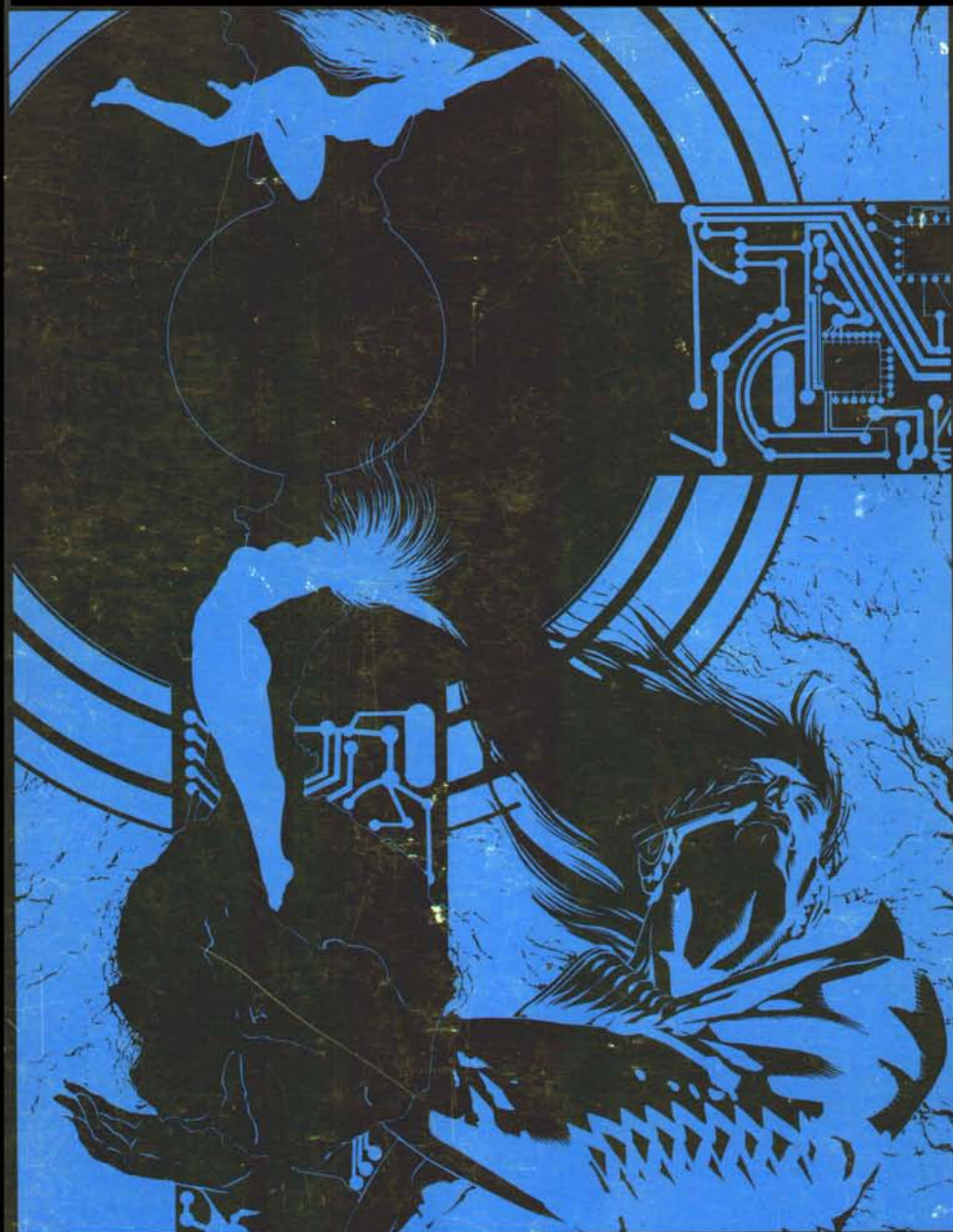
Generally, federal agencies prosecute weapon, injury, and homicide cases only if the offense occurred in connection with the violation of federal laws. Even so, weapons offenses involving possession and transport are rarely adjudicated on a federal level.

Refer to the sector sections in the **Denver** book for applicable fines and/or punishment for various offenses. Reduce or increase sentences at your discretion if extenuating circumstances exist or the player character offers to plea-bargain.

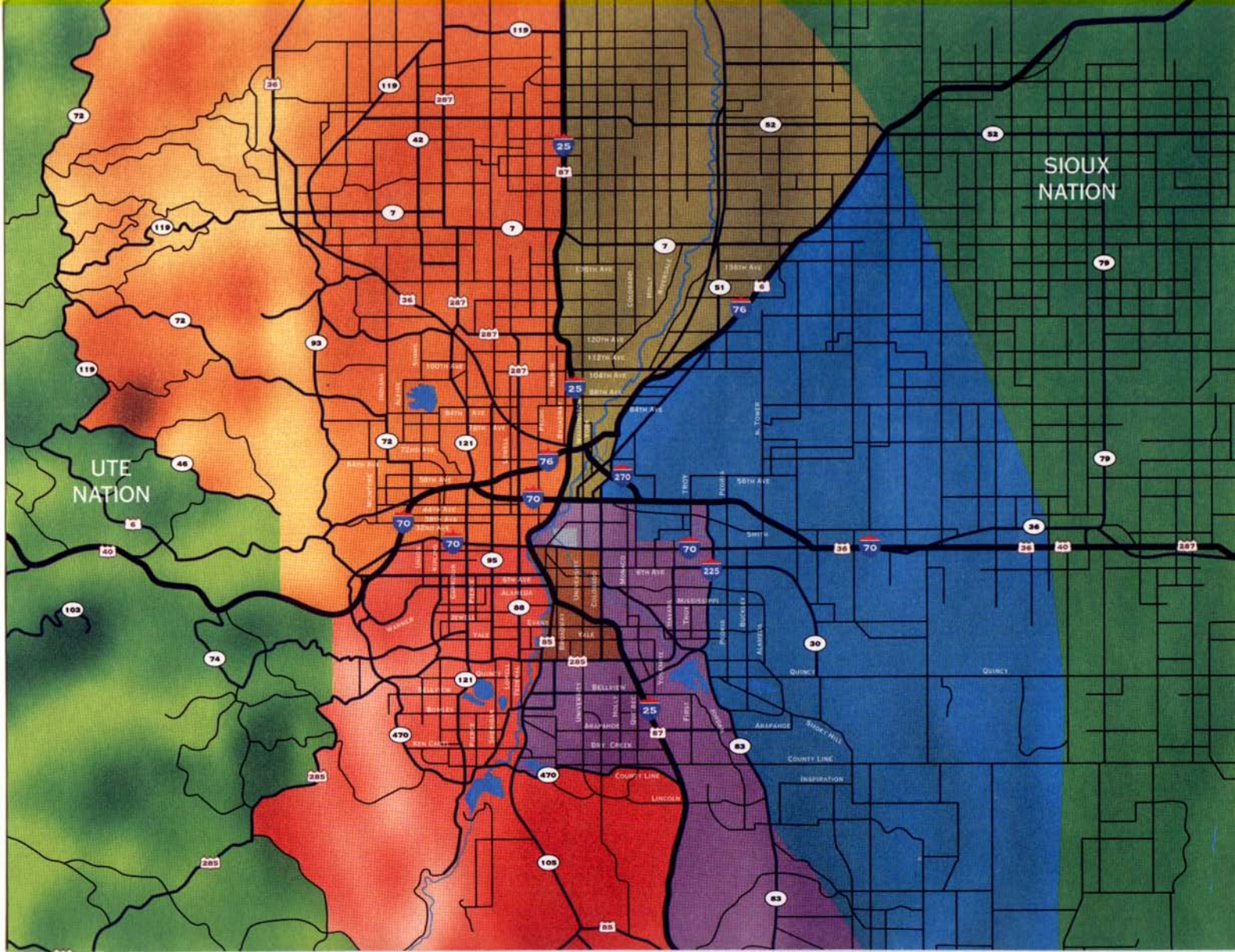
Unless otherwise noted, most sentences include the potential for parole after the offender serves at least 30 percent of the prison term. If the governing body grants parole, the individual must remain on parole for a time equal to at least another 20 percent of his original sentence.



FIN






FASA CORPORATION



PUEBLO
CORPORATE
COUNCIL

DENVER SECTOR MAP

	PUEBLO		UTE
	C.A.S.		SIoux
	U.C.A.S.		ATZLAN
	DOWNTOWN		

MILES 0 10 20
KILOMETERS 0 10 20 30

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