COLD CITY
COMPANION

BREG BRITISH EXPERIMENTAL ROCKET GROUP, SECTION IV

To: Sqdrn. Ldr. Tutbury, V N
From: Maskelyne, A J

Vernon,

What in the name of blue blazes in going on with you people over there? The Prof is about to blow a gasket over the latest stuff up in Berlin!

Please tell me that this isn't going to be like the incident back in '48. We all remember too well the results of that little escapade. I for one have no intention of trying to diplomatically weasel you out of some Godawful GRU prison!

So, the next report had better be a damn sight more detailed than the last and we'd better start getting some reasonable intelligence out of this situation. You know better than anyone that we've been bleeding men to the other side at a ridiculous rate, even worse than the Yanks or the French. The rumours back here are saying that it's an inside job, that some high ups in Whitehall have been compromised. Makes me shudder to think.

Furthermore, the boffins back here aren't at all sure that this crypto-linguistics things of yours has legs. Nothing is coming out it, a dead end, if you'll pardon the inappropriate pun. I do realise that the affair with Blume et al may have given creedence to your theory, but the big brains say its simply not worth the time and effort to investigate.

Finally, do be careful out there. Losing one am to the Luftwaffe was bad enough, please don't go risking the other one on wild goose chases! Madeline sends her love, by the way. And young Henry made it into the First XI with a ripping good display on Sunday.

Yours,

Bert

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Contested Ground Studios

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SLANTWISE

July, 1946

It turns out that we were wrong. So very wrong.

Sources indicate that our Soviet counterpart, Project 303, was far more successful than Operation Strangle. This is a great cause for concern. Although we have 'the bomb', the Soviets must have access to some technologies that we have yet to encounter. Our intelligence on this matter is sketchy at best. The first line of infiltration would appear to be this new 'Reserve Police Agency' being set up in Berlin. In a spirit of allied co-operation, it appears we must team up with our Russian friends to hunt down the very things we wish to keep from them.

I do not like the way this is heading.

September, 1947

The Reserve Police Agency is proving to be remarkably effective in the execution of its duties. However, there are deep concerns regarding the avenues it provides for intelligence gathering and infiltration. We would have been foolish to think that our comrades in Soviet intelligence would not be thinking along the same lines as us. The British have already had to eliminate six double agents, all of them turned during their time in the RPA. The 515th have been assiduous in eliminating infiltrators into our network. Only four at the last count, but I suspect we are being overly optimistic. The French are, as usual, being somewhat recalcitrant in providing us with information.

Needless to say, our efforts at turning Soviet personnel have not met with great success. Of the three we managed to get on side, one was 'killed in the line of duty' and the other two have been 'recalled to Moscow', a common metaphor for summary execution. What intelligence we have managed to obtain is truly terrifying. We are not simply dealing with the usual MGB or GRU thugs, but a wholly new organisation. Whoever they are, they appear to have complete authority over the use and application of esoteric technologies. I grow more fearful as the days pass.

March, 1948

They are called GK-11. 'State Committee-11', a typically innocuous and banal Soviet thing to name them. We know they have a direct line to Stalin, possibly even bypassing Beria. One of our sources revealed that something huge is happening near the Pripyat River in the Ukraine. We know for a fact that there was a German 'facility' there during the drang nach osten. Its purpose is unknown. However, if the Soviets are taking such an interest in it, it must have great significance.

In short, I feel, we are losing the intelligence war that is being waged within the RPA. The Russians are proving too good for us. We seem to get a dribble of new information and artefacts, while they must be siphoning off vast amounts of valuable material. We are also bleeding personnel at an awful rate. The level of attrition that is taking place is appalling: death, madness, treachery, all are taking their toll on our men and women.

November, 1949

We have finally obtained permission to go in hard and fast to get information about the Pripyat complex.

This is a very risky strategy and could precipitate an armed conflict between East and West. We are using a much-modified RB-36, stripped out to fly as high as it can possibly go. No Soviet missiles or interceptors can reach these heights. If they start anything, we deny everything: we had no planes flying in that area at the time, no such plane exists, we know nothing. This is Operation SLANTWISE. We are risking much to confirm our suspicions.

The RB-36 will be flown from the US, over the Ukraine and back again. Should the mission go wrong or be compromised in any way, the crew are fully aware that they must undertake plan YQ-HARPOON. We will deal with the fallout from that as and when it happens. Hopefully our diversionary activities will draw attention away from that sector of airspace. May God help us all.

January, 1950

SLANTWISE was a success. Of sorts. Protests have been received by our embassy in Moscow, but the denials are spilling forth. Glibly.

We obtained the photographs but they prove depressingly inconclusive. There are signs of a substantial underground facility near the Pripyat River and the tracks leading to the area show use by heavy vehicles. Very large, heavy vehicles. As to the purpose of the facility, we are no nearer any understanding. What was more alarming were the pens in the marsh a few miles north. Vast barbed wire enclosures, spotted with crude bunkers. Within the wire stood hundreds, maybe thousands of motionless figures. Just standing there in the rain, seemingly oblivious. The 515th have been muttering nervously and disappearing into secret conclaves ever since.

I deeply and truly fear what the Russians are up to. They may be ready to unleash the unspeakable upon the world a mere five years after we prevented a descent into chaos. What I fear more is that we are likely to do the same.

VKA: Then you are willing to assist t

SM: Yes, yes, I will tell you what I

VKA: Good. Then speak clearly. For
1940 to 1945.

SM: I served as a scientific adviso
of the Deutsche Ahnenerbe. As a b
and categorisa

NDS: And you were
criminal organi

SM: No! I was not a member of the

NDS: Record
automatically c

Reserve Police Agency
Report

Security: DELTA BLUE KRAKEN

Date: 22/11/1948

Investigating Agent:
...erpatyin, V. L. (USSR)
...ger, D. (UK)
...France)

Page 1 of 3

Security Clearance BIGOT-GREENKEEPER

Eyes Only No part of this document is intended for
onward transmission

Approved: PM, CIGS, BERGO, VALIANT

Field memorandum: OPERATION TRIANGLE

04/10/45

Report From: WOODFINCH

Further to the
seems that we
exten...

From: T A Chuikov (Capt.)
To: O E Lebedev

756-195-KOSCHEI

This communique pertains
organisation known as K
considered absolute

KOSCHEI is b
powers within
steps to con

Matters have
operating as

1) In
amongst the
work. You m
leverage to

2) I
sponsored
efforts of
it is impe
information

#44 unknown cause of death
heavy damage to eyes and inner ear

CHAPTER ONE

Your se
recognised
on his res

Ends

Chuikov

Waffen-SS command structure
WVHA Amtsgruppe C

Apprehended by
NKVD?

Firstly, may I begin by stating that none of the
subjects have been able to give any clues as to the
whereabouts of KAMMLER. It is my recommendation that
we investigate his disappearance and attempt a
retrieval of KAMMLER at the earliest opportunity.

Ahnenerbe personnel have (in a limited fashion)
admitted to association with esoteric technology
experiments. In addition, two (2) individuals have made
reference to the Waffen SS HOLLE Division.

Speculation!

ЧЕТВЕРГ

The remains of individual found fused to the wall of Experimental Compression Chamber 23 at site #456/76/B. Remains destroyed during removal.

coldcity

GAME ADVICE

This section of the Companion offers some expanded advice for running and participating in Cold City games. It elaborates on the advice offered on pages 89 to 92 of Cold City. Here, there will be discussion of hidden agendas, how to cooperatively set up games, different ways of playing those games and other useful matters.

CLOSED & OPEN GAMES

When it comes to all the dark secrets, hidden agendas and mysterious histories that characters in Cold City can have, there are two broad possibilities as to how to use them within a game. For the purposes of discussing how to approach and run games of these two different types, I've decided to call them closed and open games.

What is a closed game?

Put simply, a closed game is one in which the players are unaware of the hidden agendas of any characters other than their own. They may develop an inkling of what these are as the story develops, but at the start, they will have no clues as to the hidden motivations of the other characters.

Character creation should still be a collaborative, communal process but there will be certain elements that remain outside the sphere of group discussion. Hidden Agendas are the very obvious elements, where each player will decide the agendas for their character in discussion with the GM. Players may also choose to keep elements of their character's histories secret from each other (although the GM should be aware of these).

Closed games are ideally suited for those groups who want to have that real feeling of not knowing exactly what the other characters are up to and what their motivations are. There is also the excitement of exploring and deciphering the motivations of a character, both in character and as a player. Like completing a tricky clue in a crossword puzzle, the sudden realization, and potential revealing of, the hidden agenda of another character can provide great satisfaction and rewarding moments of play.

However, the closed game does place a lot of responsibility on the shoulders of the GM, as she is the only figure at the table to have full knowledge of what the secrets are of all the characters. The GM must have a thorough understanding what it is that the hidden agendas represent and how they feed into what the individual players want from the game experience.

The division of roles within a closed game is very much along traditional RPG lines. Much of the responsibility for bringing conflicts into play lies with the GM. However, each player should be aware that he or she should be bringing their hidden agendas into play in a manner which enhances the overall story.

What is an open game?

As you may have already guessed, an open game is one in which all of the participants are aware of the hidden agendas and other secrets of all the characters taking part. As we will see, there are advantages and disadvantages to this in terms of ongoing play.

The very process of creating characters for an open game should, by its very nature, involve a great deal of collaboration and co-operation between players. Knowledge of hidden agendas gives players powerful tools to bring conflict and tension into the ongoing story by 'pushing the buttons' of other participant's characters.

An open game requires trust amongst the group that the players will use the information at hand to advance the story, rather than use it purely to advance their own character and agendas. Whilst hidden agendas are vitally important to the story and to the individual characters, the agendas of one character should not be allowed to dominate the story.

The open game does, to a great extent, take a lot of weight from the shoulders of the GM. Rather than one person being aware of the hidden secrets round the table, there are many who are aware, so they can all use this to improve the flow of play and the story being told. For groups who are keen to play in this open manner with a certain devolution of responsibility for the running of the game, the open game is the ideal style.

Within an open game, there is a certain 'blurring' of the line between the traditional GM/player roles. While there is still a GM, some of the responsibility for driving play is devolved from the GM onto the other participants round the table. As they have full knowledge of the strengths, weaknesses and hidden secrets of the characters in play, participants should use this knowledge to push the game on, to bring issues into scenes and enhance the experience of everyone round the table.

AUTHORITY: WHO SAYS WHAT? AND WHEN?

Authority is a general term for who gets to add what to the story being told, what they get to say and whom they are allowed to say it about. In many games, it's immediately obvious who gets to say what: the GM has authority of plot, background and so forth, while the players have authority over the actions of their own characters. However, it can be very useful (especially when dealing with Open and Closed games) to look at how authority can be broken down and how it can be used to create a better and more satisfying game.

In broad terms, you can break authority round the game table down into the following areas and meanings:

Content authority

This is more commonly known as back story and includes all those little bits of information about characters in the game as well as the world itself. In Cold City this is mainly the domain of the GM. For example, the GM may decide that a particular NPC the characters have encountered is, in fact, a double agent working for the Soviet and American secret services in Berlin. This is content authority.

Plot authority

This relates to revealing content (note, this is not the same as content authority!) around the table and during the game. It deals with making revelations or revealing snippets of information. For example, the characters finding a German dossier that reveals to them the location of a previously hidden bunker would be plot authority.

Narrational authority

In Cold City, narration rights come from conflict resolution so we can see that narrational authority relates to the outcome of conflicts and shouldn't be mistaken for any of the other kinds of authority. An example would be Per, playing his character Eduard Reisser, winning a conflict and narrating how his character successfully tails a suspected traitor through the streets of Berlin.

Situational authority

This is who is doing what, and where. The GM creating a scene and then asking the players the position of their characters within it and what exactly they are doing as the scene opens, is an example of distributed situational authority.

In a game of Cold City, it is important to know who has what authority and what it means. In a 'standard' game of Cold City, it is the case that the GM has exclusive control of content and plot authority. Whereas everyone participating in the game (including the GM) has narrational (as determined by the outcome of conflicts) and situational authority. Let's look at some examples:

The GM outlines a scene where the characters will be waiting outside the apartment of a former SS doctor. The corridor is damp and slippery underfoot, footsteps ring through the corridor (situational authority). Each of the players describe where their characters are standing and what they are doing (situational authority). The doctor appears and the characters apprehend him and bundle him into his apartment for questioning. The characters of Reisser and Bloom attempt to get information out of him and a conflict ensues, which they win. Per (playing Reisser) narrates that the doctor is terrified but eventually gives up information about the documents they are seeking (narrational authority). The GM now states that, yes, he gives up the information and the information is that the documents are located in the cellar of an old manor house in the suburbs of Berlin (plot authority).

Joe thinks that the doctor is hiding something; he thinks that the doctor is hiding more than he has reveal about himself. The GM takes this as a cue that the players wish to know more about this NPC, and reveals that he participated in experiments at the Dachau concentration camp (content authority).

Successful distribution of authority and agreement on who has what authority can lead to a much more fruitful and successful game. When the participants around the table are not aware of what authority they have, there can be confusion in the game. For example, if the group are unaware of where content authority lies, a player may, in the course of narrating the outcome of a conflict say something like "...and I also discover that he is a CIA informer!". The GM may not have intended that the NPC be a CIA informer, indeed, this might derail plans the GM had for that NPC. However, if during a pre-game discussion, it is made explicit that the GM has Content authority over such revelations, but the players can use Plot authority in conflict stakes, then it can avoid just such a situation.

COLLABORATIVE GAME CREATION

The title of this section may be something of a misnomer, but what it does do is offer participants in a game of Cold City some guidance on creating games on the fly, without any prior preparation. Referring back to the section on Open & Closed Games (see pg.9), this method is perhaps best suited for an Open Game, but can also be used with a Closed Game (participants will just have to be a little more circumspect in what they reveal at the table).

When creating the game through this 'check-list' of concepts, everyone at the table should be encouraged to participate and contribute. Nobody should be sidelined nor should their concepts be discarded without a fruitful discussion of the value of the ideas by everyone at the table, this must include ideas put forward by the GM as well as ideas put forward by players. Even discarded ideas should be noted down, as they may turn out to be useful and valuable at some point in the future.

What will the tone of the game be?
Cold City can, and does, deal with some fairly serious issues, but the tone does not always have to be dark and gritty. The overall mood and tone of the game is up to the participants to decide and can cover a huge range. Here are five sample tones that might provide useful guidance:

Pulpy
In a game with a pulpy tone, the mad science of the monsters and technology are emphasised, two-fisted action and starkly defined, stereotypical villains are the order of the day. This would be a much more light-hearted take on Cold City, a tone in which the characters are very much the 'heroes'. The consequences of Nazi technology are more akin to the mad science of pulp serials than horrific and disturbing scenes from a concentration camp. A tone such as this is perhaps best for groups who do not want to dwell upon the darker aspects presented in the game.

Cinematic Inspiration: Hellboy, Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow

Noir

The atmosphere created by film noir is very much the default tone for Cold City: there are stark shadows and harsh black and white, but the characters operate in a moral and ethical grey area, where they are not exactly very heroic themselves. The villains may be no worse than the characters themselves and may even have agendas akin to theirs. A noir tone suits the mood of the time: fear of destruction, mistrust (even of your allies), moments of brutal violence and covert (and overt) manoeuvring to gain the upper hand.

Cinematic Inspiration: Kiss Me Deadly, The Third Man

Arthouse

In cinematic terms, arthouse films cover a wide spectrum of tone, content and theme. However, for the purposes of this definition, we'll consider arthouse to be a tone that deals with issues of the psyche of the characters, with a great deal of internalisation and focus on psychological issues. These issues can deal with matters of sexuality, morality, ethics, societal issues or personal crises and often there can be a lack of resolution to these problems by the end of the game. Taking an arthouse tone can, potentially, be a difficult and challenging route to take in terms of structuring play. Hidden agendas will likely be cause for deep introspection and self-analysis for the characters, steering the game away from a more action orientated tone such as that offered by pulp or even noir.

Cinematic Inspiration: Europa, Kanal

Dark Horror

This tone emphasises some of the worst aspects of mankind's attitudes towards others. It must be emphasised that a dark horror tone should not be exploitative. To do so would demean real events and people. However, it should emphasise the horrific nature of what was done in the twisted technology experiments and the brutal, amoral nature of some of those who took part. The horror can also stem from very personal, small scale things within the characters and the game as a whole: a character searching for a lost comrade, only to find she has been broken and changed by experimentation during the war is a good example.

Cinematic Inspiration: Come And See, Jacob's Ladder

Black Comedy

While not a tone than would immediately spring to mind, the paranoia and bleak outlook of the Cold War is rich territory for comedy of the blackest kind. The characters may find themselves as latter-day Jossarians, trapped in a situation where they have little power or influence. Their superiors could be incompetent, mad, corrupt or a combination of all three. Black comedy would tend to focus on the more immediate Cold War issues, rather than those raised by the activities undertaken during the war.

Whilst comedy is a valid way of looking back on tragic events, a group would need to consider carefully how they would approach matters relating to human experimentation, Nazi cruelty and other such themes in a black comic tone.

Cinematic Inspiration: Catch-22, Dr Strangelove

Example:

The group sits down to play and after some discussion, they decide that they'd like to play a game with a dark, noir-ish tone. So, everyone round the table begins to throw out what a dark noir game means to them. After this process, they group ends up with the following words written down on a sheet in front of them:

Noir, smoky, pain, double lives, meeting public places, underground cabaret, on the brink of the occult, RPA = hiding/set aside.

Create engaging characters

Once the tone has been set, play can move into the process of creating engaging characters. Players should create characters which satisfy them and give them opportunities to take part in a story which is satisfying for them and for the other participants.

Discussion around the table should be free flowing, with connections between characters being established, even at this early stage. Depending on whether the game is considered to be Open or Closed, discussion may include hidden agendas and secret parts of the characters' pasts.

In a departure from what is set out in the main text of Cold City, players should not feel that they have to define all of their characters traits from the very outset. Creating traits 'on the fly', that are appropriate to what the character is doing and sudden ideas the player has for their development can add a lot of the game.

Example:

After the discussion mentioned above in the 'Tone' section, the players set about creating their characters. Each player (there are three, plus the GM) thinks about what they really want to play, what nationality they would like to represent. They come up with the following:

Joe decides to play Jacques Benoit, a former collaborator in Vichy France who turned double agent to save his own skin when the Resistance came knocking. He's a troubled, dishevelled private eye brought into the shadowy world of the RPA by a former lover...

Per chooses to play a German character named Eduard Reisser, a man with a hazy and indistinct background. Per really wants the character's background to be developed in play, so simply says he used to be a saboteur, assassin and spy who has been ordered into the RPA by his former Commanding Officer who now works in the German civil administration...

Jim creates the character of Professor Blume, an American Jewish linguist who spent World War Two cracking codes. He's in Berlin for revenge, to exact retribution on the unknown lover of his wife, a lover who was complicit in her death...

What are we doing?

It's a simple question, but one that has great impact on the way the game will run.

What does everyone round the table want to happen in the game? What will the main thrust of the activities of their characters be? What things would the GM like to bring to the table in terms of stuff she would like to see happening for the characters?

There are many options here, depending on what everyone wants. Some groups may decide that they would like to have a game where the characters are heavily involved in physically hunting down monsters (this could be 'mission based', with assignments handed down on a regular basis). Some may have a desire to investigate the whereabouts of missing Nazi personnel with connections to twisted technology (maybe the group has an overwhelming desire to pin down the whereabouts of Hans Kammler?)

The GM should, in the main, act as a 'chairperson', rather than a 'master' in this situation. She should be taking on board what the players want from the game and reacting to what they say. However, the GM should also be aware that things she wishes to see in the game should also have an effect and should take an equal part in the discussion.

Who are the antagonists?

In essence, what will the threats be to the characters? Who and what will be facing them and what assets, advantages and so forth will they have? Referring back to the section on 'Authority', players saying who (or what) they would like to see as antagonists is an example of the distribution of content authority.

Antagonists can be people, monsters or even technology which may, or may not, exert its own malign influence. Players may simply state that they want the antagonists to be:

"Renegade Nazi scientists living in the sewers of Berlin"

or

"Our superiors in the RPA and the bureaucracy that they create."

And leave it up to the GM to elaborate further and weave this into the game.

Another group may suggest that the antagonists might be:

"A creature that fades in and out of time and can posses people and drive them mad."

Yet another option could be even more detailed:

"The Gehlen Org will come into it somehow. They want to capture at least some RPA personnel and in-terrogate them in order to find out what is really going on. All this happens whilst we are hunting down someone who seems to be re-manufacturing STs at an unknown location in Berlin. Maybe the Stasi are also very interested in what is going on..."

Who else features in the game?

Who else will be encountered during the course of the game? Are there friends, allies, old enemies, family members, lovers or colleagues who will pop up in the course of the story? This doesn't have to be an exhaustive list and, of course, new characters will pop up in the game, be created on the fly or re-appear from previous games.

However, this gives the opportunity for participants to say "This person is important to me and I'd like to see them in the game at some point".

Are there particular scenes participants would like to see?

This is the chance for all participants to say "I really want to see a scene like this appear in the game." It could be some thing as simple as:

"Shoot-outs and chase scenes in corridors"

or

"Scenes where we revisit places from our past"

or something far more detailed, along the lines of

"I'd like a scene where the entire party are in a steamy local tavern in the Soviet sector of Berlin. It'll be riddled with Stasi informers and have a very hostile atmosphere. But we need to get something from this place."

All of the above examples are perfectly valid scene suggestions. When starting the game off, it's probably best to restrict each participant (the GM should also feel free to suggest scenes here) to one scene suggestion to avoid overwhelming the GM with scenes that she feels obliged to fit into the game. A good option with larger groups might be for two or more players to collaborate on suggesting a scene: perhaps they suggest a scene that includes both of their characters, a scene that might be even more engaging if the characters are antagonistic towards each other.

Once all of the required information has been drawn together, the entire group should feel satisfied that they have given a good platform on which to build an engaging and satisfying game. Through the suggestions from players and the nature of the characters they have created, the GM should be aware of what everyone wants from the game. The players should also be aware of what the GM wants from the game through her participation in the discussions. There should always have been equal opportunity to throw ideas into the ring and have contributions taken on board.

BRINGING HIDDEN AGENDAS INTO PLAY

It's been said a few times before, but it always bears repeating: hidden agendas are one of the cornerstones of characters in Cold City. To players and the GM, they are buttons that can be pushed, flags as to what is wanted in the game and huge motivators for the character. For everyone in the group, it's important that these vital elements are brought into the ongoing story. A GM should pay attention to the hidden agendas that have been created, creating much of the conflict in the game in such a way that it hits the agendas of one or more of the characters.

Scenes should be pushing one or more characters hidden agenda or agendas. Indeed, you could go farther and say that every scene must reflect, deal with, question or comment upon the hidden agendas of one or more characters in the game.

However, there is always the chance of going too far and, if it is warranted, 'rest scenes', where there might not be conflict and where hidden agendas do not come into play, might be appropriate. If there have been a tense or action packed series of scenes, then a short period where the core motivations of the characters are not being pushed may be useful for both players and characters.

Let's look at a couple of sample hidden agendas, one national and one personal. Chris has created the character of Captain Geoffrey Harris, a Royal Marine Commando and decorated war veteran. His hidden agendas are:

National:
An agency from outside the usual circles is trying to infiltrate the RPA and find out its secrets. Find out who they are and eliminate their agents, while finding out who is in control...

Personal:
Nobody can find out about my homosexuality. If it were uncovered, it would mean disgrace and dishonour. But I fear someone already knows...

Let's say that the group are playing in an Open game, so everyone is aware of each others hidden agendas. Chris has created his national hidden agenda because he has read about the Gehlen Org and wants to bring them into the game. He's explicitly saying that he wants the Gehlen Org to be attempting to infiltrate and subvert the RPA. His character is trying to stop this.

His personal hidden agenda is one that shows a troubled side to the character. For a British officer to be openly homosexual in 1950 would be unthinkable. So, he has to keep his feelings to himself and live with the knowledge that should he be found out, his career will end in disgrace. Such were the attitudes of the times. With this hidden agenda, Chris is saying that he wishes his character to be challenged on this: will he subsume his feelings and carry on with his duty? Will former lovers appear to haunt him?

In any session of play, there should be at least one scene for each character which brings their own particular agendas to the fore. On some occasions, the player themselves will have suggested a scene that is ideal for bringing one of these into the story. Let's say that the personal agenda is coming into play and the GM has set up a scene where Harris has to meet up with a known informant and informant who, through devious means (perhaps the Gehlen Org have tipped him off?) knows of Harris' sexuality.

Harris is confronted by this: what will he do to prevent the man from revealing his secret? Kill him? Pay him off? Offer him something more?

As well as the GM being aware of hidden agendas and creating scenes with conflicts that relate to them, players should also be aware of their agendas and how they can contribute to bringing them in to play. And, in the case of Open games, how they can contribute to bring the hidden agendas of other characters into play. Conversely, bringing the hidden agendas for a character into play for every scene, or a majority of scenes, makes them two-dimensional and hackneyed.

As previously mentioned, there should be at least one scene in every session of play where each character gets to bring their hidden agendas into play. In three or four hours of play, there may be eight scenes and with four players, there may only be four of these containing real moments of pushing hidden agendas. That is not to say that the other scenes may not contain powerful, strong conflicts, but these may not be related to hidden agendas.
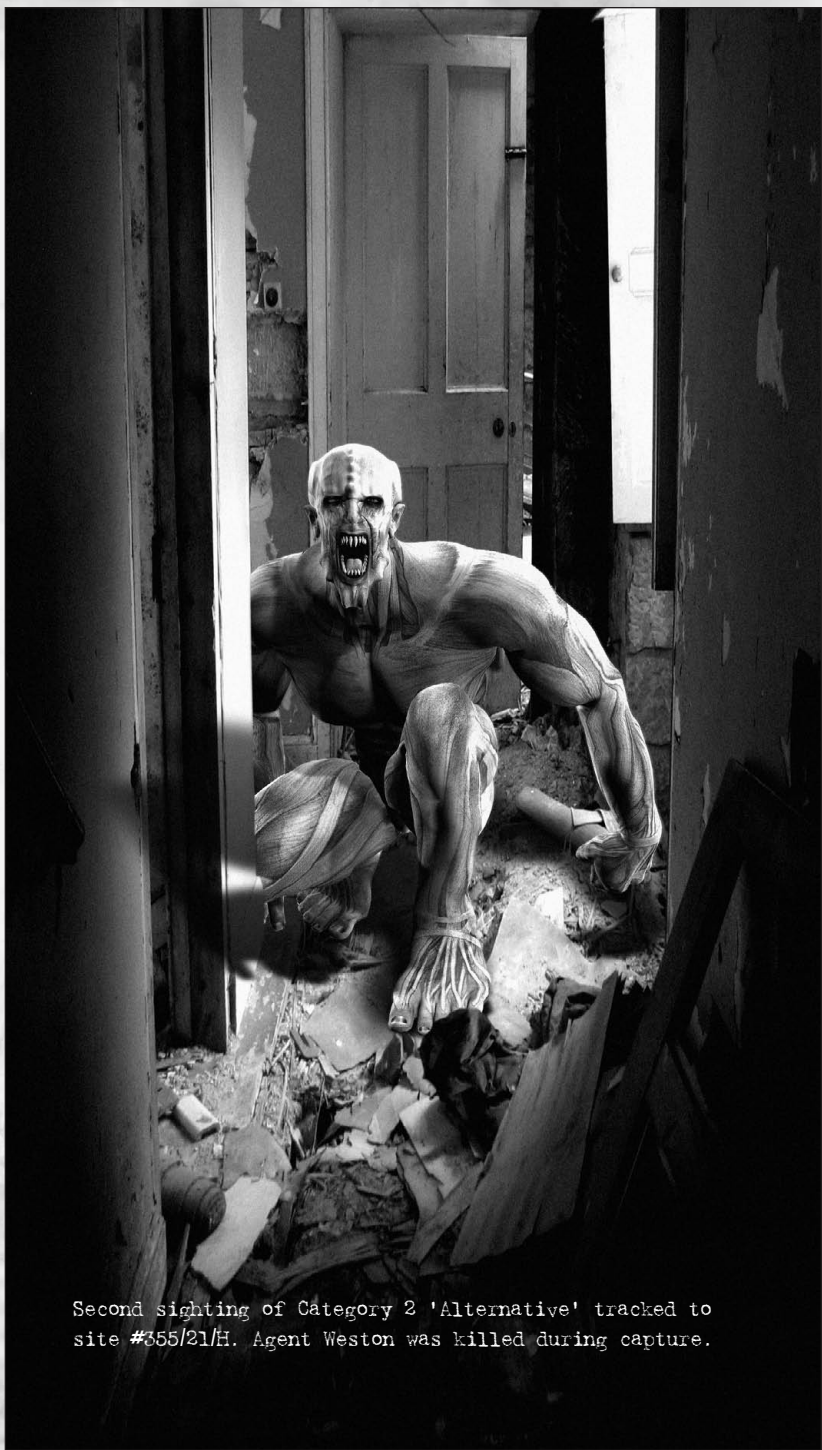
Through dialogue with an NPC, a character could bring the conversation round to something that their hidden agendas point towards. Or, the player could have suggested a scene that explicitly brings it in to play, either for themselves or for another character.

Let's look again at the case of Harris. His national hidden agenda relates to possible infiltration of the RPA by the Soviet GK-11. Another player, aware of the agenda, has suggested that a good scene would be one where a relatively new clerk within the RPA has fallen under suspicion. Harris is personable and friendly and he could be the ideal man to have a quiet word with her. Is the woman in the pay of GK-11? Well, Harris could be in a position to find out. The scene could have other characters present, but the focus of the conflict will be on Harris and his hidden agenda.

But here's another conflict: what if the woman is a spy for GK-11 and what if she has been tipped off that Harris is hiding something. She might not know what, but it's yet another pin to stick in the conscience of poor Captain Harris...
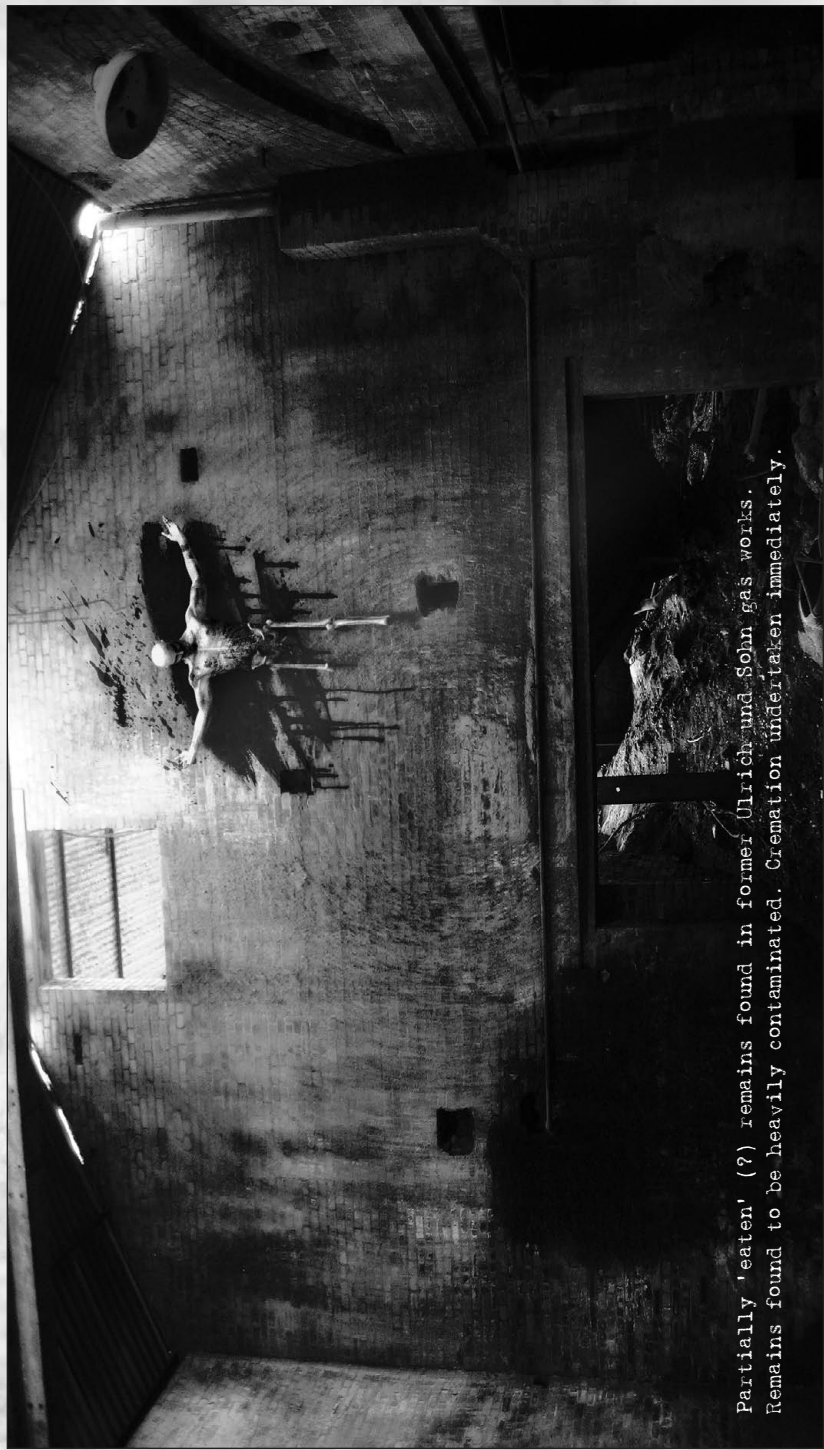
Partially 'eaten' (?) remains found in former Ulrich und Sohn gas works.
Remains found to be heavily contaminated. Cremation undertaken immediately.

coldcity

Present:

Col. V K Agarenko, NK...
Capt. N D Solokov, NK...
Subject 'M'

Clearance TRAFALGAR 467/...

Page 2/3

and the death ...

отделки кабин. Отделения цеха рас...
прилетов здания. Направление техно...
Перевала металла и заготовок...
пролеты осуществляется изземн...
электрокарами, рольгангами, ...

Фиг. ...

На фиг. 18 ...
пролета перв...
...ных изем...

#291714S316

CHAPTER TWO

SM: I kno...

VKA: But ...
not? He ...

SM: He ...

NDS: Te...

/sound...

VKA: O...
us no good...

NDS: In tha...
for and ref...

VKA: Oh, I d...
that fact. ...

SM: Please, I...

tracking down the ...
German regime. It i... more wise to make use of su... pro...
monies in order to protect the populace at large from
further harm.

CAN WE COUNTRIVANCE THIS DOWN?

Second sighting of Category 2 'Alternative' tracked to site #355/21/H. Agent Weston was killed during capture.

OPTIONAL MECHANICS

THE DRAW SCENE

The Draw Scene is an optional element in the game that takes place between the end of character creation and the beginning of the game proper. It is an opportunity for players to create a scene that says something about their characters, their background and how they came to be involved in the RPA.

In the Cold City text, players are asked to come up with a 'Draw', something that says how and why they came to be involved in the clandestine war that is going on in Berlin. The Draw Scene takes this one stage further by making it an integral part of the character creation process.

When characters have been finalised, the Draw Scene for each character can take place. The player of a particular character should decide what they want the scene to be, when it takes place and which NPCs are involved. There are a few restrictions on this:

1) The scene must involve the Draw of the character, either by occurring in the time period when whatever event the draw represents took place, in its immediate aftermath or when the character was first brought in to the RPA.

2) There must be conflict in the scene. This conflict can be whatever the player chooses for their character.

3) There must be achievable stakes for the character that will not result in them either being killed or prevent them from being part of the RPA.

These are the restrictions on the draw scene that players must adhere to. Beyond this, they are entirely at liberty to frame and create a scene as they see fit. The player can designate who will play the role of NPCs within the scene and who will be providing opposition in the conflict that takes place.

The player in questions can bring whatever attribute and trait combination they feel like into the scene, including negative traits (see below for the new optional mechanics relating to this). They roll their pool against an opposition pool of 5d10. However, each participant round the table (excluding the player whose character is the focus of the scene) can choose to either add or subtract a die from this pool. They can do this for any reason: they think it would be better for the character to succeed/fail, they thought a line of dialogue was particularly apt or they like something someone did in the scene. The only rule here is that the minimum dice pool for the opposition is one die.

If the character wins the conflict, then they can take an additional positive trait that relates to what happened in the conflict. If they lose the conflict, then they take an additional negative trait that relates to what took place in the conflict.

Example:

Matt has just created the character of Nikolai Yehzov, a former Red Army commissar, now a mole for Soviet military intelligence (the GRU) within the RPA. His draw is "Cut off behind the lines, he witnessed STs being marshalled for an attack by their SS handlers. He had to flee for his life when he was spotted".

Matt decides his draw scene will take place at the moment when he had to flee. Matt asks Gregor to play the role of Lieutenant Timofeev, his close friend who is seriously injured. The stakes that Matt sets for Yehzov are as follows "Get away from these horrors with Timofeev. I want to get him back to our lines so he can have his injuries tended to."

Matt asks the other two players to contribute on behalf of the massed STs and their handlers. Matt sets the scene: It's a wooded clearing in a shallow valley and the sun is going down. Yehzov is practically carrying the badly wounded Timofeev, desperately running for their own positions, which they can see in the distance through the light woods and scrub of the Byelorussia countryside. Other players say that they can hear the barking of the SS officers and the sounds of shambling STs coming after them. Sporadic gunfire pings off of rocks.

Gregor (in the role of Timofeev) urges Yehzov to run for his own lines and leave him behind with his gun. Yehzov refuses to do this and presses on. Matt decides it's time to roll the dice.

He brings in Yehzov's Action of 3, two positive and one negative trait, giving him a total of six dice. Looking at the opposition pool of five dice, Joe (one of the other players) decides he liked Matt's description of his caring for his comrade, so takes one die away from the pool, giving a pool of four dice. Both sides roll.

Matt rolls: 2, 4, 4, 8, 9, and 9
The opposition rolls: 6, 6, 8, and 8

This means a standard success. Matt can now narrate the results of this. He describes the nightmarish chase, Yehzov getting more and more tired and Timofeev lapsing in and out of consciousness. Eventually they reach their positions and Yehzov screams at the commander to open fire against the Germans coming after him. Machine guns chatter and rifles crack as the STs are cut down.

Thinking of a positive trait to choose as an outcome of this scene, Matt decides to create the trait "Comrades always see each other through" representing the bond that he and Timofeev shared and the fact that he would not leave him to die alone.

Other examples that potential draw scenes could be:

Christoph, the French commando, has been sent to infiltrate a schloss high in the Alps during the last days of the War. He chances on a dark cabal engaged in bringing something terrible into this world. A potential conflict could be to see if Christoph's bombs manage to destroy the schloss before the terrible summoning comes to fruition. What if he fails, but thinks he has succeeded? The negative trait 'Over-confident' may be appropriate in this case.

Professor Bloom has recently arrived in Berlin with his two young children. His status and knowledge would make him a valuable asset for the RPA and his scene takes place in his apartment, with an attractive young French lady visiting him to find out if he would be interested in joining the RPA. The conflict could be to see if the RPA truly respect Bloom or they simply see him as another academic egghead. If he is successful, an appropriate trait could be 'Air of authority'.

Vanya has be cornered and cut off in Stalingrad, his unit cut to pieces around him by strange troops who seemingly know no fear. The conflict here could be to see if he escapes without injury. If he does so, a positive trait he could take may be 'Hard to kill'.

USING NEGATIVE TRAITS

In the rules presented in the Cold City book, players are encouraged to bring in negative traits as story elements and little things that help define their characters further. However, after further play and experience, it seems that there is little impetus, in mechanical terms, for players to actually bring negative traits into a conflict. This optional change to the mechanics goes some way towards rectifying this and making negative traits more usable.

The creation of negative traits occurs in exactly the same way. Consequences also act in the same manner. The only change is in the use of negative traits in conflicts.

Should a negative trait be brought into a conflict, then the player should take a distinctively coloured die and add that to their pool. Note that the negative trait now adds to the pool, rather than taking away from it.

Conflict resolution is then rolled normally. However, should the distinctively coloured die representing a negative trait end up as the highest number rolled (even if there is more than one die showing that number), then something problematic, complicated or unwanted associated with the negative trait will take place. This happens even if the character has won the conflict. This outcome should be worked in to the subsequent narration.

Example:

The character of Dr Gerhardt von Schuberth has the negative trait "Arrogant and overconfident". There is a brawl taking place where a fellow RPA agent (a Russian lady) has been tackled to the ground. As an honourable member of the German nobility, von Schuberth decides this is totally despicable behaviour and steps in to lift the man who is now lying on top of his colleague, beating her severely. However, Schuberth is not a big man, nor is he skilled in a fight. In order to try and win the conflict that will take place, Iain (playing von Schuberth) decided to use the negative trait "Arrogant and overconfident". He rolls!

Luckily, he gains success against his opponent. Unfortunately, the die that represents his negative trait comes up as a 10. Even though he is successful in hauling the assailant from his colleague, Iain narrates that as he does so, von Schuberth totally overbalances and ends up with the assailant unconscious but now lying on top of him in a very undignified manner. A bit of an embarrassment for this somewhat haughty man!

If you are the owner of a copy of Cold City dating from the third printing onwards, you may already be familiar with this change to the use of negative traits. I hope that you don't feel short-changed by this, as I felt that it was a small, but important, change that would really benefit the game text.

My investigations have so far failed to r
information on this division. Reason seem
that it may have been a paper only divisi
never activated. However, cer
evidence points to a far more
HOLLE Division. I respectfully sugg
did, in fact, exist but has no
scattered or we ha

I realise it
hope you und
totally run

So, your posti
mysterious. So
back through t
very hush hush
they started d
everybody. I me
to anyone, but
thorou

The Ahnenerbe personnel wh
esoteric technol
medical and bio
living subjects. M   That is
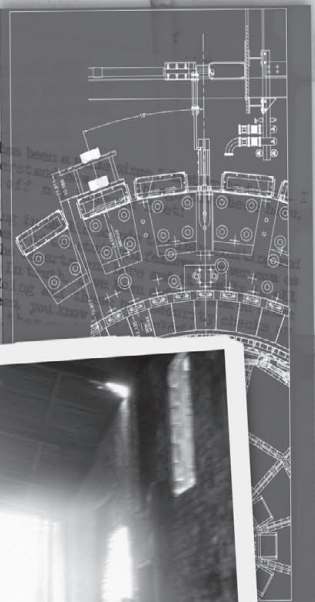
CHAPTER THREE

sts captured at

However, one WVHA officer
information that may lead
mentioned the removal of
August of 1944. The indiv
to me that these valuable
under Berlin known as the
located somewhere in the vicinity
Canal. Our informant also states that it is unlikely
Soviet troops will locate this facility purely by
chance.

Slide #12: Colditz Straße (Berlin) Laboratory Site.
Evidence of embryo experimentation and implantation.
Host bodies not found on site.

COVERT AGENCIES IN BERLIN

There are many intelligence agencies at work in Berlin, many of whom have an interest in twisted technology and the aftermath of its use. There follows brief profiles of eight of the more notable or interesting agencies currently engaged in the manoeuvring of the Underground War.

These can be used as antagonists for characters or as the groups which have given characters their National Hidden Agendas. This is not to say that every character in Cold City will be affiliated with one secret agency or another. However, there are many personnel within the RPA, from humble clerks to senior officers, who have ties to the shadowy intelligence community in one way or another.

Characters could also be approached in-game by intelligence agencies who wish to use their position within the RPA to their advantage. Would a character will be willing to give up one of their hidden agendas in favour of a new one, more in line with the desires of a well-paying, threatening or blackmailing agency?

BERG (British Experimental Rocket Group) – UK

The efforts to analyse and utilise remnants of Nazi twisted technology in Britain are spearheaded by the secretive British Experimental Rocket Group, headed by the erratic (some would say maverick) genius Professor Bernard Quatermass.

The BERG have their fingers in many technological pies, including (as their name may suggest) space travel and ballistic missiles. Whilst technically a non-military organisation, they do have deep connections with the British military establishment (much to the annoyance of Professor Quatermass) and much of their work takes place at the top-secret facilities located at Porton Down in Wiltshire and Spadeadam in Cumbria (a base that appears on no roster of British facilities).

The BERG (mainly at their offices in London or at the Porton Down Chemical Warfare Facility, see pg.42) have carried out a number of important analyses of various items brought in from Berlin and Germany at large and several key RPA agents are known to be working under the aegis of the BERG.

Other than some notable public relations stunts surrounding the use of captured rocketry equipment, the activities of the BERG are kept firmly out of the public eye. In part this is down to reasons of national security, in part down to the horrific and disturbing nature of some of the activities carried out by the Group personnel. Tests have been carried out on 'live targets' at Porton Down: mainly Waffen SS POWs who were never returned to Germany.

Should such appalling breaches of all the codes of human conduct that Britain fought so hard to maintain ever become public knowledge, the fallout would have far reaching consequences.

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

The Soviets are operating a group similar to BERG. Find out who they are, what they are doing and the extent of their involvement in the RPA.

CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) ~ USA

Created out of the wartime expediency of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the CIA is a very young organisation but is nonetheless enthusiastic and dedicated to its cause.

The majority of CIA efforts in Europe are directed towards the disruption and diminishment of Soviet and Soviet client state activities. They plant spies and saboteurs in Eastern European countries, try to engineer political strife and carry out actions that attempt to blacken the name of leftist organisations throughout Europe.

The Agency also funds the Gehlen Org, the spy organisation of Western Germany (see Cold City, pg.69). Through their proxies in Germany and through their own people on the ground, the CIA has developed a deep and abiding interest in the activities of the RPA and the possibilities inherent in the twisted technology.

Like their counterparts from other nations, the CIA sees the RPA as a means by which they can infiltrate and disrupt the intelligence and technology gathering activities of other nations. When twisted technology comes into it, this does not have to mean merely the Soviets. American operatives are equally keen to frustrate the plans of the British and the French as well.

They also have a mutually aggressive relationship with the 515th Intelligence Wing based at Tempelhof. They view their USAF colleagues as cack-handed amateurs who know nothing about spying and are merely making things more difficult for the American assets stationed in Berlin. The 515th on the other hand views the CIA as nothing more than well financed bully-boys with no understanding of the real issues at stake. Hence, the CIA has made very extensive use of its Gehlen Org contacts to worm into 515th operations.

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

Use RPA activities as a cover to disrupt and destroy foreign intelligence gathering activities: sabotage, kill and dissemble.

GK-11 (Gosudarstvennoye Komitet-11) – USSR

Whether GK-11 (State Committee 11) operates under the wing of the MGB, the GRU or some other organ of state security, no one is entirely sure. Suffice to say, that this enigmatic organisation has access to the highest levels of the Soviet administration (meaning a direct line to Stalin himself). The committee was formed in early 1945, when the scale of German experimentation and esoteric research became apparent to the terrified officers of the secret services.

GK-11 has control over the use and experimentation with esoteric items recovered by Soviet agents from the MGB, GRU and other state security organs. This has lead to no small amount of tension between the groups who are reluctant to hand over all of their hard won spoils.

The organisation also controls and guards major experimental facilities scattered across the USSR, including the former German site at Pripyat in the Ukraine and the secret city of Krasnoyarsk-14. They also use several sharashka (scientific camps operated under the GULAG network), where captured German scientists labour for their new masters.

A goodly number of Soviet RPA personnel, particularly at the higher levels, are working for GK-11, much to the annoyance of the MGB and GRU, who are both trying to weasel information out of the system in their own ways. To its agents in Berlin, GK-11 is known by the code name 'Koschei', which in translation means 'demon of darkness'.

Disturbingly, foreign intelligence groups theorise that GK-11 also managed to capture personnel, equipment and files relating to the Japanese Unit 731 in Manchuria. Snippets of information gleaned from spies and reconnaissance flights shows tell-tale signs of horrific mass experiments being carried out in the wastes of Siberia and the stony deserts of Kazakhstan...

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

Arrange the kidnapping and transfer to the USSR of any important personnel that may be brought to light during RPA operations. This can include personnel from the Western nations.

GRU (Glavnoe Razvedyvatelnoe Upravlenie) – USSR

One of the many organs of security in the Soviet state, the GRU represents the sphere of military intelligence and information gathering. They are extensively focussed on gathering intelligence that would be useful to the armed forces of the Soviet Union. It is rumoured that they have large numbers of agents operating within the borders of the USA, UK, France and Western Germany.

The GRU sees almost all aspects of twisted technology as having a potentially useful military application. Their infiltration of personnel into the RPA is well known and widespread. There is, however, competition with the MGB and even the far more secretive (if such a thing can be possible) GK-11.

The GRU were instrumental in setting up and aiding Projekt 3Ø3, which brought the lions share of twisted technology to the Soviet Union. Since the end of the war, it has become apparent that the GRU feels somewhat sidelined in favour of both the MGB and GK-11. There have been a number of 'difficulties' within the RPA which can be directly related to inter-ministry antagonism between the various Soviet spy organisations (see the entry on the MGB that follows).

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

Isolate Soviet personnel, befriend them and then extract any useful military information by any means possible.

MGB (MINISTERSTVO GOSUDARSTVENNOI BEZOPASNOSTI) ~ USSR

The MGB, grew out of the NKVD/NKGB complex, becoming the ministerial successor to the NKGB in 1946. With responsibility for foreign intelligence work, the suppression and elimination of counter-revolutionary elements and the combating of foreign intelligence and espionage activities within the USSR, its powers and resources are huge and varied.

The MGB is active throughout the USSR, Europe and further afield, gathering human intelligence (HUMINT) and signals intelligence (SIGINT). Much of the most valuable information collected by the MGB comes from their HUMINT activities, infiltrating spies and saboteurs into the governments, militaries and intelligence communities of foreign and allied powers.

In Berlin, the RPA is a primary source of information of esoteric technologies. Of all the state security organs that have an interest in such things, the MGB probably has more personnel secreted within the RPA than all of the others (most often the GRU and GK-11) combined. That is not to say that things are always easy. MGB moles in the RPA are constantly being rooted out or eliminated by their so-called colleagues, operating on their own orders from the CIA, BERG or one of the many other groups with their finger in the twisted technology pie.

Even other Soviet intelligence organisations have been known to eliminate or disrupt MGB activities. 1949 saw a series of particularly brutal spats between MGB and GRU assets within the RPA, almost leading to a Soviet withdrawal from the organisation for fear of the repercussions such an embarrassing feud might have. Luckily, a series of 'recalls to Moscow' and the 'disappearance' of some of the most vitriolic parties to the feud called things down somewhat.

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

Ensure the success of any missions to which you are assigned and appropriately diminish the contribution of other organs of State Security (particularly the GRU and GK-11)

SDECE
(Service de Documentation Extrieure et de Contre-Espionnage) Departement B ~ France

The SDECE, created out of wartime expediency, provides military and civilian intelligence for France. In particular, Departement 'B' deals with matters arising from twisted technology, both inside and outside the borders of the Republic.

Departement 'B' is small, poorly funded and somewhat idiosyncratic. Its personnel are all drawn from those who had experience of twisted technology during the war and includes former POWs, spies and even a few collaborators. Understandably, this does not lead to a pleasant working atmosphere within the section. Souring things even further is the tense and antagonistic relationship between the department and certain elements of the French military.

Some military men see the twisted technology (along with the atom bomb) as the key to making France great once more. Most of Department 'B' would like to see everything to do with it buried under a mountain and never touched again. It has even gone so far as to attempt sabotage (using former SS personnel 'persuaded' to carry out the mission) on the former concentration camp at Natzweiler-Struthof in the Vosges mountains. The former camp, a place with a terrifying reputation, is secretly still being used by the French military for experiments they barely understand.

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

Make sure any new twisted technology discoveries are destroyed or rendered unusable.

SIS (Secret Intelligence Services) ~ UK

Sometimes known by the appellation MI-6, the foreign intelligence agency of the United Kingdom has a long and eventful history. Originally set up in 1909, it has grown and evolved through two world wars into its current state as the frontline in the United Kingdom's efforts in the Cold War.

Many current field agents of the SIS have extensive wartime experience as part of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), the wartime infiltration and sabotage force set up by Winston Churchill. With their experience of surviving behind enemy lines, organising resistance groups and gathering intelligence, the former SOE operatives are a tough and resourceful lot. The personnel were absorbed wholesale into other areas of the SIS when the SOE was finally disbanded, providing a much needed pool of personnel experienced in the techniques of clandestine warfare and intelligence gathering.

The SIS have cordial, if somewhat strained, relations with the BERG, viewing that organisation as a haven for crackpots and mentally confused boffins. The SIS is much more concerned with the danger that twisted technology poses to the security of Britain than any possible uses (either military or civil). They are very much of the view that this stuff should be buried, and buried deep.

The SIS has a few lines into the RPA, mainly via military and former SOE personnel. They are one of the less aggressive agencies when it comes to the Underground War, preferring to stay out of the limelight and conduct their operations in a more subtle and devious manner. They do, however, have considerable enmity for the MGB who, for some reason, keep predicting their moves with amazing accuracy...

Sample National Hidden Agenda:

The MGB and possibly other agencies have planted moles in the SIS, trying to leech out twisted technology secrets. Find out who they are and do something about it!

USAF 515TH INTELLIGENCE WING ~ USA

Operating from Tempelhof Airbase in Berlin, secreted in a shabby Nissen hut, far from other buildings, 515th Intelligence Wing carry out their task of extracting as much of the remaining twisted technology from Germany as possible. The current 515th is predominantly made up of men and women who were involved with Operations Strangle, Paperclip and ALSOS during the closing stages of the war. The wing was set up by direct Presidential order in late 1946, bypassing even the most senior members of government (including, so rumour has it, the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defence).

The unit is also engaged in a highly secret intelligence war with their Soviet counterparts. Whilst the CIA and the Gehlen Org face off against their opposite numbers, the 515th fights its own, much quieter, but no less deadly conflict. In their innocuous hut, the 515th interrogate those who have defected via the RPA or who are suspected of treachery whilst working for the USA. As mentioned on pg.30, the 515th do not exactly have a good working relationship with the CIA.

Men and women from the intelligence wing, in addition to their other duties, take part in clandestine missions into Eastern Germany in a desperate attempt to find out more about the various former Nazi sites now occupied by forces from the USSR. These missions meet with a depressingly high rate of failure, yet still men and women continue to be trained and sent out with almost impossible orders in their hands.

When asked, few individuals within the American military and intelligence community will avow any knowledge of the 515th Intelligence Wing. Even on the airbase itself, their name is never mentioned and no signs point to their quarters. More ghosts in a city full of shadows.
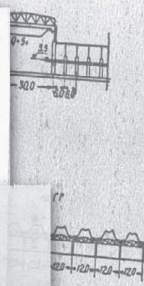
Sample National Hidden Agenda:

Make the foreign agents within the RPA look inadequate and unprofessional in all their activities, especially those from Eastern Europe and the USSR.

Neith...
any t...
assoc...

In co...
and "...
evidence...
HOLLE 1...
did, in...
scatter...

FOLL...

Farm...
cond...
esoteri...
unde...
medica...
REPO...
living...
variety...
Struthe...
GEISS...
experi...
from W...
Grupp...
individ...

site #234/3/i destroyed by 'tallboys' 6 years previous
remains of 'kurtzke' experiment not recovered

CHAPTER FOUR

They in...
I reme...
numbered I re...
see things differently after thin our p...
turned upon their fellow men while the...
noted But Pierre and I never turned up...
left alive where in the...
Canal. Our info...
Chained, shackled and guarded, we we...
transported further into the heartla...
dramatic and sudden. An air raid, a sky...
our convoy, allowing us to kill ou...
forests. We were only to painfully s...
danger that we posed to others. Perhap...
the sadistic pleasure of knowing the...
understand our condit...

Donald C Mueller
(Signature of properly designated U.S. Off.)
DONALD C MUELLER MAJ FA HQ 774 TANK BN

THIS REPRESENTS A TRUE AND CORRECT STATEMENT OF THE AMOUNTS DUE ME
Dies ist eine wahre und richtige Aufstellung der Summe, die die
FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES.
amerikanische Regierung mir schuldet.

SIGNED (gezeichnet)

RANK   (Dienstgrad)

INTERNMENT SERIAL NO
Kriegsgefangenen Nr.

Last exposure from Col. Fulton's Ansco camera, recovered
from the basement of location #118/02/A.
The search for Fulton has since been terminated.

LOCATIONS BEYOND BERLIN

This section presents some locations beyond the city limits of Berlin that could impact on the activities of the RPA and its personnel, either in the course of the duties within the city or perhaps by taking them beyond Berlin itself. All offer interesting story possibilities and each comes with two such possibilities sketched out in brief.

These locations are not meant to be substitutes for Berlin, which remains the focus of Cold City and the key location in the game. However, they do provide a wider scope and additional background information to spice up games.

KRASNOYARSK-14 (Siberia, USSR)

A town with no name, a place hidden from the outside world. Krasnoyarsk-14 (K-14) is known only by its postal district code (the 14th district of the Krasnoyarsk city area) and appears on no maps of the vast USSR. Within the town lies the greatest concentration of twisted technology on the Eurasian landmass, perhaps even in the world. From all over the former Third Reich, the victorious Red Army brought technology to this place, all under the auspices of Projekt 303.

K-14 is now wholly and totally controlled by GK-11 and remains utterly closed to anyone not approved at the highest levels. Even such stellar figures as Marshal Georgi Zhukov and head of the secret police Lavrenti Beria are rumoured to have been denied access to this cold and desolate place. This does not exactly please other agencies such as the GRU and MGB, who see the technology and the results of experimentation as fruits which rightly belong to them.

The town itself is a cold, wintry place of concrete apartment blocks, low-lying barracks, numerous squat bunkers and windowless towers. On the very edge of the town lies a massive power station, far bigger than would normally be needed for a settlement of this size. The entire place is surrounded by high, electrified fences, rolls of barbed wire, mine fields and surveillance towers. A very large, long runway sits just outside the fence, sometimes receiving unmarked aircraft from unknown locations.

Foreign intelligence services would love to know what is happening within K-14: Why do hundreds of people arrive on trains, yet the town never increases in size or apparent population? What is the source of the seismic vibrations that occasionally emanate so strongly from the site?

The answers are probably far more appalling than any observer may wish to think.

Story Possibilities:

An aircraft allegedly bound for Krasnoyarsk-14 has crashed in a suburb of Berlin, killing most of the crew and releasing the cargo. The RPA would be very interested to find out what the Soviets were shipping out of Berlin. In addition, other intelligence agencies might be extremely keen to have a few words with any survivors...

Certain parties have learned of a recent and massive seismic emanation from the area of K-14. This has coincided with the death of several Soviet agents, all of whom used to work for various police agencies within the Third Reich. Coincidence, or something deeper?

MONTAUK/CAMP HERO (New York state, USA)

Located on a remote part of the Eastern tip of Long Island, Montauk Airforce Station (or Camp Hero as it is sometimes known) has long been a key part of American coastal defences. During World Wars One and Two, it played a key role in keeping watch for invasion forces. Since the end of the war, it has started a new life, a life kept away from the prying eyes of public or political scrutiny.

On the surface, the station is mostly abandoned or mothballed, occasionally used for army and navy training programmes. But beneath the surface, there is an extensive warren of facilities, all built to provide a home for the captured twisted technology.

In order to preserve secrecy, many personnel and much of the equipment has been brought to the base by submarine or in converted oil tankers in the dead of night. Aircraft and personnel sometimes arrive on the site to take part in 'training exercises', bringing with them unusually large amounts of unspecified equipment.

Within the higher levels of the military and intelligence community, rumours are rife about the Montauk base. Most revolve around captured Nazi scientists and secret weapons research. Few speculators have even thoughts about what is really going on: human experimentation, highly dangerous research and the continuation of various German wartime experiments. Of particular note are the 'gateway processes', the means by which German scientists brought the Incursors into our world. US scientists seem to have made great strides towards replicating these experiments, treading on dangerous ground.

Rumours also seep out regarding various mind-control projects involving brainwashing, surgery and the harnessing of bizarre new energies. If these experiments come to fruition, there is no telling to what end the US military may be prepared to use the results in fighting the Cold War.

Story Possibilities:

Irene Brandt is a US representative within the RPA, ostensibly working for the US Navy. She is not all she seems. She has been subject to mind control experiments at Montauk, experiments aimed at making her the perfect double agent. The trouble is, the experiments are causing highly untoward side effects. Some Berliners (maybe those living in the same apartment block as Brandt) are literally losing their mind and memories. Why is this happening and what is causing it?

Why would the crew of a US tanker, recently docked in Hamburg and now enjoying shore leave in Berlin, be seen so often near RPA investigations? Why has a known Soviet informer recently been caught by British military police screaming about 'Montauk!'? Strange things are most certainly afoot.

NATZWEILER-STRUTHOF (Alsace, France)

Even amongst the horror and despair of the concentration camp system, some camps had a darker reputation than others. High in the Vosges Mountains of Alsace, Natzweiler-Struthof was home to hideous experiments carried out by scientists from the Ahnenerbe. The Ahnenerbe started out life as a relatively innocuous, if somewhat madcap, society set up by Heinrich Himmler to discover the archaeological and historical origins of the so-called 'Aryan' race. During the decade of their existence, they went from making plaster casts of Swedish rock carving to conducting appalling experiments on living subjects.

During the Nuremberg 'Doctors Trial', the world learned of terrible killings carried out at Natzweiler for the purposes of collecting Jewish skeletons for racial examination. What the world did not learn of were the other experiments carried out by the Ahnenerbe in the Vosges.

With most STs dedicated to the bleeding wound that was the Eastern Front, the Ahnenerbe was determined to find solutions to the problem. Only huge chemical plants such as those at Ploesti could produce enough of the noxious chemicals used to preserve the STs. But what if they could reduce the living to the state of deathly robots controlled by dedicated teams of 'handlers'? They would have no fear, no pain and could be unleashed in mass terror attacks on allied troops. Thus, the scientists at Natzweiler attempted to find a solution.

Many inmates, most of who were members of resistance movements from across Europe suffered hellish agonies or succumbed to the purgatory of a living death. Many perished on the operating tables, others were gradually hacked apart in tests to see how 'durable' these new creations were. The experiments did not come to much, but more horror was to come.

After the war, a shadowy cabal within the French military decided to maintain the Natzweiler camp and continue with the experiments in the hope that they could be used for military medical purposes.

Since the end of the fighting, tens, if not hundreds, of POWs have been spirited to Natzweiler and subjected to the same degradations visited upon the erstwhile victims. Were the French public to find out about this, there would surely be a public outcry and resulting political chaos.

Story Possibilities:

A French character may be attempting to use the RPA as a tool to expose or shut down the military-controlled activities taking place at Natzweiler.

A number of former-SS guards have been found dead around the Berlin area. All served at Natzweiler for a greater or lesser period of time. Who is killing them and why? Perhaps it is former prisoners? Former experimentees? French military personnel attempting to cover up the continued activities at the camp?

OHRDRUF (Thuringia, Germany)

Ohrdruf was the first concentration camp liberated by American forces in Germany during the war. The popular media showed General Eisenhower visiting and solemnly examining the evidence of Nazi atrocities. In reality, the general was there on more covert business.

The camp was near to the Jonastal valley, the site of substantial underground workings of a distinctly odd nature. In the depths of these subterranean galleries lay chemical vats, incubation tanks, X-Ray bombardment equipment and the whole panoply of twisted technological machinery.

For Ohrdruf and the valley were key locations in the race to create viable Alternatives; mutated soldiers that would turn the tide and change defeat into victory. Hundreds of prisoners were psychologically broken prior to the physical experiments being carried out upon them. One of the few successes at the camp was the Nachwachter programme which successfully created creatures capable of fighting and surviving in pitch darkness. Most of these 'products' were nothing more that automatons, capable of following simple orders. Their time as men and women had long since passed: they were simple raw materials fed into the war machine.

Rumours also began to circulate that Ohrdruf had been part of the German atomic weapons project. Persistent tales continue to float around, telling of mysterious, powerful explosions at the Ohrdruf site, explosions that claimed the lives of many thousands of unfortunate camp inmates. Now under the control of the Soviets, most of the entrances to the tunnels have been blown up and others concreted over. So what, if anything, remains there? And why are the Soviets so keen to keep everyone out of the area?

Story Possibilities:

A mole within Soviet intelligence has passed information to the RPA which indicates that information vital to a current case in Berlin may be related to current Soviet activity at Ohrdruf. But how to use this information without compromising this valuable information source?

Henry Buchmann was an SS guard at Ohrdruf. Now he is an itinerant drunk on the street of Berlin. He rambles and raves, but within his madness are grains of truth. Now, he has come to the attention of more than one intelligence agency. Will the RPA find him first?

PLOESTI (Wallachia, Romania)

Sitting on the plains of Wallachia in Romania, the massive oil fields and refineries of Ploesti were, as Winston Churchill said, "The taproot of German might." They provided the petrol and diesel that kept the panzers rolling and the aviation fuel that kept the Luftwaffe flying. They also had a darker purpose.

The well-equipped labs and chemical facilities within the refineries were ideal for the production of the curious, noxious chemicals required to create the legions of Spezialeinsatztruppen (STs, see pg.85 of Cold City). Day and night these labs, under SS supervision, pumped out vast quantities of the precious liquids, storing them in vast, heavily guarded pressure vessels for transport into the German heartland.

And Ploesti is the reason that the STs were seldom encountered by the Western allies, save for small penny packets in the Ardennes and Vosges. The air raid of Operation Tidal Wave heavily damaged the refineries, but the damage was easily repaired. What was not repairable was the loss of the precious chemicals, their tanks blown sky high by American bombs. The situation on the Eastern front was seen to be far worse than that in the west, so the stocks of ST-creating liquids were earmarked for use in Russia, the Ukraine and the Crimea.

The refinery facilities and their secret labs are now firmly in the hands of the Romanian communist government, overseen by 'advisers' from the USSR. The laboratories are held in the iron grip of GK-11, who are building up stocks of the ST creating chemicals. Just like the Nazis did during the war...

Story Possibilities:

Characters representing the Western allies may hear rumours of the work still being carried on at Ploesti. Why are the Soviets doing this? What are their plans?

The RPA has gunned down some STs in Berlin. But they are relatively fresh, only a few weeks dead. And one of the characters recognises a dead figure as a known Romanian partisan from the War. A former partisan who was known to have settled down to a quite life in the town of Ploesti...

PORTON DOWN (WILTSHIRE, ENGLAND)

Located in bucolic, rural Wiltshire, England, Porton Down is one the key British military research and development establishments. Set up in 1916 as a chemical weapons laboratory, it continues in this role today (under conditions of great secrecy), analysing and testing the various chemicals created by Germany during the War (such as Sarin and Tabun). However, there are parts of Porton Down that even the secretive chemical weapons experts are barred from entering, places that contain things even more sinister and deadly than nerve gases...

When twisted technology began to trickle out of Europe in the closing stages of the war, the British military needed somewhere secure to store and test what they and their allies had found. The site at Porton was already closely guarded and tight as a drum, therefore it was decided to set up a new section of the site, nominally under the auspices of the British Experimental Rocket Group. A series of bunkers, reinforced huts and underground storage pens contain equipment and personnel, and not all of the personnel are willing visitors.
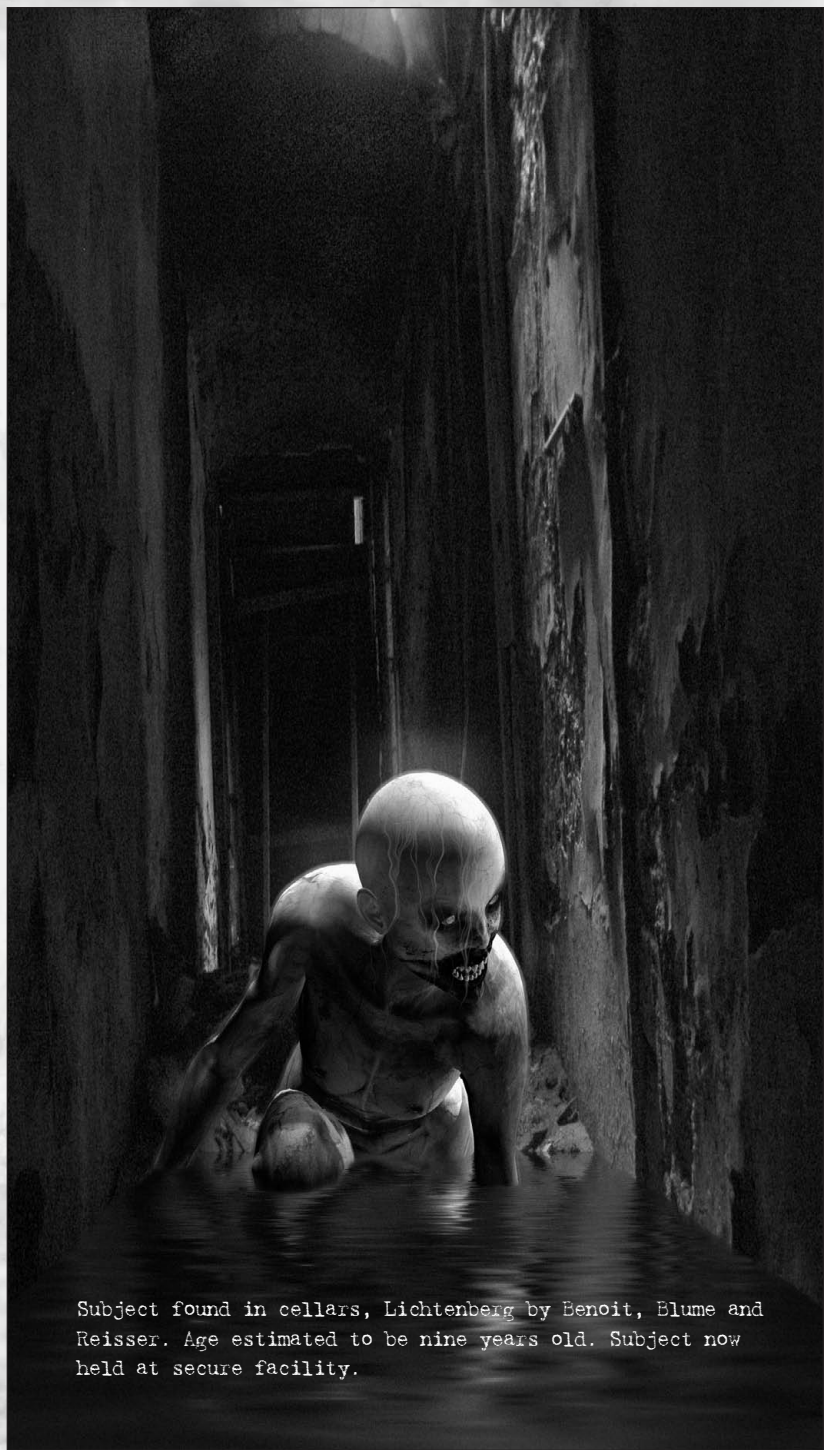
Much to the disgust of many members of the BERG (but, it must be said, to the delight of others), the group has been carrying out live experiments using certain items of technology salvaged from Germany. A select band have also delved into what some would describe as the more 'esoteric' areas of the German research, carrying out practices disturbing even to those hardened by their exposure to the goings on in the bunkers.

Needless to say, the activities at Porton are far beyond top secret. The mere fact that experiments are being carried out against unwilling, foreign victims on British soil would cause a tidal wave of revulsion should it become public knowledge.

Story Possibilities:

Victor Mannings worked at Porton prior to his assignment to the RPA. The stress of the work has, however, caused him to go off the rails in a spectacular fashion. He has disappeared, but rumours pop up now and again of a mad Englishman killing people in the Berlin U-Bahn system. The British authorities would also be very keen to make sure that his knowledge does not fall in to the wrong hands...

A notable Member of Parliament, unmoved by talk of national secrecy and security, is asking awkward questions about Porton in the House of Commons. What is worse is that he has somehow worked out a link between the facility and certain endeavours in Berlin. He is planning to fly in to the city on a 'fact finding mission'. What exactly is going on and is he simply a nosey buffoon or is he working for someone else?

VKA: Then you are willing to assist us in our enquiries?

SM: Yes, yes, I will tell you what I know.

VKA: Good. Then speak clearly. For the record, tell us of your service during the ...

1940 to 1946 ...

SM: I serve ...
of the Deu ...
and categ ...

NDS: And you ...
criminal or ...

SM: No! I was ...

NDS: Records ...
automatical ...

SM: Yes, but ...

VKA: Bu ...

SM: Yes ...

VKA: No ...

SM: Germa ...
primary ...

Hhf receiver found at location #231/S/v receiving continuous message for 32 days language unknown, translation attempts ongoing

P.D.
ii & iii ...

Department ...

MR K... ...

as S... ...

has been e... ...

*Please ...

(i)* Ter... ...

CHAPTER FIVE

He (or her) ... record is giv...

Signature ...

Date 21/11/49.

[OVER]

Subject found in cellars, Lichtenberg by Benoit, Blume and Reisser. Age estimated to be nine years old. Subject now held at secure facility.

coldcity

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is by no means exhaustive, there are many other works out there that could provide influence, inspiration and resources for Cold City. However, what follows is a selection of those that I have found most informative, intriguing or just plain bizarre!

NON-FICTION

The following is a brief selection of non-fiction works that have proved particularly useful in creating Cold City. I would highlight 'The Undergrowth of Science' by Michael Grazer and 'The Master Plan' by Heather Pringle as being particularly useful.

Applebaum, Anne, GULAG: A History of the Soviet Camps
Looking at the Soviet camp system from the early days of the Revolution to its final demise with the fall of the USSR, this is invaluable reading for those wishing a greater understanding of the camps, the organs of state security which ran them and the people involved.

Beevor, Anthony, Berlin: Downfall, 1945
An incisive, but often harrowing, examination of the Soviet advance into Germany during 1944-45 and the final battle for Berlin.

Botting, Douglas, In The Ruins of the Reich
Excellent study of Germany in the period 1945 to 49, looking at the social, economic, political and social impact of the recently ended war. Highly recommended reading.

Foederowitz, Michael, Flak Towers in Berlin, Hamburg and Vienna, 1940 – 1950
A thorough and well illustrated analysis of the flak tower fortifications built to defend Berlin, Hamburg and Vienna during World War Two. Includes many archival photographs giving a great insight into the construction, use and demise of the giant buildings.

Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah, Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans & The Holocaust
One of the most exhaustive studies into the complicity of ordinary Germans in the Holocaust, this is a profoundly disturbing and effective study. However, it has caused some controversy amongst historians of the period, some of whom dispute its findings.

Grazer, Walter, The Undergrowth of Science
Fascinating in its scope, of particular interest are the sections dealing with science in the Third Reich and in the Soviet Union, showing the influence of politics, ideology and sheer wrong-headedness on scientific method and practice.

Hastings, Max, Armageddon: The Battle for Germany, 1944-45
A lengthy and very well written account of the final battles in Europe that followed the landings at Normandy. Taking into account the Allied (on both the Eastern and Western fronts) and German perspectives, it is a work which successfully encapsulates the almost apocalyptic period from 1944-45.

Paine, Lauran, The Abwehr: German Military Intelligence in World War Two
A very accessible analysis of the German military intelligence organisation that operated throughout World War Two under the leadership of the anti-Nazi Admiral Wilhelm Canaris.

Pringle, Heather, The Master Plan

An extremely well researched, thoughtful and engaging study of the Ahnenerbe, from its inception in 1935 until its final dissolution and into the trials a Nuremberg.

Sebag-Montefiore, Simon, Stalin: At The Court of the Red Tsar

A substantial study of the life, personality and those close to one of the most infamous leaders in modern history.

SPECULATIVE WORKS

The three books mentioned below provide great sources of inspiration for Cold City games, but they must be considered speculation (some more extreme than others) rather than historical or scientific fact.

Cook, Nick, The Hunt for Zero Point

Written by respected Jane's correspondent Nick Cook, this work veers off into wild speculation, taking much anecdotal evidence as proof and using somewhat unreliable sources. Entertaining, but should be taken with a grain of salt.

Baker, Alan, Invisible Eagle: The History of Nazi Occultism

An attempt to analyse the supposed occult connections of Nazism, 'Invisible Eagle' trails off into conspiracy theory and wild speculation in regard to a number of projects, experiments and people.

Farrell, Joseph P, Reich of the Black Sun

Using the tiniest (sometime non-existent) shreds of circumstantial evidence, this work creates a massive scientific conspiracy to cover up super-advanced German technology from the War.

FICTION

Harris, Robert, Fatherland

Dealing with an alternative history where Germany won the war, this novel follows an investigation into a mysterious murder. Good for its period detail and characterisation of various notable historical figures such as Artur Nebe.

Powers, Tim, Declare

Paranormal espionage during the Cold War, featuring an intriguing cast of characters (including well known double agent Kim Philby).

Stross, Charles, The Atrocity Archive

An entertaining read, in many ways dealing with a modern-day equivalent of the RPA combating evil entities from beyond space and time. Slightly more occult-based than Cold City, it is nonetheless a worthwhile source of ideas. A sequel, 'The Jennifer Morgue', is also available.

Stross, Charles, A Colder War

A Lovecraftian tale of spies and apocalyptic Cold war machinations. It is available to read free on-line at *http://www.infinityplus. co.uk/stories/colderwar.htm*

COLD CITY

DESIGNERS NOTES

The Cold City Companion grew out of a desire to expand on the information that was presented in the Cold City game, both in terms of advice for participants and in terms of the information made available.

Much of the advice presented in the first chapter has come from further actual play experience since the game was launched at Gen Con Indy 2006. Since that time, the game has been run many, many more times and I've also had the opportunity to play other new and interesting games which perhaps offer and different perspective. So, I wrote the advice based on this experience (and experience gained from the actual play reports of others and my reading of various sources, such as the forms of authority identified by Ron Edwards) to draw all of this together in form that is, hopefully, useful to all players and GMs.

The optional mechanical changes to the game are quite slight, but I feel that they do enhance the game greatly. The draw scene was inspired by similar mechanics in other games (such as the 'Accomplishment' scene in 'Dogs In The Vineyard' by D Vincent Baker) and the desire to make more out what I felt was an important, but under used, part of the character creation process. The new way of using negative traits must be credited to Steve Dempsey and Joshua A C Newman who suggested it after their own games of Cold City. I am deeply grateful to them for the suggestion as I feel it is indeed an improvement on the way that negative traits are used in the basic game text.

The parts of this book dealing with agencies and locations allow me to talk more about all the Cold War places and people that I feel are so important to this game. Many of the places and organisations may be familiar, but they have been twisted to suit the needs and the background of Cold City.

In particular, I should mention the existence of the British Experimental Rocket Group and its leader, Professor Bernard Quatermass, within the pages of the Cold City Companion. Neither the organisation nor the character are my own invention, they are the creations of that immensely talented and innovative film and TV writer, Nigel Kneale. It was his passing in late 2006 that prompted me to include a slightly twisted and changed version of the BERG and the Professor and a tribute and homage to a man who was one of the great inspirations for Cold City. His 'Quatermass' TV series are some of the most effective pieces of science fiction horror ever shown on the small screen and their style, inventiveness and wit have made a lasting impact on the genre.

I feel I should thank everyone who has in some way helped or inspired the development and growth of Cold City since the book came out. The reception has been very pleasing, as has been the feedback through on-line fora, emails, reviews and in person at conventions. I'd like to thank every single person who has bought, read, GMed, played or taken the time to comment on the game. Thank you very much.

Cheers
Malcolm

FAITH. FIRST LOVE. COUNTRY. FAMILY.

Choose one. Sacrifice the rest.

GREY RANKS

In the summer of 1944, child soldiers liberated Warsaw and defied the Nazi war machine for 63 days. Combining player-driven action with dramatic history, Grey Ranks gives you the tools for powerful, focused roleplaying.

A Bully Pulpit Game   www.greyranks.com