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

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

Everything The Cyberpunk Player Wants to Know About the Europe of the Future By Mark Galeotti
There's a new Edge in town; a new style. It's smoother, more subtle, with the sheen of expensive metal and silk. It moves through the cabarets and clubs like a cybertechd shark, seeking the action, defining the fashion, choosing its targets with precision. When it goes for the kill, a momentary fog of blood hits the water, then, once again, the smooth, remorseless waves close over the body.

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

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

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

So here's your ticket, ripperboy. Grab your seat; the party's just starting. Here's Eurostyle—in your face.
GERMANY: HEART OF THE CONTINENT

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

HISTORY AND POLITICS

With the reunification of Germany in 1990, the road to European dominance was clear and inevitable. By the last years of the century the economic, political and social dislocations caused by the marriage of two so different systems had been overcome, and Unified Germany was the acknowledged regional superpower. Bismarck's dream, Germany's 'place in the sun', was assured.

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

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

Note

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

New Europe— one of the dominant world powers in the twenty-first century, at once a united bloc of economic and political allies and a morose collection of feeding countries, divided by national egotisms and historical bad blood. It's not the paradise some foreigners might think, but it's certainly not the paradise the Eurocrats would have their flock believe— but it's definitely a world apart from the USA, with a polish, wealth, elegance and elitism all its own.
partners, it became a powerful symbol in the election campaign of Volker Mohr and his New Liberals, whose slogan was, "Saviours of Europe, Crucible of a New Millenia." Mohr's crudely nationalistic rhetoric struck the right note at a time when the ravages of the plague had stripped away much of the sophistication of cosmopolitanism of the Germans, and left them looking for something to believe in.

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

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

**GEOGRAPHY**

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

Greater Berlin is a sprawling beast, a national capital seemingly beyond even the Germans' ability to tame. The centre is the historical and administrative heart of the country, a beautifully landscaped place of parks, museums and dark-glassed office blocks. The suburbs, however, are relatively disorderly and violent places, the focus for all sorts of corporate rivalries and private enterprise.

The other major cities are Dresden, the Köln-Dortmund Conurb(KDC), Frankfurt, Leipzig-Halle, Munich and Hamburg.

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

**CULTURE AND SOCIETY**

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

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

Most Germans go on holiday at least twice a year, with disposable incomes unparalleled in the world. Yet fewer than ten percent have ever been outside Europe, and half, indeed,
have never stepped beyond Germany's borders except to a corporate holiday resort: imported German beer and sausages served by, who? Czechs, Spaniards, Hungarians, Turks?

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

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

---

**FRANCE: JEALOUS DREAMERS**

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

**DREAMERS**

Above all, France is about dreampainting, that particularly European version of the general Cyberpunk-era quest for Style and Edge. Originally it was the Goldenkids, bored credard elite upand-towners who looked to build a legend as a way of bringing some sort of meaning to their soft and easy lives. This has, to some extent, generally spread down the social pyramid, but it is the French who are most hooked on 'painting.
The Benelux nations (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg) are to France largely what Austria is to Germany. Integrated into their neighbour's power grid, transport network and economy, speaking (largely) the same language; while independent nations, they are heavily dominated by Paris.

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

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

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

**A NEW MOOD**

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

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

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

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

**POLITICS**

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

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

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

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

BRITAIN: THE BORDERLINE OF EUROPE

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

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

Facts

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

-BBC TV announcement, London, 3 February, 2001

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

-BBC TV announcement, London, 2 February, 2002

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

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

**History**

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

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

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

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

**The Provisional Martial Law Authority**

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

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

**Geography**

Britain is dominated by eight main conurbations, each capital of an MLA. London is much diminished. After the Plague and the food shortages it was near-deserted, and the government has actively prevented further
immigration to keep it relatively quiet and disciplined. Birmingham has also contracted in size, and is now General Lord Cornwall’s seat of power. Since the Midlands OrbitAir facility is within his fiefdom, he has responsibility for Britain’s minimal space programme. The Southern Welsh Conurbation, capital of WELSMARLAUTH, is also relatively stable.

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

The fighting in Scotland has brought a vast influx of refugees - usually of English extraction - to the industrial Tyne-Tees Conurbation in NORWESTMLAUTH, and as a result of the fighting, the Lanark-Lothian Conurbation (uniting Glasgow and Edinburgh) is now effectively under siege behind networks of defensive robot-mines, its margins killing grounds randomly swept by the SAS and Army Intelligence Active Service (ARMINTAC). Vital supplies come in by air or sea, or in the huge, division-strength road convoys that at intervals punch their way through rebel-held areas.

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

**CULTURE AND SOCIETY**

British society largely resembles its US counterpart, with the notable exception of the New Aristocracy. Since the coup, the generals have replaced all previous titles with a new aristocracy based on service in the military and its civil service. MLA commanders, for example, become hereditary barons, while Colonels, Department Heads and Police Commissioners are knighted.
Despite all the efforts of the authorities, nomads are ubiquitous: simple fugitives from martial law, bandits and freedom fighters; kong who refused resettlement and took to the road; essentially peacable 'hippies' who left the cities as a protest against autocratic rule and tend towards reverence for a simple, inchoate nature cult, focusing on traditional sites such as Stonehenge and Glastonbury. Relatively well educated, politically and environmentally aware and organised, most are a far cry from the unwashed looters of the popular stereotype.

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

The real heart of British culture, though, is out in the streets, in its violent and constant undercurrent of protest, idealism and despair. Where some flee the control of the MLAs in a nomad life, most turn to internal, street-level cultural resistance, in the kaleidoscopic array of gangs and movements. Revivalism, for example, has a mass appeal, an escape to mythical golden days, from the Round Table Knights of the Bristol-Kingswood ResiDeveloPment to the (predominantly Asian British) Nabobs of East London, in their colonial finery and pill helmets. Revivalists tend to be counter-culture undergrounders, along with other, music- and style-based groups. The androgynous Goths, for example, whose accessories make them staple badguys for Continental vidflux but which are, by contrast, largely middle-class rebels against the timid conformity and compromises of their upbringing, more likely to be hotshot deckrunners than doped-out knifers. Or, even the AndroGoths who take Gothic androgyne one further, biosurgeried into so-called 'sexual neutrality.' The underground is a network of groups, not necessarily gangs - though there may be gangs of such types - nor necessarily antagonistic: they tend to cooperate in face of the greater threat posed by suspicious and trigger-happy authorities. They just want to do their own thing, more likely to meet at a gig than in a turf rumble.

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

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

Another key influence has been the influx of refugees. Following the Consolidation, many kongs retreated into their own enclaves, recreating small slices of Hong Kong. Since then there has been increasing cross-cultural contact, with groups like Down2Zero and Beijing Belle mining a new, cosmopolitan seam.
Faction-ridden, largely poor and unstable, the southern tier is definitely the 'second rank' of the EC. While not as exploited as New Central Europe, nor as far from the mainstream as Britain, these nations are definitely treated with patronising contempt by France and Germany. They are also much less carefully controlled by the eurocrats and, hence, provide foreign freelancers greater opportunities to break into the European scene. Greece, in particular, has become well known as an entry point for ambitious 'lancers.'

ITALY

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

In contrast, the Mezzogiorno, the Italian south, remains relatively underdeveloped, and economic stagnation has bred unrest, resistance and conspiracy. With NCE providing new sources of cheap, unskilled labour, in 2010 the Italian government passed a law allowing mass land confiscations and their sale to corporations, in return for guaranteed work and services for the local populations and steady tax revenues for the state.

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

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

**Spain**

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

**Portugal**

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

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

**Greece**

Greece remains a major entry point to Europe. Cargoes from Africa, Asia and the Middle East arrive at its ports and airports - not the least due to the traditional corrupt-
Turkey has suffered by its proximity to the Middle East, and the worse things get, the worse its luck. Fallout and acid rain following the Meltdown blighted its croplands, forcing Turkey to rely on EC food supplies. By evil coincidence, this came at a time when the EC was looking to make up for lost oil supplies. The price it demanded was novel: the Taurus and Canik mountains.

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

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

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

So the National Assembly survived and, despite the odds - and another seven attempted coups - it continues. Most of its efforts are still directed towards damage limitation, and a daily struggle to keep its people fed and housed, but the desperately poor and violent shanty suburbs of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir all seem here to stay.
In the latter years of the last century the renaissance of former Eastern Europe seemed just over the horizon. Post-Stalinist permafrost melted in the face of people power and Western liberalism, and investment was set to recreate a new, all-European democratic order. Gorbachev and then Gorbachev pulled out all the political controls to concentrate on internal reforms.

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

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

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

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

Even in sullen, downtrodden NCE, however, there were stirrings, and a seemingly random string of terrorist attacks finally culminated in the spectacular series of explosions at the German military arsenal in their Danzig/ Gdansk Live Fire Training Zone. This was the perfect opportunity for the 3000 group to announce its existence.
An umbrella group uniting nationalists from all across New Central Europe, 3000 has little positive programme beyond a rejection of EC control. For many this is enough, though, and 3000's example has sparked off a wave of petty and not-so-petty anti-euro (and, particularly, anti-German) violence. Stabbings, muggings, arson, vandalism—it's a good idea not to drive with German number plates these days, and leave your 'Ich liebe Berlin' t-shirt at home.

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

---

**THE TROUBLESOME MARGINS**

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

**SCANDINAVIA**

The Scandinavian Bloc is at once Europe's pusher, ally and dependant. Starved of petrochem, the Bloc (a loose federation of Sweden, Norway, Finland and the Baltic League) precariously hangs onto its 'European' lifestyle by providing the black clinics and designer drugs forbidden by EC law. By road and rail from the Baltic League through Poland, by stealthy exec jet, in radar-invisible speedboats, they get across.

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

---

**THE NEW EUROPE**

---

**Quote**

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

— Roger VanMorgen, midman

---

**The Baltic League**

An increasingly flimsy fiction since 2018, when Latvian troops seized the Lithuanian town of Daugavpils in a dispute over reparations from the 1970s Eglava neurotoxin spillage. With the help of its National Guard smashed by Latvia's brand-new Krupp-Melara battle tanks, Riga began hiring mercenaries. Backed by Arasaka-affiliated AsiaBank Pacifico, it hired the flower of the world's mercenaries and managed to push the Latvians out of the city, albeit not to within their own frontiers. The Bloc Council has imposed a ceasefire, but the mutual suspicion and grievances still haven't been settled.

---

**Neutral turf**

Developed, but outside EC political control, Scandinavia has become an essential neutral meeting ground for agents, buyers, sellers and spooks of every kind to meet, deal and spy. And the Scandals just charge everyone all they can for everything they can. So long as governments and corps want to play their power games, why shouldn't someone make an honest buck?
and licensed, so the EC feels it's better not to leave the market exclusively to cheap, dangerous South American and Asian imports. Besides, the Bloc is also the unmarked bank account and secret database haven of the hemisphere, and that provides a lot of leverage. Remember, knowledge is power.

THE USSR (UNION OF SOVIET SOVEREIGN REPUBLICS)

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

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

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

THE MIDDLE EAST

What can you say? Oases of extreme wealth amidst the rubble and the silence. The nuclear exchanges of the Meltdown shattered the nation states of most of the Arab world. Israel's experimental particle beam defences saved it from the relatively few warheads coming its way, while Egypt and Syria's rather more primitive defences were augmented by realtime target telemetry from US and Soviet satellites, respectively.

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

NORTH AFRICA

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

THE USA

Margins of Europe? Well, any Euro would say so. Most have a particularly bigoted idea of the US, carefully cultivated by the eurocrat media. They characteristically view it with smug scorn, a has-been nation full of crudely murderous thugs, pimps and nobodies.
"The European Community is not a political bloc. It is an affirmation of cultural, economic and historical community. No other continent can boast such an association of equals. No other continent is as stable and dynamic. I think the conclusions are clear."

Dr Gerhard Zettelkasten,
Speaker of the Council

POWER IN THE EC

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

Of course, being a Councillor costs money: to get elected, keep up with the political scene both back home and at Brussels, buy those nice Wilier suits, and to re-spray the 'Benz this month's colour. Some are already filthy rich, some plan to get filthy rich, some have filthy riches thrust upon them. By corps, mainly: it has become even customary for each Councillor to be sponsored both by his government and a corp. The idea is that their different interests cancel each other out. The practice is to make being a Councillor a big bucks profession.

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

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

The Secretariat is, in theory, a non-political, multi-national body of disinterested experts, working together in a spirit of mutual...
collaboration for the common good. Right, and it never rains in Belgium. In fact, it is a battleground, where member governments try to pack key Commissions with their own people, while pushing their own pet schemes. There are three key flashpoints at the moment. First of all, the French have always been over-represented in the Secre-
Europe scarcely needs troops so long as it’s got those massdrivers up the gravity well. Just ask the good citizens of Colorado Springs.

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

Institutions of the EC

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

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

Those massdrivers are the responsibility of the European Space Agency. Dr Caverlo has fought hard to keep the ESA out of mainstream EC politics, although Paris has a traditional edge given the number of French-speaking African communities lifted in the Hiccup. But as the orbital factories become increasingly important to the European economy (with the ESA creaming 10% off the
lor), the big political players are getting more interested. The opening gambit has already been made, with Germany proposing the creation of a new post of 'Executive Consul' of the Crystal Palace. This would effectively distance the L-5 station from the ESA and provide an opening for the Germans to insert their current prodigy, Dr Anna Dorfmann. Who will win?

**Welcome to Immigration**

Every European - in theory - has an official ID. A small smartcard, this serves as a driving licence, passport, work permit, EuroBank credit card and medical record. A brilliant expression of European technology and political control, the ID's existence guarantees work for a small army of netrunners,
techies and fixers in forging them, altering the supposedly secure data on them or simply getting hold of so-called 'recycled cards'. After all, they are important: any policeman or other official can demand to see yours at any time, and will have the requisite cardreader to hand. A hotel, an employer, a customs officer, anyone may at least request sight of the card, with its full-colour hologram and summary bio printed on its blue-green surface. Not having your ID brings an automatic fine of anything from 500€ to up to prison and labour service.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Civil servants?

INTERPOL

Interpol, the International Criminal Police Organisation, is the teeth of the EC. Given new powers, new responsibilities and a wholly new cohesion in the face of terrorism and corporate, US and Soviet meddling,
Interpol is now both symbol and guarantor of Europe's prosperity; a recognition of the envy this arouses across the shattered, polluted globe, its agents drawn from the cream of Europe's educated youth, a (self) consciously elite body drawing on the expertise and manpower of the national security forces within the EC.

The 'Pyramid', an ultra-modern office block in the outskirts of Berlin, houses Interpol-Centre. This is, however, essentially an administrative complex. An advanced, secure communications system called the PanEuro-Grid links the Pyramid with regional centres and the Operational Directorates. The Grid also links all Interpol commands with an almost obscenely comprehensive datacentre.
...agents are forbidden to shoot to kill, for example. Outside Europe, though, or once the bad guys have started shooting, of course, all bets are off...

called the European Criminal Intelligence Centre - formally ECIC (‘Ee-kick’), but ‘the Pit’ in Intercop jargon.

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

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

The relevant Ops Directorate will dispatch a team of more experienced agents selected according to the apparent needs of the mission. This ‘blue team’ has a wide range of powers at its disposal. It can carry and, if need be, use any weapon, device or stratagem. It can co-opt local police resources, files or information at will. Its netrunners have awesomely powerful programmes and access codes and the right to break into databases at will, bar max security government ones. Even they can be breached if the team gets the confirmation of their Director General.

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

Espionage and counter-espionage, on the other hand, are handled by the 2nd (Counter-Intelligence) Directorate, under Brigadier (ret’d) Sir Magnus Caine DSO, now in a slightly precarious position: despised as a eurocrat at home, patronized as a Briton in Europe. Nevertheless, his success in cracking down on US operations in Europe wins him grudging respect all over Europe—and Langley. This is especially true given the relatively small size of the 2nd, (the 1st still monopolizes most internal security work). But the 2nd regards itself as select, and greater emphasis on ability rather than nationality has meant no original ser-
vice is dominant, and even the NCE 'poor cousins' are not as under-represented as usual.

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

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

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

**Playing the Interpol Heat**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It's not a conspiracy, as such, just that Europe's prosperity does a good job of persuading people that it really is better: better to get out of a goldenboy's way in Bremen than starve in Bombay or be gunned down by 'dopers in Baltimore. So there's the temptation to keep your head down, giving the top dogs the Imagin, the luxury to indulge in elitism. They can afford to be that bit more exclusive; they don't have to be quite so ready to accept in outsiders who show The Edge; in short, they're strong enough that they probably don't need you.

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

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

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

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

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

Or die trying.
LIFE FOR THE COMMON FOLK

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GOONS, GANGS AND GURUS

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

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

MEATBOYS

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

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

REVIVALISTS

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

Some are effectively semi-clandestine political societies, such as the notorious neo-fascist Neues Reich and the Greek meatboy/revivalist Spartans. Others are essentially circles of shared values and interests, with revivalism just an expression of those bonds. The Hansa, for example, is a group of
northern German and Scandinavian industrialists lobbying for the development of Baltic sea routes and happy to indulge in some fancy-dress after-hours drinking in its name.

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

**Fighting Back: Anti-EC Terror**

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

**Separatist and Nationalists**

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

The IRA remains one of the old perennials, with a traditional base in Eire and Northern Ireland, and a fine old heritage. But there is also the new nationalist movement 3000, that is uniting the New Central European undergrounds with its calls for a withdrawal from the EC and confiscation of foreign assets. 3000 concentrates on sabotaging EC
and corp installations and the execution of local 'quisling' administrators. A third example would be the Basque separatist movement ETA, reformed after the Spanish government's decision to transfer funds from rebuilding Bilbao after the '97 quake to developing a new sports complex in Madrid for the 2008 Olympics.

**TERRANOOSTRA**

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

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

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

**CRIMINALS**

The crime syndicates being edged out by the EC - increasingly indistinguishable from a huge, international mafia itself - are also turning more and more to violence in their fight for survival. But there are also more grassroots groups, such as La Nuova Mafia. While the 'real' Mafia got respectable, moving into offshore banking and data brokerage, the old traditions were being revived in southern Italy in resistance to poverty and 'foreign' rule. From bombings to kidnappings, they formed an uneasy cross between a political movement and a crime family.

**LAW**

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

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

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

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

Heavy pistols, light SMGs and assault rifles require a Just Needs Permit: for corporate security and police types, this is just a formality. Others will have to wait 4-6 weeks and will need to have a record free of serious criminal convictions (know a good netrunner, triggerboy). Registered bounty hunters usually pack a JNP.

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

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

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

And the police know this, only too well.

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

WPC Sarah MacKenzie

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

COP: British

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

CYBER: plugs; cyberoptics w/target, lolite

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

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

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

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

**UFF. ETORE GIANFRANCHI**

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

**COP ITALIAN**

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

**COP AUSTRIAN**

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

**CYBER:** 1 cyberoptic w/image enhancement
**SKILLS:** Authority +4, Handgun +6,
Rifle +4, Streetwise +4, Melee +3,
Interrogate +4, Expert: criminology +2, Judo +4

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

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

**PZO HANS ULF-JAHREN**

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

**COP AUSTRIAN**

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

**CYBER:** Plugs, MRAM chips for Law Code +1 and an updated list of wanted names and faces, cyberrear w/recorder option
SKILLS: Authority +4, Handgun +4, Streetwise +4, Melee +3, Interrogate +5, Expert: Criminology +6, Aikido +3

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

C Y B E R T E C H

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

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

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

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

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

But they still have access to the (incredibly expensive) black clinics of Scandinavia and Switzerland that specialize in easing the marriage of meat and metal. The e-bucks keep cyberpsychoctasis at bay for the elite, washed away in a steady stream of gene-tailored pseudohormones and Finnish vodka.
Come on in, room for everyone. Rockerboys, solos, fixers, we’ve got the lot here in Europe. But it’s not just about different accents. Whatever role you play, you better know how the streets go, over here. You see, we expect you to play it our way. Capisci?

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

ROCKIN’ EURO

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

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

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

‘It’s only rock and roll? Watch us rock and roll those streetscum into the Atlantic, kid!

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

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

As always, though, the real heat and life is on the indie circuit. Three times the Intercoms have tried to catch Brown Fox; three times a mob of crazed fans have pushed them back, with fifteen year old girls pulling powercutters on riot armoured snatchsquaddies, and twenty year old bank clerks pulling molotovs out of lunch boxes. And while no one's tried to arrest T K Philippe, yet, it's not because he's well liked. Just how do you arrest a punk-retro poet whose latest lines appear as virus programmes writing themselves over public info databases? Rather more innocuous, pirate laserdiscs of the Afro-go-go dance group Rub-a-dub change hands for over 75c a piece, but the six have shrugged off every offer to sign up with a corp.

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

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

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

Selected, usually after degree-level education, eurosolos are then trained, equipped and groomed for operations Europe-style. A tour as a security op in a domestic posting to get some basic experience, a little cyber and a tour as a corp cop in a North African facility for
some blood and adrenalin experience. A spell as a bodyguard or security advisor to get a handle on the political aspects of the job, then proper wet work: extractions, assassinations, whatever.

Pension plans, corporate insurance discounts, the works.

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

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

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

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

If you're in Europe, you should also remember that the police exist and people still have a quaint attachment to the law. If you're the type who keeps getting into fights, consider investing in some non-lethal jelly rounds or a can of gas. Failing that, get chipped for e-law.
After all, the archetypal eurosolo is no bored-out cybergrunt or bare-chested soldier of fortune, nor even an Edge-gripping adrenalin junkie. They take their cue from the near-mythical elite of the Cybercircle and the Angels: shrewd businessmen, educated aristocrats of combat, honourable and cultivated artists of death. It’s a model very few live up to, but it hangs over every serious ‘establishment’ solo’s head. Even the triggerboys handling the really heavy work who’ve got time in Naf or Britain keep their shirts on, and their metal arms shrouded in synthflesh.

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

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

Of course, governments have muscled into the merc scene. The French Foreign Legion will hire almost anyone, to do any job, but they have a reputation for brutality and leaving a lot of collateral damage behind. The British Special Air Service is good, and much more selective, but correspondingly more expensive. If you really don’t have much spare cash, though, you could always try the Turkish government’s JanissarCo. Turkish troops may be poorly equipped, badly disciplined, scarcely trained and barely motivated, but they are cheap. Very cheap.

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

**Netrunners**

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

NetWatch is strongly represented in the EuroNet, and in each main city the three largest e-corps are licensed by Interpol to carry out their own security ops. These corps get bounties, so there is a constant pressure for their netops departments to become profit centres. Hacking also isn’t so much of a way of life in Europe (if for no other reason than the deterrent effect of the security of the EuroTheatre kingdom), and duds are more likely to be known and recorded by NetWatch. Finally, the Interpol’s Third Directorate has its own police role protecting EC databases, riding shotgun on many primary EC systems and datalinks.
US netrunners may be surprised at the mediocrity of many but their top European counterparts. Running isn't such an arthritic this side of the world, and a lot of the undoubted security of the EuroTheatre kingdom is due not so much to the quality of the security as the quantity. Intercomp runners are especially solid, many just rookies, sent out to log on some time in the real world before coming home to sysop a Brussels mainframe. If a 'runner can't outwit, outrun or, if it comes to that, outfight one then he really should get out of the Net and stick to cheating at DataDemon. Indeed, this is one area where there are some genuine opportunities for foreigners to break into some lucrative jobs.

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

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

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

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

"Yes?"

"Go away."

— Overheard at Thirtieth
ComputerFest, Leipzig, 2019
TECHIES

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

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

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

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

— Mad Margriet, Amsterdam
MED TECHIES

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

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

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

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

What's biotech? You want it in a word? Wassa matter, when they stuck that plug in your skull, they forget to put some brains there? Still, I'll skillsoft you, rattledome. Magic, that's biotech.

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

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

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

Nah, forget it, story's a washout. Si, sixty dead, but they're all foreigners.
— Claudia Arnaldi, ReteVerona
Most of this has been bought from independents, and that's definitely where the real talent and initiative lies. Find yourself a friend with a comsat uplink dish, or a 'runner who can blee your stuff direct into the digitised groundlines and into people's homes. Remember the public's right to know? Well, that's up to you.

COOPS

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

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

Besides, Europe is rich, and money breeds temptation. The France/Belgium/Luxembourg industrial triangle is knee deep in corporate spies, security, commen and parasites, while the northern coast of Europe is periodically washed with the blood of customs police and the smugglers who bring in designer drugs and black cyberware from Scandinavia. Given the money involved, it's no surprise how many big-time criminals are linked with the structures of power: not one mafia, but many, each with its own interests, clients, patrons, turf, rivalries, alliances and emnities. Then there's always terrorism, alive and well and living.
underground in Europe. And don’t forget those foreigners. The USA in particular is involved in all sorts of penetration, sabotage and destabilizing ops against the EC, and even the Japanese are prepared from time to time to help out their zaibatsus with a little covert action.

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

EUROCORPS

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

There are distinctive elements to Euro biodiversity, though. One is the resistance of the EC and national governments to the ‘privatization of authority,’ so much a feature of the States and the Far East. Interpol is determined, for example, that some day it will prove the experimental long-rod penetrators the USAF used to attack Mir XVIII were supplied by Dornier Aerospace GMBH, OrbitAir’s chief rival in ‘it-squared’ (IT², ‘interface transport and technology’).

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

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

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

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

None of this applies in NCE, though. As associate members only, excluded from a positive role in policy-making, the countries of this region are not covered by all these regs. So corp ops in the East are much more ruthlessly colonial, with masses of drudge-labour working on huge, heavily defended corporate farms and factory complexes for low wages, paid in corporate scrip for use in corporate shops. Again, consider Dornier Aerospace's factory complexes around Lod: and Brno, defended by their Control Companies, each a fully heli-mobile combat unit in 8 Kraken transports, supported by 3 Adler gunships. In NCE corps go armoured and bodyguarded,
but here is where they really get to hike those profit axes, without all this bleeding heart legislation.

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

Fixers

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

So wear a suit.

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

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

Nomads

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

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

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

The real margin is at sea. There, boatpeople assemble in their ones, twos, dozens and hundreds. Colonies of energy-efficient sailships, inshore fishing smacks, even rebuilt freighters
and liners bought up at scrap values when cargo catamarans and rotary sail freighters made them obsolete. Skipping in and out of territorial waters—a little fishing here; a spot of piracy there; a bit of datajacking, tapping into underwater fibre-optic cables when times are lean. It may not be a very secure life, but it could be worse, and you don’t have to wear a suit or clock on.

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

ROOTTLESS NATIONS

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

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

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

— Sean O’Doherty, no fixed abode

New skill: WATER VEHICLES

The ability to crew and pilot all sorts of water vessels, from sailing ship to powerboat.
So what are you, armchair cyberpunks? No, you want to get out there onto those streets, and here are three adventures allowing you to do just that. They form a sort of trilogy, culminating in some industrial-strength trouble, but they need not be run back to back. If anything, it's better to insert some other incidents between them. After all, the important thing is that once the team have Jacobsen as an agent (or some other, equivalent NPC if they don't hit it off with CJ—wing it, K?) you can throw all sorts of ops their way. (cont. in side bar page 52)
The opposition is geared for a team of 5-8, including soloas and, ideally, a runner. Tweak the opposition up or down if necessary. NPCs are given only with the skills and stats likely to be relevant.

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

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

Skipping the Pond (Entry Point for Non-European Characters)

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

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

At the infobooths a slight, dapper little man in chauffer’s livery comes alongside. Golden Heron ID glitters for a moment in his palm and the team falls in behind him. No fuss, no bother, just biz.
Somehow team and luggage all fit into his Nissan Oyabun stretch-limo. The seats are plush, the drive smooth, and the driver silent, so they’ve got nothing better to do than sit back and watch the city go by.

**MADRID**

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

**GOLDEN HERON**

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

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

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

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

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

**GETTING READY**

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

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

In a hurry? If so, you can take the training pretty much as read. Otherwise you can develop this so the characters get used to working together, earn a few IPs and get room for a little roleplaying. Characters can be run through a variety of appropriate training programmes to prepare for the op. Solsis and other assault team members could benefit from just target practice and an assault course and some competition. If there are enough, Jacobsen divides them into two groups, gives them paintball guns and visors and lets them take it in turns to guard and penetrate an abandoned warehouse. Netrunners can even do some preliminary recon of the villa through the net. Give any techs the chance to practice disabling a spy biomonitor and disable capacitance wires under combat conditions. Overall, they should gain 1D6 IPs in three relevant skills.

---

**The Op 1: Panic Attack**

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

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

---

**The Op 2: Extraction**

Actually raking the villa requires a mix of skills and some clever coordination. Given the defences, straight attack is suicidal. A useful initial tactic would be for a netrunner to disable or even take over the security systems. These include a continuous string of cameras and capacitance wires around the perimeter (an AVERAGE Electronic Security roll to spoof) linked to the security station, extra cameras covering all approaches (20% chance of spotting anyone in the grounds per minute), and all sorts of burglar alarms on the villa's outer doors and windows (AVERAGE task to bypass). There is also a computer-controlled minigun (Sd6 damage) overlooking the front drive, with 180° arc. This can be set to fire on any moving targets above dog-size, controlled manually from the security station or by a netrunner 'in' its control box or the CPU.

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

At some point shooting will start. When it does, introduce the danger of a 'sour grapes'
killing - if Huber is sure to be snatched, Berlin or one of the other guards may think it better to ice her than let the opposition get their hands on her. Don't let it happen - but make the players sweat.

**Mercy's Mission**

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

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

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

**Cutting for the Border**

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

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

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

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

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

**Safe? Be Serious!**

If the team have any smarts, they will have given up hope of their 'safehouse' being anything of the sort. If they get to Liege, they find that the address is actually the local Infoconsult office. Of course. What's worse, it's under constant supervision by a UDG counter-extraction team under the notoriously effective Aaron Hammer.
How to get out of this mess? If they try to contact Golden Heron, they'll have no luck, but if they ring Jacobsen's cellphone, he'll be very brief and arrange a meet in the Cathedral of St Paul. If all else fails, he rings them: he's suddenly feeling very vulnerable. NordDanske have sown up another loose end by getting a client terrorist group - the 17th of July Commando - to firebomb Golden Heron's offices to slag. He has a pretty good idea of who'll be next on their list.

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

**CATHARSIS IN THE CATHEDRAL**

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

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

Once the team get together with Jacobsen, he has the contacts to swing some sort of deal alerting UDIG to Nord-Danske's plot and get the heat off. After all, once the story is blown, Nord-Danske have no real reason to bother killing them (though they'll quietly claw back the remaining half of the fee). Alternatively, if you're really desperate for a deus ex machina, introduce an investigating team of Interpol corpsquad cops eager to damp down a developing biowar and prepared to trade immunity for information.

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

**SOLO GERMAN**

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

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

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

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

**ANNA HUBER**

**TECH GERMAN**

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

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

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

**SKILLS:** Jury Rig +10, Athletics +5, Handgun
+1, Drive +4, System Knowledge +10, Cyber Tech +10, various computer languages at +7-10

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

UDIG SECURITY OFFICER

SOLO GERMAN OR AUSTRIAN
INT 6, REF 8 (9), CL 7, LK 5, MA 6, BT 8
CYBER: Kerenzakov reflexes
SKILLS: Combat Sense +3, Handgun +5, SMG +4, Drive +4, Athletics +4, Judo +4, Awareness +5, Intimidate +4
OUTFIT: X-9mm smargun, smartgoggles with low light, thermograph, targeting and anti-dazzle options, trauma card, radio, armoured - on an alert also carry Sternmeyer SMG 21s

BELGIAN BORDER POLICE

COP BELGIAN
INT 6, REF 7, CL 7, LK 5, MA 5, BT 7
SKILLS: Authority +2, Handgun +4, Rifle +4, Brawling +6, Stealth +2, Awareness +2
OUTFIT: FN FAL, Browning SelfDefender +3 (treat as X-22), armour jack, radio

Note

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

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

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

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

AARON HAMMER ('THE HAMMER')

SOLO ISRAELI
INT 10, REF 8 (10), CL 10, TECH 4, LK 4, ATT 2, MA 6, EMP 4, BT 7
Clever and brilliant, brutal and remorseless, hire The Hammer when you really want them back.

CYBER: 2 cyberoptics w/targeting, thermograph, anti-dazzle; cyberarm w/ Uzi MiniAuto; 2 cyberlegs; Kerenzakov reflexes

SKILLS: Combat Sense +2, Handgun +10, Rifle +8, SMG +8, Cho Li Fut +5, Stealth +4, Human Perception +8, Awareness +5
OUTFIT: Colt AMT smargun, HK MP-2013 smartgun, armour jack, long coat, radio, trauma card

CORPORATE NINJA

SOLO VARIOUS
INT 6, REF 7 (9), CL 9, LK 5, MA 7, BT 8
CYBER: 2 cyberoptics w/targeting, lo-lite, anti-dazzle; interface plugs; cyberear w/ radio splice; boosted reflexes

SKILLS: Combat Sense +5, Handgun +6, SMG +6, Wrestling +5, Drive +5, Stealth +4, Intimidate +5, Awareness +3
OUTFIT: Armoured jacket, trauma card, radio.
UDIG Counter-Extraction Team are armed with MP 2013 smartguns and X-9mm s, while Nord-Danske assassins carry smarchipped, silenced Uzi MiniAutos and Beretta 97 pistols, with one also carrying an FR-F6 sniper rifle, with Rifle +5 skill.
GOIN' CRUISING...

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

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

THE BRIEFING

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

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

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

THE CONTACT

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

Jacobsen will give the characters a phone
number to contact and then leave negotia-
tions up to them. He doesn't know much
more about them than that, though he has been told they are rather pushy and eccentric. Expenses come first out of the float, then the team's pockets.

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

THE HAPPY BOYS

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

That 'flagship', incidentally, is quite a sight. One of the old 'fletels', floating residential units used by North Sea oil rig workers has been towed into the Med and refitted in a surreal mix of ultratech and Rube Goldberg. A modern rotary sail towers over the superstructure, computer-controlled to make the most of any winds. Arrays of solar cells fan out from the sides like flapping wings. Strings of coloured lights trail along the side of the ves-
sive - but infuriating. Yet if the team hold their line and win a decent share of all their challenges, the Boys will be delighted and true to their word.

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

**THE CLEVER BIT**

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

**Angel Franklin**

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

**Quid pro quo**

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

**Gutterboys**

The lowest of the low, their shanty town is built in that old car graveyard. The cops keep saying they’re going to move in and clean it up, but have been too busy shaking down foreigners and cashing their bribes this year to get down to it. What a shame if the person the team needs to speak to is in the middle of that violent, stinking hell. What a real shame if it’s the right the cops finally decide to have their fun...
control relays have been disconnected. Most ships can be redirected from the centre, but the Voyager is out of contact, running on a preprogrammed course tape.

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

**THE VIOLENT BIT**

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

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

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

**THE AFTERMATH**

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

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

**DARIUS NOVEMBER**

**ROCKER AFRICAN**

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

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

**CYBER:** openframe cybernarm

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

**OUTFIT:** gold-plated Colt 38 Detective,
personal stereo, cellphone, pocket TV
**TYPICAL HAPPY BOY/GIRL**

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

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

**OUTFIT:** switchblade, personal stereo

---

**MARTIS' HEAVIES**

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

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

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

---

**LUC FERRARD-M'BOYA**

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

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

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

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

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

---

**MENELAS MARTIS**

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

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

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

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

---

**PETROCHEM HEAVY**

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

---

**CRUISE ADVENTURE**

**Off the peg**

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

---

**There go the expenses...**

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

---

**That chopper...**

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

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

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

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

So why was a Petrochem suit after a satspot system?

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

Fooling into overestimating Europe's coming harvest, the Kremlin would order much too little CEP Grain and face mass hunger when it can't afford to make up the shortfall. Hunger that would bring people onto the streets and justify the KGB's calls for 'a return to law and order'. Hunger that, in Petrochem's eyes, would finally break Moscow's grip on the Ukraine, the last unexploited opportunity for an agricorp. Besides, Petrochem still remembers its bloody defeat in its dust-up with SovOil in the South China Sea. Bad blood.

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

Where's the Midman?

Quite soon after the last adventure, Jacobsen suddenly drops out of sight. He won't answer his cellphone, none of his contacts know where he is, and if anyone checks out his pad, he's obviously just packed up and gone. The next day a courier brings the team a parcel posted the day before he vanished, containing
the 'comp from last episode, a microdisk and a standard vichip of the home movie sort (playable on any vid) with a message from him:

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

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

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

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

**CRACKING THE CODE**

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

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

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

**PARIS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This requires a specialist, and Bazjouk knows just the person. Dr Susan Lei is retired now, living in the Cheshire Plains Conurb, but ‘If she can’t crack it, try prayer.’ He will pass on the address, then cordially hope never to meet the team again. If they seem likely recruits for Terranostra, though, he will pass their names on to his control. One last thought: ‘Oh, by the way, do you realise this is Russian-source data? KOSMOSOV’s signature and format are very distinctive.”

**A Violent Interlude**

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

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

**Sunny Cheshire**

The Cheshire Plains Conurbation doesn’t feature on many tourists’ itineraries. Most of the smart bits are corporate territories, and the Liverpool Combat Zone is dangerous enough to train troops for Northern Ireland. It’s dirty, hard-edged, violent and squalid, and any US characters will probably feel quite at home.
But Dr Susan Lei lives in New Canton, the colourful and bustling Hong Kong refugee community enclave. Largely left to its own devices, it has an effective internal administration based around local community councils and residential militias, albeit one increasingly coming under the control of the British Triads.

Dr Lei lives in a large, comfortable flat in New Canton's outskirts. An elegant, collected woman in her early 60s, she will eventually be persuaded to help the team. Have the spokesman make a roll of EMP + Credibility or Persuasion + D10. A result of less than 5 means she refuses; 5-16 that she will require her usual consultation fee of 5000eb per day; 17+ and the situation intrigues her and she will do it free, out of boredom.

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

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

She takes the team to a comp centre where she has an account and starts feeding in the telemetry to be processed by a programme she has written and perfected over the years. For about ten minutes the machine hums and grumbles. Just as Lei says it should be finished in five more minutes, the 'intrusion' alarm winks on - someone has broken into the system and is beginning to wipe the data.

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

**OBSCHIZDENTORG**

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

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

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

The Cops

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

A Corp Contact

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

The Screamsheets

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

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

— CPC Evening News

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

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

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

GET OUT!

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

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

GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN?

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

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

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

**The Squeeze**

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

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

**NOW WHAT?**

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

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

The team may well decide some crazed badlander cannon fodder is just what they need to
bring things to a satisfactory conclusion, and could easily persuade the scouts to bring them to their gang's camp.

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

BADLANDER PARTY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Remember, an AV-4 has 40 SP armour, and can soak up 100 SDP of damage.

DEUS EX MACHINATION

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

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

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

Turning out the lights

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

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

Virus Hunt

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

71
fighting's over the survivors begin scavenging for parts, goods and ammo. A couple of old badlanders even wheel out an ancient solar cell-powered cryofreezer and start picking over the bodies for any useful parts going begging. The team could always attach themselves to the gang next time they slip out of the Squeeze to sell their booby.

SO, WHAT WAS GOING ON?

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

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

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

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

PROFESSOR MOHAMMED BADJAOUI

TECH. FRENCH (ALGERIAN-BORN)

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

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

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

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

SANs COULOTTES GANG MEMBER

NOMAD: FRENCH

INT 3, REF 6, CL 6, LK 5, MA 6, BT 11

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

OUTFIT: Clubs. One punk, the leader, will also have an Enfield-Ubichi Last Chance and have taken muscle treatments to build to BT 11.
SKILLS: Jury Rig +5, Handgun +5, SMG +4, Athletics +4
OUTFIT: Armoured vest, TechAssault II, Avenger pistol

KGB 'RUNNER'

NETRUNNER BULGARIAN
INT 8, REF 7, CL 5, LK 10
ICON: A dark shadow-like figure, silver chains around neck and waist. This guy needs counselling.
SKILLS: Interface +4
OUTFIT: Cheap generic Yugoslav cyberdeck with Codecracker, Worm, Killer II and an Imp with Killer II and Flack

OBSCHIZDENTORG MERC
Use UDG Security Officer from Adventure 1, with level 1 Kerenzov reflexes.

BRITISH RESTRICTED ZONE PERIMETER PATROL (REZ OPERPATROL)

SOLO BRITISH
INT 2, REF 8, CL 9, LK 4, MA 7, BT 8
Rejects from the army, vicious, bored and too dumb to be anything but brave.
SKILLS: Combat Sense +4, Handgun +4, Rifle +4, Melee +3, Drive +2, Brawling +4, Awareness +4, Wilderness Survival +4, Intimidate +3
OUTFIT: SA-80 rifle, flak vest, helmet, radio, IR goggles, flashlight, knife. A squad of 6 also includes a driver with Drive +5, Basic Tech +4, an X-9mm instead of an SA-80 and a 4x4 Land Rover (SP 20, SDP 75, Max Speed 165 kph, Man. Speed 50 kph)

SA-80
RIF 2 N P
5d6 (5.56) 30 20 VR
Standard British assault rifle since the late '80s, a bullpup with integral optic sights. Designated L70 in British army service.
MAJOR GENERAL (KGB)
GRIGOR VLADIMIROVICH PROKOF’EY

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

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

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

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

OUTFIT: Armalite 44, armourjack,
cellphone

KGb SPETSNAZ

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

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

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

OUTFIT: MPK-11 smartgun, smart
Stenmeyer 35, metalgear jacket,
combat knife. One man in each
8-man squad carries a rocket-
propelled grenade launcher.

KGb TECH

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

CYBER: Plugs

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

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

JASON D.
WINTERFEATHER, JR

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

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

CYBER: Skinwatch; Chipped for
Handgun +3

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

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

**Netrunner Korean**

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

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

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

**Cyber:** Plugs, wearman

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

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

**Badlander**

**Nomad British**

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

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

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

**Petrochem Ninja**

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

**Agnes Dei**

**Nomad British**

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

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

**Cyber:** Kerenskoy reflexes, BigKnucks,
Vampires (Sharkgrins), cyberarm

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

Catholic ritual and theology +6,
Leader +9

**Outfit:** H&K P-11, MAC 10, leathers,
amour t-shirt, fighting knife,
motorbike, personal CD
The villa is a perfect example of 2000s retrogothic, all thick mockstone slabs and tasteless gargoyles. Despite its heavy-set appearance, it is built of thermally efficient plastic and resin composites which burn and puncture quite well. Walls have 15 SDP, and if ignited burn slowly but persistently, giving off choking black smoke.
**UDIG VILLA**

**Location** Near Köln

**Owner**

**CPU's**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level One</th>
<th>Level Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Map of UDIG Villa](image)

**AI?** No

**Mainframe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATA WALL GATE</th>
<th>EBM76-14</th>
<th>104,790 eb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Notes**

**Net ICON** Deliberately inconspicuous, a somnolent country villa with a muted UDIG logos on the floor.

**Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Mu</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minigun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Link to UDIG–Köln (Security level 2, Trace 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Auxiliary Generator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>External cameras (in grounds)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ground floor internal cameras</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Security station terminal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>First floor internal cameras</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Huber's study terminal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Huber's bedroom terminal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Watchdog (alerts security station)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>See Ya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Bloodhound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Killer II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Spazz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Killer II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Watchdog (alerts security station)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Hydra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Locked files**

Most codewords are just random strings of digits (UDIG know their biz).

The **VIRTUAL OFFICE** is a duplicate of Huber's in Köln: cluttered and light.

The files are locked behind level 3 code walls.
**PETROCHEM SUIT'S PORTACOM,P**

**Location**

**Owner**

**CPU's**

| 2 | INT | 6 | 1-face | 16 |

**AI?** No

**Personality**

**DATA WALL GATE**

| N/A | 3 | Mainframe Zetatech Mini-X | 25,650 eb |

**Notes**

Not is only 'part' of the net when jacked into a deck—and then seems a very dim and pokey place.

**Net ICON**

If linked to net, small blue-grey oblong

**Skills**

| Accounting | +5 |
| General Knowledge | +4 |
| Greek | +6 |
| Spanish | +4 |

**No. Information Mu**

1. 'Sketchpad': empty; utilities | +5 |
2. Addresses, contacts (databases) | +1 |
3. Personal finances (records), expenses (records) | +5 |
   - map of Mod (data) | +3 |
4. Secure memory (LOCKED): telemetry (grey ops) | +1 |
5. Watchdog | +5 |
6. Flatine | +2 |
7. Killer IV | +4 |
8. Keyboard |
9. Integral printer |
10. Alarm clock |

**UTILITIES FITTED:**

- Databaser, Filelocker®, GateMaster

---

LOCKED file is behind a level 5 Code Gate

Codeword in name of his secretary, Monica — a full check of database will reveal this name, along with 136 others...
Central Districts of the CPC

North-East England
**Bowness Satcom Station Net**

**Location:** Bowness SatStation

**CPU's:**
- **INT:** 3
- **l-face:** 13

**AI:** No

**Personality:**

**DATA CODE WALL GATE**
- **equinox A 14**
- **N/A 3**

**Mainframe:**
- **Net ICON:** dim, flickering dish antenna

**Notes:** Dim, fading, with just enough power to stay on Net... as if full of invisible cobwebs

**Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Mu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Long Distance Link—trainable antenna, currently slaved onto Kosmos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Watchdog—placed there by Backdoor Bandit—will alert him intruders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Memory—pretty useless now, though contains decade-old satellite data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fire Extinguishers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Kosmos system is multi-layered. The outer layer is pretty much undetected since it is a redundant emergency system. Further in, the ice is thick and deadly, while alarms will call vigilant and jealous Sov runners.**

**The Kosmos's ICON is a glittering red five-pointed star high in the heavens. The first layer is freely festooned with neon 'tapes' and 'signs' warning keep out in every language. The virus, if already injected, will be a black snake coiled around the miniature star which is the aux CPU. The memory, incidentally, contains only the emergency instructions for manned docking. Nothing hot.**

**If hard at work, the Bandit will be 'in' the LDI, his back guarded by his Watchdog which, by whim, instead looks like a miniature golden bird that flies to his 'peacock'**
New Europe

One of the dominant world powers in the twenty-first century: at once a united bloc of economic and political allies and a motley collection of feuding countries, divided by national egotisms and historical bad blood.

It's not the paradise some foreigners might think, and it's certainly not the paradise the eurocrats would have their flock believe—it's a world apart from the USA, with a polish, wealth, elegance and elitism all its own. It's Eurostyle.

A SUPPLEMENT FOR

CYBERPUNK®

R. TALSORIAN GAMES, INC.

Published by R. Talsorian Games
P.O. Box 7266, Berkeley, CA, 94707
Copyright 1991 By R. Talsorian Games Inc. Cyberpunk & Eurosource are trademarks of R. Talsorian Games, Inc. All rights reserved.

CP 3901
ISBN #0-937-279-18-8