

PARANOIA
PARANOIA
PARANOIA



Teela on the Half Shell Bot-O-CLI

WEST
END
GAMES
#80104

send in the clones

A Classical Adventure by ALLEN VARNEY and WARREN SPECTOR

PC ROSTER

Name and Important Skills	Mutant Power	Service Group	Secret Society	COMBAT SKILLS		STATS							
				Melee	Missile	STR	END	AGIL	DEX	MOX	CHTZ	MECH	POW
1. Tammy-Y-NET-2 Robot Op, Comm	Telepathic Sense	CPU	Programs Group (Cleto's)	unarmed 22% neuron whip 42%	laser 27%	10	8	9	8	10	14	10	13
2. Watt-Y-WHO-2 Computer Prog, Maint, and Op	Mental Block	Power Services	Programs Group (Cleto's enemy)	unarmed 17%	laser 24% tangler 25%	9	10	8	10	7	15	6	5
3. Chock-O-BLK-1 Primitive Weapons, Vehicle	Precognition	Armed Forces	Free Enterprise	unarmed 21%	laser 26% rock 51%	7	7	11	11	11	12	10	13
4. Sam-R-KND-2 Medicine, Robot Op, Wpn, Eng	Mental Block	Technical	Anti-Mutant	unarmed 30%	laser 55%	10	16	15	17	14	8	14	12
5. Eve-R-DEN-2 Hygienics, Weapons	Pyrokinesis	PLC (IntSec)	Sierra Club	unarmed 32%	laser 40% knife 47%	13	17	14	15	12	7	11	13
6. Elm-R-FUD-1 Comm, Weapons	Empathy	PLC	Pro Tech	unarmed 40% knife 45%	laser 43%	14	13	17	12	11	9	12	16

ROBOT ROSTER

Type and Background	Move	Speed*	Weapons/To Hit	Armor Equivalent
Guardbots (6) — Water-cooler sized; 2 multi-purpose arms and manipulators; small brain; narrow, literal programming	wheels	sprint	Blue laser rifle/80% blaster/80%	Combat suit
Large Guardbot — Refrigerator-sized; 2 multi-purpose arms and manipulators; medium brain (either vicious and aggressive, or vicious, aggressive, and defective); narrow, literal programming	wheels	sprint	Violet laser rifle/90% blaster/80%	Combat suit
Gatorbots (6) — Alligator-sized; big nasty metal teeth; goes real fast in the water; small brain; reptile programming.	legs	run	teeth (treat as knife)/40%	Combat suit
Captain Botaroo — Jolly-person-sized; multi-purpose arms and manipulators; medium brain; broad, flexible programming (but obsessed with interrogating and educating young traitors)	wheels	walk	Blue laser rifle/50% Cattle prod/50% Mini-concussion grenade/50%	Kevlar/Mylar
Funbot — Midget-sized; 2 specialized arms (gas jet/pie launcher); medium brain; specialized programming (defective humor software emulates lame nightclub comic)	wheels	sprint	laughing gas/100% cream pies/80%	Polished plate
Petbot — Poodle-sized; 4 specialized arms with hand-like manipulators; tiny brain; narrow, literal programming (software for pet behavior, snooper surveillance, docbot)	feet	sprint	-----	Polished plate
Refbots (3) — Man-sized; 2 multi-purpose arms and manipulators; makes obscure and unfair judgements like all referees; small brain (defective); narrow, literal programming	wheels	sprint	Indigo laser rifle/70%	Combat suit
Combots (4) — Stove-sized mini-tanks; one turret with needleguns; one turret with stunguns; small brain; narrow, literal programming	treads	walk	(2) needleguns/90% (2) stunguns/90%	Combat suit
Securitybots (many) — Color-TV-sized; two turrets on either side, each with hand flamer and slugthrower; suspended from ceiling on coiling steel cables; small brain; narrow, literal programming	suspension cables	reel fast	(2) handflamers/75% (2) slugthrowers (HE)/75%	Polished plate

* Indicates *maximum* speed

Cream pies do no damage. For cattle prods and Gatorbot teeth, use column 7 of the Damage Table.

NPC ROSTER

COMBAT

Name and Background	Unarmed/ Weapon	Weapon Type	Armor ¹	STR	END	AGIL	DEX	MOX	CHTZ	MECH	POW
Cleto-B-QRK — No nonsense; no questions; no answers.	20%/30%	LP ²	reflec	10	8	9	8	10	14	10	10
Dewey-Y-JLK — Big, silent lout; Cleto's bodyguard.	30%/60%	LP	reflec	15	15	15	10	5	5	10	5
Sunn-Y-LST — Big, silent lout; Cleto's bodyguard.	30%/60%	LP	reflec	15	15	15	10	5	5	10	5
Zhon-B-VLJ — Down in the sewers too long; chatty, incoherent, batty as a bedbug.	60%/60%	LR ³	reflec	15	15	15	15	5	15	10	10
Computer Phreak Kids — Cute little tykes; playful, mischievous, fond of weaponsfire and noise.	5%/10%	Indigo LPs, Cone Rifles, Tanglers, Gauss guns	reflec	5	5	15	15	15	20	15	10
Teela-O-MLY — Lovely, adorable, sweet, The Computer's darling; shrewd, self-interested.	15%/—	—	reflec	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Generic PLC Lackwits — Stereotypical, unmotivated, uncooperative bureaucrats.	1%/—	—	reflec	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
R&D Staffers — Lab techs and brainy scientists.	5%/—	—	none	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Hall-Y-WUD-(1-6) — Hollywood-type; tasteless, insincere and mercenary.	5%/—	—	none	10	10	10	10	15	15	10	10
Morrie-G-LSE — High-strung vidshow producer of <i>Date With Death</i> .	5%/—	—	none	10	10	10	10	10	15	10	10
Don-Y-OSM — Professionally cheerful host of <i>Date With Death</i> .	5%/—	—	none	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Ozzie-R-DIP — Pencil-necked, wimpy geek.	20%/20%	LP	none	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Vulture Squadrons (Green)— Hulking apes; long on muscle, short on brains.	80%/70%	LPs	none	20	20	20	20	5	5	5	5
Pepsi Generation — Generic horde of secret-society traitors.	40%/30%	LPs	none	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Secret Society Traitors (Yellow)— Fellow secret-society traitors.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Violets and Indigos (one or the other)— Hostile vigilantes, out for Troubleshooter blood.	20%/20%	LPs	reflec	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Teela Clones (no clearance)— Fresh-from-the-vat Teelas; innocent and narcissistic.	5%/—	—	reflec	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Stanl-Y-LRL-1 and Oll-Y-HRD — Power Services inspectors; curious about power fluctuations.	2%/—	—	implausible coincidence ⁴	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

¹ **Armor:** Unless otherwise noted, each character has armor in the color of his or her *security clearance*. A recent technological breakthrough by The Computer's devoted R&D scientists has produced lasers and armor that work against weapons and defenses of all lower security clearances — automatically! Bless our friend The Computer!

² **LP** = laser pistol in the color of his or her security clearance

³ **LR** = laser rifle in the color of his or her security clearance

⁴ These guys don't get hit. Why? 'Cause I'm The Computer, that's why!

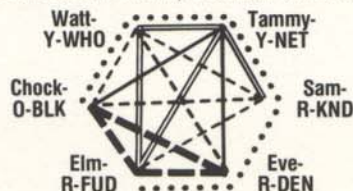
THE MEMORY-WIPE SCANDAL

The Situation Thus Far:

- A) Sam-R-KND turns the wrong spigot filling all the bottles on the line with memory-wipe drug.
- B) Tammy-Y-NET, Sam-R's supervisor, fails to notice the mix-up.
- C) Watt-Y-WHO, Supervisor in charge of Conveyor Belts, notices the mix-up and decides to have some real fun by shutting the power down till meal time.
- D) Down in PLC Eve-R-DEN and Elm-R-FUD both notice that Bouncy Bubble Beverage has been replaced with memory-wipe drug. Rather than burdening their superiors with trivial data they send the shipment to the messhall on schedule.

CHARACTER RELATION CHART

(GM aid: This chart should help you keep track of the interrelationships between characters.)



KEY

- Wishes to kill character as part of Secret Society Mission
- Wishes to kill character to hide part in the Memory-Wipe Scandal
- - - - Wishes to kill character because he is a traitor
- - - - Wishes to kill character because he is loyal
- Wishes to kill

PARANOIA

send in the clones

PARANOIA

Allen Varney & Warren Spector
Teleplay/Adventure Design

Ken Rolston
Script Supervisor/Development

Jeffery Briggs
Montage/Editing

**Larry Catalano, Stephen Crane,
and Kevin Wilkins**
Set Designers/Graphics

James Holloway
Video Production/Illustration

**Steve Gilbert, Peter Corless, Doug Kaufman,
Kevin Wilkins, Stephen Crane and Paul Murphy**
Additional Concepts and Lyrics/Horrible Ideas

**Dan Gelber, Greg Costikyan, Eric Goldberg, and
Ken Rolston**
Series Creators/Original System Design

Ann Streimer
Production/And More Production

The Computer
Executive Producer/Productive Executioner

Security Clearance ULTRAVIOLET WARNING:

Knowledge or possession of the contents of this document by any citizen of Security Clearance VIOLET or lower constitutes treason. Stick out your tongue and reveal your identification tattoo for the cameras. If you are a traitor, thank you for your cooperation. Quite noble, considering the circumstances.

Welcome, Gamemaster, to another journey into mirthful terror and hilarious frustration in this madcap-deathtrap adventure, **Send In The Clones**. Watch your befuddled Troubleshooters squirm through a zany scenario of fun and fatality, chortles and —

(Cut. No, sorry, too stale. Try again. Take Two.)

Hey ref! Zotz in and recon this hyperinteractive collab fictionware! Metagrok the **PARANOIA** mindview, glom six eptified non-cogs, rev the pineal glands, and commence intravolving Kafkaization!

(Whirr-buzz-click. Take Three.)

Send In The Clones: In one sense a **PARANOIA** adventure for a gamemaster and six players, requiring only the original **PARANOIA** rules, several percentile dice, a

pencil, and paper to play, designed to occupy one to three long play sessions — and yet in another sense a syntagmatic analysis of the first and second order signs (iconic and arbitrary) as well as the signifiers and signifieds expressing the deepest fears dwelling in the cobwebbed byways of the human psyche — in short, a paradigmatic dissection of the omnipervasive, paranoid *Weltanschauung* —

(Cut. Never mind. We'll go back and shoot the teaser later. Take it from 1-B on the outline.)

But Seriously, Folks...

It's a good idea to read through the entire adventure before running it. Our goal is to give you, Mr. Gamemaster, an episodic plotline that can withstand much mangling and reordering, but it's always helpful to know what would have happened if you were not so inspired in your

improvisations and if your players were more tractable sheep.

The backdrop of this adventure is the least prestigious, least important, least regarded, and most treasonous service group in Alpha Complex — the entertainment division of Housing Preservation and Development & Mind Control. The inspiration for this setting comes from the mythical Hollywood Mentality: ego-mania, glib glad-handing, treachery, and an almost fanatical dedication to dishonesty (Loveyababy, don'teverchange, letshavelunchsometime). In addition to the dialog provided in the book, a little research in gossipy magazines and TV talk shows will help you capture the atmosphere of Show Biz, **PARANOIA**-style-wise (Whattakidder, yerthegreatest, letsgettogetherwithyourpeopleandmypeople...).

0. INTRODUCTION

0.1 ADVENTURE MATERIALS

Send In The Clones gives you *more* for your money.

Not *only* do you get this engagingly written, even charming 48-page adventure booklet...

not *only* do you get an attractive full-color cover which shields this literate, consummately professional text from the elements, and which doubles as a gamemaster screen and reference aid...

not *only* do you get complete lists — with statistics, no less — of all major player characters (PCs), non-player characters (NPCs), and bots (bots) summarized in easy-to-read form on the inside panels of that selfsame cover...

not only, not *only* do you get diagrams of several entertaining locales, six pre-generated PCs, and an organizational (if that's the word) chart of Production, Logistics, & Commissary (PLC) in the previously-described hot-stuff adventure...

not *only* does all of this come to you for the measly price you paid, but — much more important — you also have our profound respect for your good taste in roleplaying products, not to mention for having made your way through this whole sentence.

0.1.1 GM Reference Screen

The inside of the adventure cover provides charts showing important statistics, abilities, and notable features of all non-player characters (NPC Roster), robots (Bot Roster), and player characters (PC Roster) in this adventure. Use the cover as a screen for your high-clearance notes and documents.

Also inside the Reference Screen is a chart which summarizes the circumstances of the Memory-Wipe Scandal — a terribly treasonous mishap which involves each of the pre-generated player characters. Everyone is guilty, and everyone has something on someone else. An occasional passing reference to the Memory Wipe Scandal keeps them twitching. Probably the players will be too busy dodging other dooms, but, in their spare moments, this gives them something else to scheme about — as if they needed anything else.

You may find that once you've digested the contents of this reasonably fabulous adventure, you can run it from memory, simply consulting the inside of the cover to jog your memory.

You might even throw this book away and wing your own adventure from the NPCs and bots listed. If it works, write it up and send it to West End Games. They can publish it without having to prepare a new screen!

0.1.2 Prepared Player Characters

Send In The Clones is designed for six player characters (PCs). Pre-generated PCs are provided in the center pull-out section, which may be sliced, diced, and distributed to players. If you have more than six players (or, for your own perverse reasons, want to use different characters altogether), generate the extras using standard **PARANOIA** rules, and provide conflicting briefings, secret society missions, and reasons to fear and despise at least two other characters apiece. (Remember, the greatest peril in any **PARANOIA** adventure should come from the players themselves.)

The PC statistics are printed for your reference on the inside of the adventure cover. That way no smarty-pants player will ever put one over on you — not that **PARANOIA** allows much opportunity for that anyway.

0.1.3 Maps and Diagrams

Sure there are maps and diagrams. There's one on page 4, some in the text of the adventure, and one in the pull-out/slice and dice section.

One map — the sewers, on page 4, is tricky. This may be photocopied in great quantities, and all the copies taped together. They're geometric, so each side fits together with any other side, in any orientation — try it and see.

Tape together seventy or eighty of these in a shape like the Greater Chesapeake Bay. Hang them on the wall behind you when the PCs travel in the sewers early in the adventure. Maybe put a note at one side reading, "TROUBLESHOOTERS START HERE" and another one (or two or twelve) way at the other end reading "DESTINATION."

You know this map has nothing to do with the adventure, but it's so neat watching your players' eyes bug out when they think they'll have to cover all that territory. It makes the photocopying worthwhile, believe us.

And, of course, you may decide you just *have* to use such a pretty map. Go ahead. Fill it with orcs and goblins. Sure, we understand — you're forgiven.

0.1.4 Other Stuff

Let's see, what else....

When the PCs attempt to pick up equipment and supplies midway through the adventure, they'll go to Production, Logistics, & Commissary (PLC). If they've been to PLC before, they haven't been to *this* PLC before. This is the *new* PLC: it's been reorganized for greater inefficiency. The 'PLC Runaround Flowchart' on pages 24 and 25 comes in handy when ignorant Troubleshooters attempt to weave through Alpha Complex's bureaucracy.

Oh, and there's an 'Information Inquiry Form' on page 26. It has nothing to do with anything, but makes a nice variation in dealing with players who want to know things.

When someone asks a question, instead of saying, "That information is not available at your security clearance," hand the player a copy of this form. If someone fills out the form, say, "I'll send this through for processing right away." Then, stand up, place the completed form on the seat of your chair, and sit on it. The player gets the idea.

A set of two "paranoia" notes is included in the pullout section. These can be photocopied or hand-copied (or even cut out, if you're into mutilating books) and handed to your players during the climactic encounter of this scenario, "The Big Pie Fight." Don't worry about them until then.

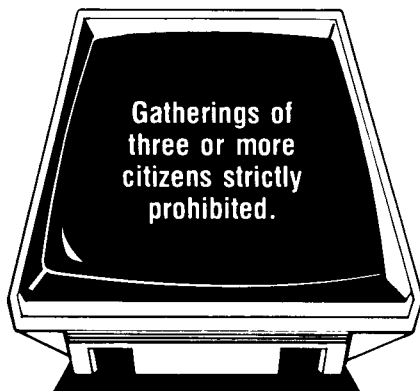
Finally, excerpts from the terribly treasonous "Alpha Complex Songbook" may be found in the pullout. From time to time you are directed to sing selections to your players. Sing them real loud. Your players have waited a long time for this privilege.

0.2 GM BACKGROUND

Ah, Teela O'Malley... The beloved entertainer, melodious songstress, the leading vidstar in Alpha Complex — the traitorous, ill-mannered broad, currently on her last clone incarnation. Tella-O-MLY-6 ("1" is her stage name) is now the last of her line: Teelas 1 through 5 were terminated quietly at moderately regular intervals, over the last few years, for possessing material benefits far beyond those legally available to Orange-level citizens. ("Whaddya mean I can't have my own combot? I'm a star! And take your hands off that truffled turkey!")

Teela-6 hasn't behaved much better than her sharp-tongued sisters, and she can read the writing on the vidscreen. The Computer has replaced her with its own realistic, animated Teela-images in her popular adventure serial. (They act as well as she does, which tells you the level of talent we're dealing with here.) Her personal appearances around the Complex are going unpublicized, and none are scheduled beyond a month from now. The last Teela is clearly in her farewell performance.

To say Teela O'Malley has an ego the size of Alpha Complex would be catty but not incorrect. She can't bear the notion of a Complex without some kind of Teela — and since having a clone to carry on your name is the accepted Alpha substitute for immortality, Teela



has concocted a scheme to keep herself alive after her last official clone meets the inevitable.

Teela's considerable beauty is supplemented by a previously undocumented mutant power to "Cloud Men's Minds" (see section 0.4.3 below). With this secret ability, she has "prompted" a highly-placed official in the Central Processing Unit, Cleto-B-QRK-2, to start a new secret society: the Clone Rangers (see section 0.4.2 below). The Rangers have set up a secret laboratory beneath NBD Sector where they create clones of anyone with enough power and credits. Unlike the standard clones we all know so well, these take mere months to mature into fully-developed adults. (Ain't science grand?)

Where did the Clone Rangers get their technology? Teela again — she's been collecting valuable Research and Development equipment for her friends in the Pro Tech society. When a colossal shipment of cloning equipment became available, she resigned from Pro Tech on about eleven seconds notice and spirited the stuff away for the Rangers.

Teela O'Malley is now more popular than ever. Not only is her computerized image still beloved by every right-thinking citizen, her actual physical form is ardently desired by Internal Security — not to mention Pro Tech, which wants her for stealing the clone equipment that was properly theirs by right of prior theft.

Now Teela has vanished. She was last seen in HPD & Mind Control in NBD Sector. Someone has to go in there undercover, into the very stronghold of her influence, locate and terminate her — *secretly* — and retrieve the cloning equipment.

Guess who gets the job.

0.3 GM ADVENTURE SUMMARY

0.3.1 Part One: Sewerworld!

As a brief prelude to the main adventure, a mixed-lot of Yellow, Orange, and Red Troubleshooters that nobody in particular cares to see alive again is sent down into the sewer system of Alpha Complex to trace and eliminate the source of some treasonous songs pervading the entire Complex's public address system. (Song lyrics are provided in the pullout.) In the sewers, the brave Troubleshooters must deal with traps set by a Blue-level Troubleshooter — Zhon-B-VLJ-2. Zhon-B has been down there for twenty years, obsessively hunting a renegade group of Troubleshooters who stole a loaf of synthbread.

In addition to Zhon-B, the PCs encounter the true culprits behind the PA mischief — a group of ten-year-old kids, nascent Computer Phreaks, headquartered in a long-defunct video studio in HPD & Mind Control. Any firefight erupting in the studio is likely to activate the robot host of the children's program, *Captain Botaroo*.

The PCs end up in a no-win situation, from which they will be saved by the timely intervention of Teela O'Malley (who just wants to maneuver them out of close proximity to the Clone Ranger laboratory — about which, more later). With every reason to admire Teela's selfless generosity, the PCs are perhaps discomfited to return from their successful mission only to find they are sent on a second one: into HPD & Mind Control — to terminate Teela!

0.3.2 Part Two: Bureaucracyworld!

Before departing on this second mission, the PCs have an obligatory opportunity to learn firsthand the intricacies of bureaucracy, as they attempt to obtain assigned equipment from Production, Logistics, and Commissary (PLC). And, of course, they are coercively permitted to test exciting experimental equipment from Research & Development. Finally, they are persuasively introduced to the ultimate in experimental robot design — the Funbot — which accompanies them on the mission.



0.3.3 Part Three: Entertainmentworld!

In NBD Sector the PCs meet their contact in Mind Control, a TV executive named Hall-Y-WUD (1 through 6 — the PCs eventually encounter, and perhaps terminate, the entire WUD clone family). The Hall-Y clones, diligent servants of Free Enterprise, deal in bootleg Clone Ranger bodies (about which, more later, too), so they have reason to wish the PCs dead. Hall-Y-WUD-1 arranges their appearance on a popular and dangerous vidshow — a sporting contest, the winner of which gets to meet Teela! What better way to land the elusive victim?

Assuming the Troubleshooters survive, their search may lead to a series of Teela O'Malley Fan Club Meetings — each a cover for a secret society meeting.

The search may even lead to the secret laboratory of the Clone Rangers — located, as if you didn't know, in the sewers. Here the PCs have the chance to terminate all the Teelas they want... dozens... hundreds.... Chances are, the numerous Teela clones will return the favor.

The search is likely, above all, to lead to dismal, fatal failure. First, the cloning equipment the PCs are sent to retrieve is heavily guarded and weighs maybe a hundred tons. Second, The Computer will not believe the Troubleshooters have disposed of Teela as long as any Teela clone remains alive — or, should they present convincing evidence that they've killed at least one Teela (fulfilling their mission), they will probably be branded as traitors for killing a beloved and loyal servant of The Computer.

Be sure to stress at every point the fun, glamorous life of a Troubleshooter. Your players will appreciate it.

0.4 CAST OF CHARACTERS, AND OTHER DETAILS

0.4.1 The Player Characters

Take a few moments to examine the six pre-generated player characters. (The temptation is to say, "Know your victims," but let's not overstate the matter.) The six PC displays, bound in the pullout section, can be removed by careful application of blunt object to staples. Or, you could tear them out violently, though this is not advised — it could damage the staples; The Computer values its staples.

This adventure is designed for these six characters. If you have fewer than six players, distribute the characters starting with the highest security clearances. Keep the lower-ranked ones yourself and play them as NPCs. This will disconcert everyone.

This is the first published *PARANOIA* adventure designed for a mixed party, i.e., Red, Orange, and Yellow-level Troubleshooters. Some of your players may be pleased to get the higher-clearance PCs, or disgruntled at being stuck with the lowly Reds. By all means, nurture these feelings. The illusion that higher-level *PARANOIA* characters are in some way safer, more comfortable, or happier with their lives is one of the most cherished notions players possess. Let them indulge this fantasy. They'll find out the truth eventually.

In playtesting, we discovered that when a higher-clearance character fouls up, or a lower-clearance character performs in a slavishly loyal fashion, it is simple, and immensely entertaining, to have The Computer or a high-clearance citizen jump in and brevet or demote the character instantly.

Thus, the Yellow that was lording it over the humble Reds might make one simple but serious mistake, earning The Computer's instant disapproval. (Often, the Reds report their superior's egregious error to The Computer over their com units.)

The voice of The Computer is immediately heard on all the PCs' private communicators. The offending Yellow is immediately demoted to Red for his malfeasance. The tattletale Red is immediately breveted to Yellow for his obsequious and fawning loyalty to The Computer. Suddenly, the former party leader finds himself licking the boots he once spat on. In literature, this is known as 'Poetic Justice'.

Special Note on the PCs

There are some GM notes regarding individual PCs which should *not* be made known to the players.

Chock-O-BLK-1: This poor sod thinks he has a password that will be recognized by fellow Free Enterpriser Hall-Y-WUD (see section 3.4.3). The problem is that FreEnt wasn't able to get the password to Hall-Y in time. Hall-Y clones stare curiously at Chock-O and say, "Hmm. I've never heard of that show." If you want to be kind, or leave Chock-O's player completely befuddled, have one or two Hall-Y clones know the password. Since it's nearly impossible to tell them apart, Chock-O will never know if a given Hall-Y is friend or foe.

Sam-R-KND-1: Sam's Anti-Mutant superiors have correctly identified Tammy-Y-NET-2 as a mutant, but diagnosed her power incorrectly. Sam-R's player may be whispering a lot at

Tammy-Y's player, who will probably reply with "Huh?" or "Speak up!" Positioning these two at opposite ends of the room may be interesting.

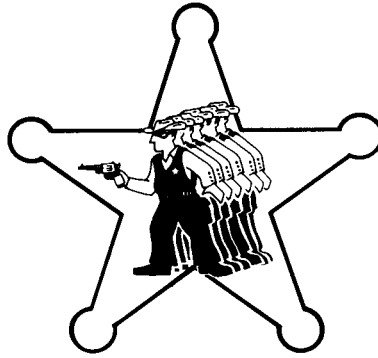
Eve-R-DEN-2: She's an Internal Security plant with a special spray used to mark traitors. This spray is disguised as a deodorant, but is actually an invisible chemical marker that shows up in any routine Internal Security scan of the victim. (All IntSec agents will recognize the marker as an indication of treason.)

But listen. This spray smells *terrible*. Garbage city. Hog heaven. We're talking the original skunk juice here. Take this into account when a PC who's been sprayed tries to sneak up on someone, enter a crowded room, or lead a normal life. The odor diminishes after a couple of days.

Elm-R-FUD-1: He has a hypnodisk to help interrogate prisoners. It just doesn't work. Let Elm-R find out the hard way.

0.4.2 A New Secret Society: *The Clone Rangers*

Doctrines: Live on forever through your clones. Identity of being guarantees continuity of spirit. All citizens should have as many clones as they want — as long as they can afford it. Teela O'Malley clones are desirable and make especially nice gifts.



Objectives: Make money, establish contact with potential wealthy customers, maintain secrecy, and perpetuate Teela O'Malley.

Friends: Free Enterprise, Romantics.

Enemies: Pro Tech (due to theft of biological equipment).

General Description: The society is new and still rather small, so organization is fluid. The dozen or so members are mainly trained geneticists and biologists; Teela recruited them by Clouding Their Minds (see below). Higher-level members have access to illicit clones at discount prices and information about high-level citizens that offer ripe possibilities for blackmail.

Advancement:

- +1 point for finding a new customer.
- +1 point for notable service protecting

one's superiors in the society — foiling an attempt to expose it, killing nosy Troubleshooters, etc.

Special Rules: Member may buy "Organic Commodities" skill at half cost, i.e., two skill levels for one skill point.

0.4.3 A New Mutant Power: *Cloud Men's Minds*

The character can cause other characters to become strongly, if platonically, attracted to her or him. The effects are similar to infatuation: the victim puts the character's happiness ahead of his/her own, thinks of the character constantly, and will do nearly anything the character requests.

Like real infatuation, the duration of effect is variable — the victim gets a difficult attribute check against Moxie to avoid succumbing at the time of the power's use, then another Moxie check of one die less difficulty each day thereafter. Repeated cloudings increase the duration geometrically; a victim hit three or four times in a short interval (say one day) might not come to his senses for weeks. Then, too, if the clouding character is attractive and the victim is lonely, the victim may simply elect not to come out of it. It's been known to happen.

Mental Block will detect and protect against Clouding. Charm and Suggestion, in conjunction with Clouding, each increase the victim's attribute checks by one die.



**SEWERWORLD
GEOMORPHIC
MAP**



"The Computer is your (*sob*) friend...!"

1. SEWERWORLD!

1.1 Mission Summary

Snatched from leisurely viewing of a Teela O'Malley episode, the Troubleshooters are sent into the sewers to search for and terminate the source of treasonous ditties, broadcast from a pirate station. They wander the sewers, encountering many very nasty things, including a very loyal Troubleshooter in the twentieth year of a mission here below, and a group of very aggressive children.

The party follows the children to the abandoned *Captain Botaroo* studios, where the cute moppets are operating the pirate broadcast station. Presented with the unpleasant prospect of terminating the adorable tykes, the Troubleshooters are dismayed — until Teela O'Malley herself steps in to save the day.

1.2 Adventure Briefing

Before the adventure, meet privately with each player. Make sure they understand their mutant powers, secret societies, motives to kill other PCs, and — if they've never played **PARANOIA** before — the basic concepts of the game.

To begin the adventure, read the following aloud to the players:

It's been another happy day in Alpha Complex. You've served your friend The Computer loyally, and, after a delicious dinner of toasted algae, you've gathered with your

fellow citizens around the communal vid-screen for the evening entertainment provided by The Computer.

You watch a rerun of *One Clone's Family*, followed by a fascinating documentary showing how Power Services has exceeded all quotas this biennium. A brief announcement informs you that programming tomorrow night will be cancelled due to power shortages. Then comes the treat you've all been eagerly anticipating — this week's installment of *Teela O'Malley*!

In this episode, the innocently attractive young Teela plays an unusual role, proving, yet again, her impressive dramatic range. She plays an ordinary citizen in an unspecified service group — a citizen much like any of you — who is heartlessly seduced into treason by the evil members of a secret society. Six heroic Troubleshooters — those glamorous, courageous, selfless servants of The Computer — are sent to apprehend her.

Their devotion so inspires Teela that she gives herself up, renounces her traitorous course, and turns in every member of the secret society. Then, as she stands framed in the glow of an open reactor port, she makes this stirring speech:

(GM: Read this with a lump in your throat and an accent reminiscent of Scarlett O'Hara. Play melancholy violin music on the stereo. Dab your fingers in a cup of water and regularly splatter your cheeks with tears.)

"I regret that I have but six clones to lose for my friend — The Computer. I have strayed from the path of right! I am grateful The Computer has given me a chance to make amends, in some small way, for my traitorous, evil, Commie-inspired acts."

"But I am too low, too low, and not worthy of The Computer's forgiveness. I only hope my clones will learn from my shameful example, and will serve The Computer loyally — to the end — of their lives!"

(GM: Pause here to allow the PCs to sob, applaud, or otherwise react.)

And with these words, over the cries of the noble, deeply-moved Troubleshooters, she hurls herself into the reactor. There is a tremendous flash, the music swells, and the voice of The Computer is heard:

"To all concerned citizens: do not worry! Teela O'Malley is not really dead. This has been a dramatic reenactment of a true incident. Names have been changed to protect classified information sources.

"Remember, Communists may appear anywhere! Thank you for your coopppp-phiissssssssss..."

The Computer's friendly voice breaks off, suddenly deteriorating into a loud hiss. Then suddenly, the hiss is replaced by a strange song broadcasting over the entire public address system.

(GM: Sing these lyrics to any appropriate melody. We'd tell you a good one, but ASCAP

would want royalties. Don't worry if you can't sing; the worse it sounds, the better.)

Isn't it great?

Isn't it keen?

Living in complexes ruled by machine?

Where are the clones?

There ought to be clones.

Send in the clones...

The voice is electronically distorted so that the PCs cannot identify the singer's gender, age, or dialect.

Read the following aloud. To add atmosphere, feel free to add more verses of this song, or of other songs, found in the *Alpha Complex Songbook* (page 26), as you continue with the following read-aloud sections:

As the song continues, getting more treasonous with every verse, the big vid-screen begins flashing **MISSION ALERT**, and six guardbots roll into the viewing area.

"The Computer requests your immediate services," they say, in voices like glass shards rubbed against a blackboard.

You're rousted out of your seats and dog-trotted through strange corridors to an unfamiliar part of the Complex. The journey ends in front of an anonymous elevator. The treasonous music echoes everywhere.

The PCs are introduced to each other here, but the guardbots keep conversation to a minimum — think of them as a cross between Nazi stormtroopers and mobile trash compactors. They can talk, but haven't got much to say. The PCs only have lasers and the equipment listed on their record sheets. The elevator door won't open. Read this aloud:

The lighting is dim, the air a little too cold, and the atmosphere tense. After an uncomfortable interval, the guardbots draw away from you, allowing a clear line-of-sight for the *really large* guardbot which enters the hallway and draws a bead on your entire group with a giant weapon.

If a player tries to fire at any robot, make sure that's what the player *really* wants to do. Then roll the dice a few times, let the character blow away a guardbot or two, then kill the poor sap. A clone replacement (and new guardbots) will show up before the remains stop smoking.

"INTO THE ELEVATOR," says the big guardbot in a voice like a lot of glass shards being scraped against a blackboard by thirty-five fourth-grade boys. The elevator door slides open.

Are you going in?

(GM: The answer is of course "yes." If a character declines to enter the elevator, the guardbots will be able to hustle his clone replacement onto the scene before the remains stop smoking.)

The elevator is typical: rickety, badly-lit, coffin-like, and terrifying — even more so when the huge guardbot trundles in after you.

The floor sags. Metal around you squeals with stress. The door slides shut. The elevator drops suddenly about a meter, then jolts to a squealing halt, then shudders and heads downward — slowly, squealing painfully all the way. Over the PA speaker in the elevator comes a new tune:

I'm an Alpha Complex Dandy,
Troubleshooter, do or die.

A clone replacement of my former self,
Soon I will probably fry.

I've got to serve my friend Computer.

If I don't I know I'll die.

Kill the Commie infiltrators,

Also Troubleshooters.

I am an Alpha Complex guy!

During the long, slow, noisy journey down, the guardbot extrudes a fishing-rod apparatus from its head. At the end of the rod is a blinding klieg light, which it suspends about three centimeters above [pick a PC] your head. It starts the interrogation.

"Name?! Security clearance?! Most recent treasonous act?! Can you keep a secret?! Do you value your life at all?!"

Let the PC answer the questions, then interrogate the others in turn. The guardbot's questions stress loyalty and confidentiality. The Troubleshooters' answers are neither heard nor recorded, and, in fact, have no effect on anything at all. But don't tell them that.

If a PC tries to fight the guardbot, the elevator sways and creaks even more ominously, but it won't fall — and there is still time to go back and get a clone replacement (not to mention clear the smoke from the elevator and treat wounded innocent bystanders).

Finally, the elevator stops, the door opens, and you're herded into a small, featureless room with a desk, one door at the far side of the room, and about a dozen guardbots. Their weapons are pointing ominously in your direction.

At the desk sits a paunchy, balding, jowly fellow wearing blue robes. He's flanked by two tall, thin, Yellow-level guards with Yellow-barrel lasers.

From a speaker on the wall emanate the melodious strains of a song that seems to be called **"Top Hat, White Tie, and Laser."**

The Blue character is Cleto-B-QRK-2. The two Yellow guards are just window dressing who don't do or say anything important unless a PC draws a weapon. Then they shout, "Execute Option A," and drill the offending PC(s). Option A means the guardbots lock their weapon fire on targets indicated by the guards' weapon fire and keep firing until ordered to stop. Then, send in the clones.

Cleto-B says the following; read it at a fairly fast clip. Never go back and repeat anything. At the line "Any questions?" do not even *think* of pausing for questions — just keep talking.

"Greetings, Troubleshooters. I am Cleto-B-QRK. My companions are Dewey-Y-JLK and Sunn-Y-LST."

"The Computer has rewarded your loyalty by choosing you to accompany a carefully selected and coordinated strike force of 27 teams of Troubleshooters who have been called into emergency action to fight the new Communist threat — subversive propaganda being pumped out over The Computer's own public address system."

"The Computer has narrowed the possible sources of interference to one subdivision of our beloved Alpha Complex, but unsuspected treasonous tampering prevents

it from pinpointing the traitors' exact location. You and the rest of the strike force will sweep through this area, searching for interference, identifying the responsible parties, and terminating them.

"I give you fair warning: only an insidious, well-organized band of fanatics, armed with the most sophisticated infiltration equipment, could have perpetrated this awful deed. The Computer relies on your loyalty and bravery to crush this awesome foe."

"Any-questions?-Good. Go forth in glorious service — and return here when, and *only* when, you have succeeded. Farewell!"

After this inspiring pep talk, the far door slides open and the guardbots hustle you out — into a large sewer. They scoot back in, the door slides shut behind them, and you hear it lock.

You're in a long, gray tunnel with narrow walkways on either side of a large brown canal. The low, curved ceiling is lit by a line of fluorescent tubes along the tunnel's spine. The canal curves away to the right downstream, and upstream the tunnel branches to left and right. The whole place smells as bad as the food vats. You can hear treasonous music echoing everywhere — impossible to trace.

Now what?

1.3 Through Deepest Cesspools with Gun and Camera

It's amazing how little sewers change through the centuries. Take a slave from the sewers of second-century Rome and drop him in the waste disposal systems of modern-day New York, or Flanders, or Tokyo. It's kind of sadistic, sure... but the point is, the guy will always know where he is. Likewise, you can describe the sewers of Alpha Complex with little fear of stumbling over anachronisms.

The water is about three feet deep, with a moderate current (an easy Strength check each round to wade in it). The depth and flow increase during peak use periods, such as after episodes of *Teela O'Malley*.

The concrete "bank" on each side is steep, usually about two feet above the flow level, and can't be climbed while doing something else (e.g., firing a laser) unless someone on the walkway helps the climber.

Characters falling in the water will be swept 1D10 meters downstream before regaining footing.

Characters can pull or push others into the water by grabbing them — a check against Agility, with difficulty dependent on circumstances — and then making an easy Strength check.

Characters may start fighting in the water, so review the drowning rules in the *Gamemaster Handbook*, section 14.4. Characters drinking the water, inadvertently or (ick) purposely, require you to consult the wild food chart in the *Gamemaster Handbook*, section 12.3.1.

That about covers gaming the sewers. Things will come up; just improvise a reasonable solution. For example, a PC drops his com

unit in the sludge and wants to know how long it takes him to find it:

GM: A real long time.

PC: Okay, I'm doing it.

(Time passes.)

PC: Hey, did I find it yet?

GM: (Rolls dice. Rolls eyes to the ceiling thoughtfully. In fact the GM is wondering what's on TV later that evening.) Nope. But you're thoroughly soaked and delicately perfumed by the soiled water. Had enough?

The tough part of gaming the sewers is creating an atmosphere so vivid that the players experience the setting: the truly awful stench, the buzzing fluorescent lights, the echoing tunnels... all the details must conspire to produce discomfort and distaste in your players.

Remind them that the enemy could be around any bend — they hear echoing footsteps coming from random directions. Play up their ignorance of the enemy and of the other 27 Troubleshooter teams. (That one is easy: they all got rerouted to the Waste Recycling Subdivision by mistake, and won't be found for hours.)

When you've conveyed just how disgusting their lives have suddenly become, then start throwing traps, critters, and Zhon-B at them.

1.4 Staging Sewerworld!

Sewerworld's orchestration divides into five major movements: 1. Wandering the Sewers, 2. Traps and Critters, 3. Visited by Zhon-B, 4. Baited by the Kids, and 5. Battered by Botaroo. Here are some tips on how to organize and present these events.

Wandering the Sewers

Your objective is to make the sewer setting concrete for the players. Present the problems the setting *itself* poses. For example:

- movement on slippery walkways (Agility checks)
- fording the sewers (scrambling down the banks into the flow, staying vertical, stepping on noisome objects along the bottom, keeping equipment dry, scrambling up the other side — various attribute checks and minor problems to think out)
- funny noises
- collapse and subsidence of delapidated walls and ceilings

To Map or Not to Map: A sewer map is provided on page 4. Section 0.1.3, "Maps," explains how to use the map. We intend that you use the map simply to boggle the minds of your players; however, it is a perfectly good map if you want to chart PC movement and pre-plan the position of traps and encounters.

We famous game designer types prefer a more free-wheeling style. We gloss over the actual details of where everything is, and pull encounters by impulse and improvisation. This is lots of fun. We can also get caught with our drawers down. If you are, by nature, a more careful, organized, well-planned person, use the map and plan your encounters.

Traps and Critters

Next, add active annoyances to the problems presented by the setting. Select a few critters and traps to pester the PCs. Now, when they



The life of a Troubleshooter is always glamorous and exciting.

try to evade the gatorbot, they have to worry about slipping off the walkway into the flow and getting their gear wet. Note how we're gradually adding little complications? The problems should slowly build to a climax of frustration.

Visited by Zhon-B

Here we relax a bit so we can build the tension again later. Zhon-B is potentially dangerous if the PCs attack him, but his main purpose is to be a little digression — a minor diplomatic encounter.

Baited by the Kids

Now we present the PCs with full-scale lethal opponents, complete with heavy weapons. These little fellows are used to bait the PCs into following them to the scene of the major conflict in Captain Botaroo's studio.

Battered by Botaroo

Here's the real action climax — lots of guns, a deranged bot, and bushels of ping-pong balls. Typical **PARANOIA** nonsense. Only this time Teela arrives with a diplomatic solution...

1.5 "Traps? In a Sewer? C'mon..."

No. Really. They're all over. Some are just there to give the PCs the idea that someone is out to get them, but some of them are for-real traps.

Rats: Not bot rats — *rats*. Live, furry rodents, the size of housecats and as mean as a registered nurse. The kind you only hear about in documentaries on the Inner City or in the middle third of a Stephen King story. Six of them, say. Have them rush out of some side tunnel right at the PCs.

A rustling. A flurry of movement. A sudden glimpse of shiny fangs and beady red eyes. Then savage attacks (column 7 on the Damage Table). Suddenly they are gone, splashing into the water and swimming upstream. That'll keep them on their toes.

Remember that the sight of any real live animal is just cause for an insanity check —

except for Sierra Club members, who may object to their fellow Troubleshooters burning and stomping the warm, fuzzy critters. Maybe pass a note to a Sierra Clubber suggesting how nice a pet a rat would make.

Electrified Screen: The sewer tunnels have offshoot branches everywhere, and many are blocked by large wire gratings that cover the entire width of the tunnel. Some have water flowing through the screen; some are dry and disused, empty. Describe two or three of these normal screens in passing before springing this one. Then read this aloud:

The tunnel is blocked by another heavy wire grating reaching from wall to wall and from the ceiling down beneath the water's surface. The screen looks cleaner and shinier than the others you've seen. You can't tell whether the music is coming from beyond the screen — or not.

The screen is electrified with — what? — ten? — twenty thousand volts? Enough to dim the lights throughout the entire sewer complex when a PC touches the grating. The trap is alternating current, not direct, so the character is merely knocked away, stunned, and probably falls into the water.

If the players make a concerted effort to get by the screen, let them crawl beneath the fence (under the surface of the water — double-ick), then drop *another* electrified screen beyond the first, trapping the characters between the two. The old Troubleshooter who set these traps, Zhon-B-VLJ, shows up as soon as the PCs are at his mercy.

Walkway Trap: Read this aloud:

Up ahead you see four thick nylon ropes suspended from four holes in the ceiling. The ropes hang into the water in a square about four meters to a side. The tunnel is wide here, too wide for you to reach the ropes from the walkway. The music is loud here.

If the PCs walk to the part of the walkway that's even with the ropes, read this:

You're walking along the side of the tunnel when, suddenly, the wall tilts out and the walkway tips down toward the water. Everyone roll percentile dice.

Everyone who rolls above 10% is spilled into the water. Come to think of it, why fix a percentage? If you want them in the water, they're *in*. Rolling the dice masks your arbitrary nature, though.

The four ropes jerk upward and you're caught in a large, tightly-woven net suspended high above the water.

Now what?

Well, only about a meter, actually, but it looks high. Give them a few moments. Someone may actually try something clever or treacherous. Lasers won't work on the ropes — they're thick and wet. Grenades or other explosives might work, but may be stressful to the victim's nerves. If they end up just bobbing disconsolately, Zhon-B shows up to gloat.

Water Trap: Read this aloud:

There's a door in the wall beside you. It's tall and sort of elliptical, with airtight rubber seals all around — it looks like the hatches on submarines you've seen on various vidshow adventure programs. There's a circular locking wheel in the middle of the door.

The door can be opened by turning the wheel and pushing. Beyond is a small compartment (barely enough room to hold all the PCs) and, on the far side, another door, identical to the first. It opens inward, away from the PCs.

That's right. An airlock. The far door won't open until the first door is closed. The room is dark.

If the first door is closed, the second will open easily — and the floor fills instantly with foul, brackish water. The large (10-meter diameter) chamber beyond, also filled with water (to about 5 meters in depth), is lit by fluorescent bulbs on its rounded ceiling, two meters above water level. There's a one-meter hole in the ceiling above the lights; characters who reach the surface without drowning hear Zhon-B's bizarre laughter emanating from the hole (along with the treasonous music over the PA system).

Characters who try to close the inner airlock door must make a difficult Strength check. They'll probably have endurance enough for two tries on each door before they drown. The doors are soundproof, but frenzied beating on them should be detected by characters on the far side.

The walls are too slick to climb. There's an outlet pipe at the base of one wall, but it's blocked by iron grating. Basically, the characters will probably just have to make blubbing noises until Zhon-B shows up to rescue them.

If a PC manages to come up with a plausible escape from the large chamber, keep your eye on that player and consider an untimely accident for his PC in the next firefight. Nobody likes a wise guy.

Gator Bots: Zhon-B knows Old Reckoning civilizations bred monsters in their sewers. His dementia has led him to recreate those legendary monsters, after a fashion.

When the PCs head down a dead-end tunnel — and any tunnel can be bricked in down

to the water level for no apparent reason — the Troubleshooters hear metal clanking sounds behind them. They'll have a moment to run, but six robot alligators — apparently modified from old model skidbots — clamber up onto the walkways, blocking the escape route.

The gatorbots immediately engage in melee, attacking (75%) on column 7 of the Damage Table — or for a more fluid and dramatic approach, just say, "They're charging, snapping their well-oiled jaws menacingly," and leave it at that. Back the Troubleshooters against a wall until Zhon-B comes to rescue them. (In case the PCs don't cooperate, the gators have the equivalent of guardbot armor.)

Setting a Properly Paranoid Pace

Throw the traps at the PCs one after another, bang-bang-bang. The PCs run down the walkway from the rats — into the dead end, with the gatorbots blocking escape — but in the wall is the door to the water trap — et cetera. Give the PCs the idea that this sewer is one long obstacle course.

Just when the players begin asking seriously, "What are all these traps doing down here? Who's setting them?"... enter Zhon-B.



1.6 He Always Gets his Man: Zhon-B-VLJ-2

Zhon-B-VLJ-2 was a bright star in the Troubleshooter ranks twenty years ago. The last survivor of half a dozen different mission teams, he constantly displayed that inventive resourcefulness and cheerful self-interest which an old civilization would have called "ruthless backstabbing."

Hence Zhon-B's rapid rise to Blue-level security clearance, almost unheard of in the high-turnover Troubleshooter group. Hence also his eventual fall. He gained his last two clearance levels through skillful blackmail of a prosperous Violet — but the Violet knew a High Programmer, who got Zhon-B assigned to a dead-end mission of a type almost unknown outside the **PARANOIA Adventure Handbook**:

"ATTENTION TROUBLESHOOTER ZHON-B-VLJ-2! A group of Troubleshooters has turned Communist and fled to the sewers, taking with them a valuable food resource. Find and terminate them. Because of the sensitive nature of this mission, you must go alone. Return when, and *only* when, you have succeeded. Farewell."

Perhaps there actually was a party of renegade Troubleshooters, but if they were ever in the sewers, they wised up and moved on by the time Zhon-B was sent after them. Ordinarily, a conniver of Zhon-B's gifts would have

had no trouble finding a handy group of innocent bystanders and burning them into charcoal, then passing them off as the renegades. But he went completely off his nut in his first encounter with a real live rat shortly after his descent into the sewers, and he lost interest in returning to the world above.

In the two decades since, Zhon-B has kind of... lost touch. You might say he's mellowed; having been alone so long, he's no longer paranoid — and, of course, not being paranoid in Alpha Complex is insane. Even weirder, Zhon-B has become conscientious about fulfilling his mission. He'll do anything to catch those Troubleshooters, no matter *how* long it takes.

That's his mindset. In practical gaming terms, Zhon-B is an offbeat antagonist for the players, and, if they try talking civilly to him, a narrative device. He can lead the characters to the source of the treasonous PA system songs.

1.6.1 Meeting Zhon-B

In all likelihood the PCs are pancreas-deep in trouble when Zhon-B decides to rescue them — whether from the gatorbots, or the net, or the flooded room. Whatever trap they're in, Zhon-B can get the drop on them and disarm it. (Except the rats. He doesn't like rats; he hates them, hates their nasty, smelly fur and glassy, glittering, murderous stares; he wants to kill them, kill them all, burn them, yes, *burn...* uh, sorry.)

Anyway, regardless of the trap they're in, the PCs will hear a strange voice say, "Throw away your weapons!" and note a shadowy figure who has the drop on them with a laser rifle, and who is in a perfect position to take advantage of cover if a firefight erupts. Zhon-B waits until the PCs present no obvious danger to him. Then, read the following aloud:

You're released from your predicament by a tall, heavily-bearded, incredibly dirty fellow in a Troubleshooter uniform. He stays safely out of range and line of fire as he trains his laser rifle on you. His uniform is so dirty, he seems to be Security Clearance Brown, and his rifle's barrel looks gray. In a way, he reminds you of a walking sewer.

(GM: Both the uniform and the rifle barrel used to be blue, but life in the sewers has soiled his uniform and worn the paint from his rifle.)

The following should be delivered with the wild-eyed, manic intensity of a raving lunatic:

"**Aha!**" he shouts. "**Caught you at last, you Commie traitors! Twenty years down here in the stink and the filth, the dirt and the slime, and ratty sludge — two decades of dismal, wretched, inhuman solitude, laying traps and plotting capture, and you thought you were too clever for me, oh-ho, never realizing I was on your trail every moment! When I think of the years, the awful — uhhmmmm — excuse me. What was I saying? I seem to have lost track —**"

(GM: Wait for someone to say something. Then jump right in, interrupting, and continue with the ravings.)

"**Right! Commie Troubleshooters gone bad! Aha, I say, caught you at last! Zhon-B-VLJ always gets his man...**

"Hmmm. I mean men.

"**Well, men and women commingled... and the occasional rat!**"

You can keep on babbling about rats as long as you like. It's conceivable that a player may try to get a word in edgewise. If so, let the characters engage Zhon-B in meaningful dialogue — as meaningful as dialogue can be when one party would require an entire chapter in *The Nature of Schizophrenia*. But if anyone tries to attack him, Zhon-B will blast away with a 50% chance to hit.

The PCs' efforts to convince Zhon-B they're not his quarry should prove entertaining. Play Zhon-B as though he's seen too many Monty Python sketches and is now completely 'Lost in Space' — long rambling diatribes, sudden vacant stares, bizarre twists of reasoning.

Actually, Zhon-B is very easy to persuade. Any inventive argument will do, or (if no one is feeling creative) a successful Con/Fast Talk with a +10% chance.

Once persuaded that the PCs are not his quarry, Zhon-B will lose interest and march off in search of the *real* traitors. He is polite to requests for information in seeking the source of the treasonous music, but he righteously observes that he is on a mission, and he cannot interrupt it without orders.

If the PCs get testy, Zhon-B will fry a couple as a warning. Then he will leave. If persistent PCs follow, Zhon-B flips out completely. When he runs out of ammo, he'll try to pull limbs off the Troubleshooters.

If the PCs don't persuade Zhon-B, he'll march them up to an access tunnel at gunpoint. He'll take them to Troubleshooter headquarters and turn them in. The PCs will be fined twenty or thirty credits for fouling up their mission and be sent back to the sewers immediately.

They may never see Zhon-B again. He'll be promoted to Indigo Clearance and sent Outside to search for a marvelous jewel-encrusted statue of a falcon. Or maybe...one day the PCs might be assigned to aid him in this mission. An adventure sequel — *The Malt-I-ZZE Falcon?*

1.6.2 If the PCs Avoid the Traps: Default Option

If the players seem not at all inconvenienced by the traps you throw at them — if they escape or evade them with infuriating ease — read this to them:

Wading through the middle of the tunnel ahead is a grimy, heavily-bearded Troubleshooter. He has a laser rifle but he's holding it at rest, not aiming it. You can't make out the original color of his uniform or his rifle barrel — right now he's what you might call Security Clearance Brown.

He's waving at you and shouting, "Thank The Computer I've found you! The rest of my mission group has cornered the traitors we were sent to find — but we need more firepower! Come support us, quick!"

Zhon-B will try to lure the characters into one of his traps. If they become suspicious of him, he'll turn and run, taking excellent advantage of available cover, hoping they'll follow into his clutches. Given Zhon-B's spacey outlook, even the bald truth will probably sound suspicious.

"My clearance? Look at me! (Peers at himself short-sightedly.) Blue! Obvious! I think. Yeah, sure, Blue, that's right.... Really!"

1.6.3 How Zhon-B Controls His Traps

It probably won't be important, but just in case some smart-aleck player gets picky about details, here's how Zhon-B rescues the PCs from any given trap — and avoids falling into it himself.

Electrical Screens: Zhon-B raises and lowers them by a hidden lever mechanism down the tunnel, or by a remote control unit in his pocket.

Walkway Trap: Zhon-B knows how to place his weight to avoid tripping the release — and he's primed to jump clear (easy attribute check against Agility) if someone else does while he's nearby.

Water Trap: The hole in the ceiling of the large chamber leads up to one of Zhon-B's many hidey-holes, where he keeps his meager supply of stolen food and tools. From there he can fill and drain the large chamber at will.

If he leads the PCs into the trap himself, he'll swim to the surface (using the treasonous Swimming skill) where a rope hangs down from the hole above. The rope is attached to an automatic winch; one pull and up he goes.

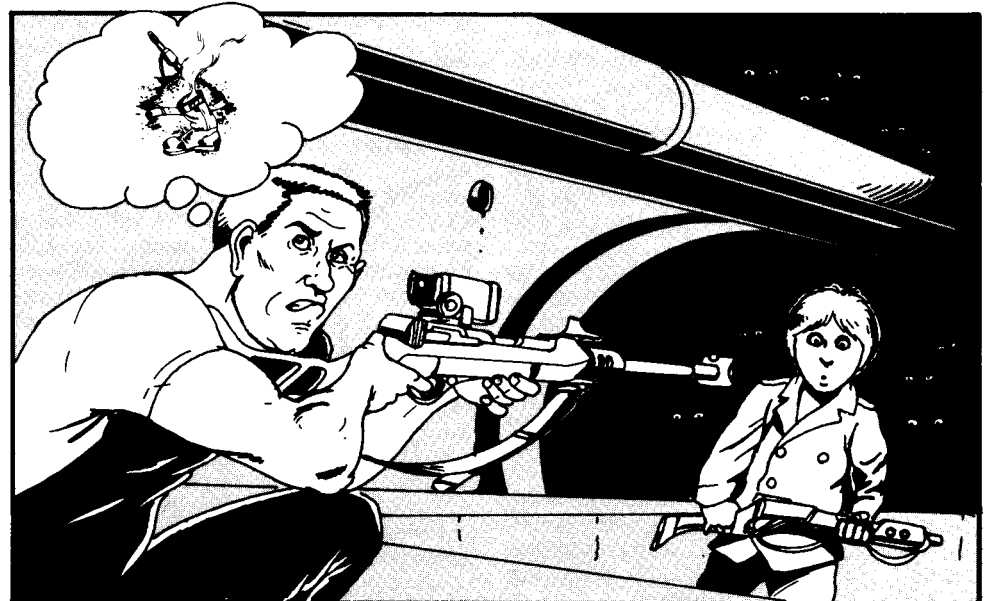
In freeing the PCs, he'll empty the chamber, have them move away from their weapons, and lower himself into the room one-handed, laser rifle at the ready.

Gatorbots: The remote control unit is in his pocket. The bots will never attack him. He might have pet names for them — Albert, Wally, Murgatroyd.

1.7 Kids Shoot the Darndest Things

Keep reminding your players that they're hearing a virtual hit parade of treasonous tunes from every public address speaker in the sewers. (There are public address speakers on top of the Alpha dome and inside the fusion reactors. The Computer is everywhere. No great surprise that there are speakers in the sewers.)

Suffer the little children who come unto me.



Possible songs include "I'm Just Wild About Mutie," "Moonlight Genocide," "Kelp!" "It's All Over Now, Level Blue" — in fact, virtually any Old Reckoning song is treasonous by definition. (See the Alpha Complex Songbook on page 26 for further inspiration.)

After the PCs have disposed of, or been disposed of by, Zhon-B, read this:

You begin to notice little scurrying shapes far away down the tunnels, at the limits of vision. The shapes are similar to human forms, but they seem too small, distorted, and hunched-over to be people.

Actually, it's just the kids overburdened with their exotic and massive weaponry, but go ahead and suggest gnomes and goblins. Everyone is waiting for his first encounter with an orc in **PARANOIA**. Not yet, but surely someday....

The shapes are seen at gradually closer and closer range, more and more frequently, on all sides. Characters should begin to feel surrounded. Chasing after shapes is fruitless; pursuers are outdistanced swiftly in the maze of twisting tunnels.

But soon the pursuers become the pursued. Read aloud:

You hear footsteps behind you as you walk. You stop — they continue for a moment, then stop too. You go on, and after a moment they start up again.

If the PCs go back, trying to sneak up on the "shadows," wait until they're all turned to the rear — then hit them with a laser blast from the rear — the direction they were originally heading! The blast should singe the concrete over their heads — you're just intimidating them for now.

Repeat this pattern, drawing the net tighter by the minute. By playing up the mysterious nature of the enemy and the PCs' frustrating inability to catch their tormentors, you can raise the tension to such a pitch...

...that the eventual discovery that the antagonists are a bunch of ten-year-old Computer Phreaks will leave the players slightly boggled. Ready to kill. And primed for a sucker play.

1.7.1 "Kids? In a Sewer? C'mon..."

No. Really. They're all over.

Children in Alpha Complex are like life in Alpha Complex — nasty, brutish, and short. The Computer raises them from decanting and infancy through late adolescence, training them to total loyalty and thoughtless obedience — but hey, kids will be kids, you know?

Didn't you ever want to put chalk in your teacher's coffee, or sneak into your scout-master's tent at night and seal him in his sleeping bag?

The same principle is at work here. These enterprising youngsters found a way to take over the PA system — and if you *know how* to do it, you *should* do it. That's what education is all about.

But some of the kids got tired of singing songs in the studio up above, and several are now clambering all over the sewers. They're engaged in a "live" roleplaying session: they were corrupted by a treasonous, Old Reckoning roleplaying game, and all the ones who didn't commit suicide or sell their souls to the Devil have embarked on this dangerous "Assassin" game. When the Troubleshooters blundered into the middle of it — "Wow! Invaders! Let's get 'em!"

The players will probably never learn any of this. All they're likely to learn is what you read aloud to them:

A blast of energy hits the wall by your head and you hear maniacal, high-pitched laughter, like a mischievous child's laugh. "Hahaha! Gotcha!" And running away up ahead is the fearsome enemy — a kid in an infrared jumpsuit. He is carrying a rifle. He's maybe ten years old.

You instinctively drew a bead on him with your weapon — a normal and appropriate Troubleshooter reaction — but suddenly you recall The Computer's teachings on the subject of Youth:

"The youth of Alpha Complex represent the brightest hope for a future free of subversive Communist influence. Each and Every child in Alpha Complex is The Computer's valued friend.

"We must all nurture these young, vulnerable minds and protect them from harm. Only Commies would raise a hand against these youngsters."

You have the kid in your sights. You can still plug him if you fire right now. What do you do?

If any PC fires and hits, roll the dice for damage behind the screen, look dismayed, and announce that the kid falls like a sack of potato substitute — stone dead.

If they all hesitate, or miss, the kid gets away — but this one is close enough that he can be followed. From this point on the shapes the PCs see down here are recognized as kids — and there are dozens of them. (You don't have to tell the players exactly how many, so don't worry about it.) Now the kids are available as targets or as leads to the studio and the next section of the adventure.

Following any kid takes the PCs up a sloping access tunnel with a sign painted on one wall reading NBD SECTOR, with an upward-pointing arrow. The treasonous songs are loudest at the tunnel's entrance.

No matter how many kids the PCs massacre, at least one remains to run, stagger, or crawl up this tunnel. It leads to the abandoned studio of the long-defunct children's show *Captain Botaroo*, where the juvie Phreaks have set up their mischievous PA tap.

If they thought things were bad up to now...

1.8 Can You Say "DeathTrap"?

When the Troubleshooters reach the top of the tunnel, read this aloud:

Captain Botaroo was "put on hiatus" four seasons ago due to its unusually high fatality rate — high for a children's show, anyway. Since then, Captain Botaroo, his friend Mr. Citizen, the humorous Isabel Infrared, the heroic Vulture Captain, and, of course, lovable Foodvat have all faded from the Complex's collective memory.

Now remembrance of those happy half-hours comes surging back as you stand at the top of the access tunnel and face a door labelled "Captain Botaroo Studio D-17." Beneath this label, a dusty hand-printed sign says CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

The door has just swung shut, and the kid(s) you were following are gone. The tunnel is a dead end at the door. The music is echoing all through the tunnel, but you can tell it is emanating from behind this door. Now what?

The door is unlocked (it opens inward), but the kids on the other side have blocked it with a large stack of plastic boxes; these were shoved back after the last kid entered the studio. Each of the six boxes contains twenty dozen ping-pong balls; the boxes will break open if the door is forced, releasing over 1,400 little white spheres. These won't trip up the PCs or kids; the balls crush easily underneath any foot.

The studio is shown in the diagram below. The large area is the studio proper, where Captain Botaroo's lovable hijinks and strict disciplinary actions were — uh — executed. A swinging door leads to the recording area, which views the studio through a thick pane of plexiglass running almost the length of the wall.

There's not much in the studio except two junky old cameras, a lot of traitorous kids with high-grade weaponry, and 37,500 ping-pong balls packed in thin plastic boxes. You just can't believe how easily these boxes break open and spill. You can knock them over, shoot them, blow on them, stare at them hard — fwoosh, over they go. Maybe all at once. And while 1400 ping-pong balls are relatively easy to deal with, thousands and thousands will cause even the most adroit characters to make a difficult Agility check each round to move and stay upright.

1.8.1 We're Having Some Fun Now!

Read this to the players:

When you enter the studio, the door shoves over a tall stack of plastic boxes. The boxes fall with a crash, breaking open and scattering hundreds and hundreds of ping-pong balls. They roll all over the floor, bouncing everywhere.

But they don't seem to affect the dozen or so youngsters who are leaping around the studio, shooting their Indigo-barrel lasers, cone rifles, gauss guns, and tanglers.

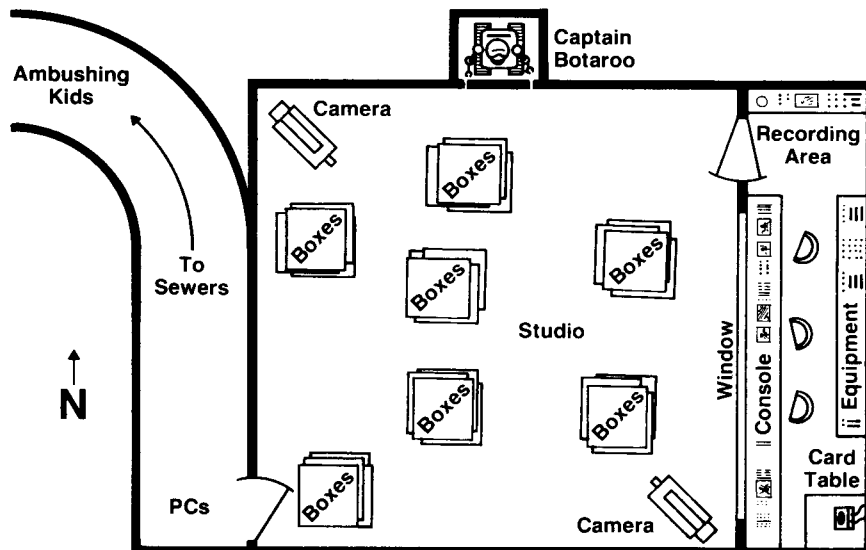
The studio is about fifteen meters square, a large empty room with bare concrete floor and soundproofing tile on the walls. A lot of dusty light fixtures hang from the high ceiling. A couple of old vidcameras stand neglected in the corners.

There's nothing in the studio except several large stacks of plastic boxes like the pile you've just knocked over, and the kids running around playing Vultures and Communists.

On the far wall are a large soundproofed door and a long plexiglass window with a vidrecording studio on the other side. You just glimpse a bunch of kids in there, hunched over some equipment. It looks like they're singing or something, and the treasonous music is very loud in there.

Give the players a moment to get their bearings. Then the children run behind the boxes and immediately start a firefight. The boxes tip over. The ping-pong balls spill out. The kids fall down. If the PCs make a move, they probably

CAPTAIN BOTAROO STUDIO D-17



fall down too. The speed of a character crawling on 37,500 ping-pong balls is left as an exercise for the gamemaster.

If the PCs try to retreat to the hallway, read this:

As you make your cowardly retreat from the studio, you hear footsteps from around a bend in the access tunnel below. Suddenly a tiny arm sticks around the bend and fires a laser pistol — Indigo barrel.

Roll die behind the screen, study the table, then announce:

The beam misses you narrowly. But now there's another arm — and another — and another.

Meanwhile, you can't close the studio door because the ping-pong balls are blocking it, and the kids inside are aiming at you. There's no other outlet in the tunnel.

Now what?

Did you know that ping-pong balls are flammable? *Highly* flammable — any laser fire that hits them (i.e., any laser fire) sets them off like a magnesium torch. This, of course, fills the room with smoke (giving characters cover to do something audacious). Then, after a round or two, the fire extinguisher system kicks in, spraying the entire studio with slippery pink chemical foam from jets in the ceiling. Anyone still on his or her feet goes down now:

Smoke, foam, laser fire — what better conditions for the accidental activation of the long-dormant Captain Botaroo himself? From a closet in one wall slides the lovable figure from your nostalgic childhood memories: the large, blocky form, so resembling a warbot except for the loose-fitting jacket and the painted-on moustache; the bulging pockets in the jacket; and — as you remember so well — the electric-cattle-prod wrist attachment. From a speaker down by his tank treads comes the bouncy Captain Botaroo theme song and that famous resonant baritone German-accented voice.

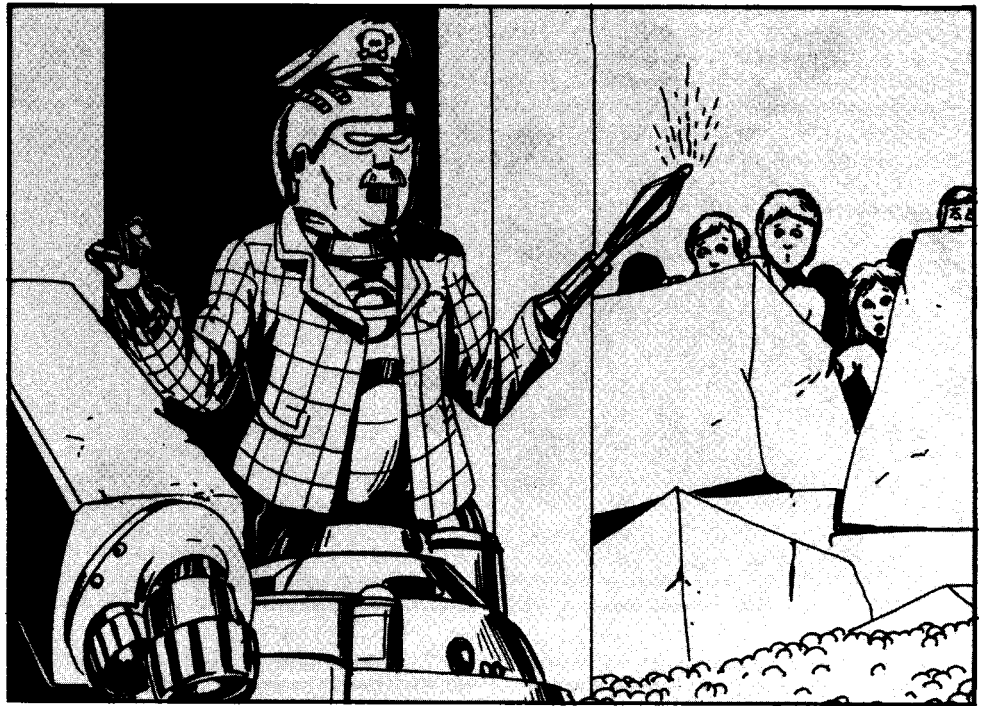
(GM: He talks like something out of the Katzenjammer Kids.) Read this:

"Hoh-hoh, boys und girls, der Captain is lookink for traitors! Haf you seen any today?" With a whining, grinding strain one rusted arm comes up. The jacket sleeve falls away to reveal a laser barrel.

If a PC accuses the kids of being traitors, the Captain targets one with the laser and says, "Now, den, little von, young citizen, haf you been a goot little boy or girl?" If the PCs present convincing charges that the kids are misbehaving (possession of unauthorized weaponry, subversion of the PA system, destruction of valuable ping-pong balls), the good old robot pulls a strange-looking lump from one pocket — a lump which appears to be some kind of a rubber ball, but which explodes after one bounce, identifying it as a mini-concussion grenade (use column 7 on the Damage Table).

But this tactic works for the kids, too — they shout that the Troubleshooters are traitors even as the Troubleshooters are fingering them. Have some fun turning the Captain first this way, then that way — laser barrel trained first on troubleMAKER, then on TroubleSHOOTER.

The good Captain's actions are determined by how well the players handle themselves: the bot could become catatonic; it could discipline



"Tennis, anyvon?"

the kids, or the PCs, or both — stunning with his cattle prod, blasting with his laser, or bombing with his grenades. In any case, there's plenty of material here: foam, ping-pong balls, the Captain, and the kids.

GM: Your goal is to tailor the material into a purely unsolvable, no-win situation. Stress that killing kids is treason; stress that *not* killing kids is certain death. Play up the distasteful nature of killing children. ("Are you *sure* you want to vaporize that cute, darling, golden-curved, red-cheeked little moppet?") Observe impartially to the players that it looks like the Troubleshooters are less than a round away from a murderous crossfire.

Should the PCs try to calm the kids and discuss matters like rational, decent human beings, laugh heartily and have the kids loose a couple of cone rifle rounds. Admirable humanistic impulse and all that, but they are not going to get off that easy.

Let the PCs take vigorous non-threatening action (a foolhardy swan dive upon the ping-pong balls to roll across to the vidstudio door should be rewarded with success), but if they try anything violent to resolve the crisis, pretend to be cooperative, but needle them relentlessly.

"Are you *sure* you want to *destroy* the purest cream of Alpha Complex youth? The Computer might not approve," or "Gosh, I just hope they don't happen to be the promising proteges of some high programmer." Twist the knife. Frustration is the artistic objective here.

(GM WARNING: Don't be surprised if the players shrug their shoulders, grin, and open fire on the kiddies. Many roleplaying gamers respond to frustrating dilemmas with heroic, even suicidal, action. **PARANOIA** players in particular are likely to shrug their shoulders when presented with a no-win situation. "So what's new?" Such players may cheerfully go out in style, executing Commie tykes while swept by a murderous crossfire.

Okay. Give 'em their moment of glory. Kill

them. Then activate their clones and send them back into the sewers. The second time (or third, or fourth, or...) around, the suicidal bloodbath gambit loses its novelty, and the PCs will be in a better frame of mind to savor alternative approaches.

And just when frustration reaches its peak, guess who appears to save the day?

1.8.2 A Special Guest Appearance

Read this aloud:

It looks like treason or death for the brave Troubleshooters, when suddenly through a secret panel in the south wall comes none other than Teela O'Malley!

Her appearance is radiant, her orange jumpsuit faultlessly tailored. She takes in the situation with a glance, raises her hand imperiously, and barks out, "Children! Put down those weapons this instant!"

All the kids look at her, then at each other, then they lay down their guns. Teela says sharply, "You've been very bad. Go over and stand in the corner until the Internal Security agents come." They all go over meekly and stand in the indicated corner.

Teela is in control of the situation. "Captain Botaroo," she says in that beautiful voice, "please aid these noble Troubleshooters."

The Captain chortles, "Vy, shoor, Miss Teela!" deep in his rattling, overdriven speakers, and helps you to your feet. He reaches deep into his pockets and hands each of you an artificially-sweetened algae ball.

(GM: The candy is a little stale but otherwise harmless. Sure it looks just like the mini-concussion grenades. Just a coincidence.)

Read this:

Teela beckons to you and marches into the recording studio. The narrow room is filled with technical equipment, playback and editing machines — and tucked away in a



Sleeping through your execution is treason and punishable by summary execution.

corner, a flimsy card table with a bunch of kids standing around it. They all look abashed before the great Teela O'Malley. You notice that the treasonous music has stopped.

On one wall above the table is an open panel with a lot of wires. Two long wires lead from screw terminals in the panel down to the table, where they're attached to a little speaker box about the size of a transistor radio. Teela picks up the box, pulls the wires from the wall, and hands it to the team leader.

"I believe this is what has been causing our recent trouble," she says. "I know I can rely on you to deal with it properly. I only recently learned of these children's mischief from their friends, whom I visited during a public appearance. Otherwise, I would have been by to assist you before."

She smiles enchantingly. Then she strides purposefully from the recording room across the studio to the secret panel. She pauses and turns at the opening, saying dramatically, "Remember the service I have done you this day" — and she is gone.

Make a difficult Moxie check (or roll dice and pretend to study them) for each PC to determine which ones are affected by Teela's Cloud Men's Mind mutant power. Record the results, then hand the following note to those affected.

You think to yourself, over and over: "Gee, that Teela is sure swell. Boy, I hope she is real happy. I wish I could do something to make her talk to me again. (Sigh.) I wish I were assigned to her mission group."

The concealed panel cannot be opened without a construction permit. PCs who force the panel open with tools or explosives receive a treason point for unauthorized modifications to Alpha Complex structures and find themselves staring out into a maze of sewer tunnels. No sign of Teela. Hint broadly that pursuit is futile.

GM: Gee. You don't see Teela. She must be gone. G, O, N, E, gone. I guess she didn't want to talk with you any more. Hint, hint. But if anyone wants to

wander around in the sewers looking for her, don't let me stop you. No sirree. Might be lots of fun. (Gaze at the ceiling and roll your eyes a lot. Look innocent.)

1.8.3 Say, Where Did Those Kids Get All Those Weapons?

Who cares?

1.9 Debriefing... or Maybe Not...

Mission accomplished. Source of treasonous music located and apprehended. Now the air waves are free of disloyal ditties.

Support Your Local Security Police

There's the minor problem of finding a way out of the sewers to report for debriefing and deliver the traitors for judgement. Teela said Internal Security would be there right away, however. All the PCs need do is sit around and wait. Fifteen Blue IntSec troopers arrive in a matter of minutes, curtly acknowledge Teela's summons, and take custody of the kids. They march off without another word. The PCs can follow if they hustle.

The IntSec troopers march directly to a large, well-armored metal grate about a quarter mile down a sewer tunnel. They open the grate and step into a large, grimy elevator. If the PCs hustle, they can squeeze in.

There is a sudden, terrible acceleration. Five G's maybe. Then the elevator stops. Abruptly. "Whack," go the heads on the ceiling. The tykes wail. Maybe a weapon goes off. Then the door opens and the IntSec troopers march their whining captives down the corridor through a blue door. PCs are firmly discouraged from following through the blue door, but an IntSec trooper grudgingly gives directions to Troubleshooter Headquarters.

Of course, free-spirited Troubleshooters may want to snatch all the glory and deliver the kids themselves. Arguing with the Blue troopers is unthinkable. The PCs would have to find a way out of the sewers by themselves.

One way is to wander around the sewers looking for a way up. Let them traipse about on slimy walkways for a few minutes, then have

them round a corner and bump into the fifteen Blue IntSec troopers. The troopers politely but firmly take custody of the kids and the sequence proceeds as above.

Another way is to retrace the party's steps back to the entrance to Cleto-B's office. Handle this in one of two ways (your choice).

A. Have the PCs run into the Blue troopers on the way to Cleto-B's office. Sequence proceeds as above.

B. Let PCs find the entrance to Cleto-B's door before the troopers find them. The door is locked. Opening the locked door without a construction permit is treason. Inside, the lights are out, nobody home. The elevator won't open. Opening the elevator without a construction permit is treason, and it ruins the elevator. PCs must go back out into the sewers. Now the troopers find them. Sequence proceeds as above.

(Another alternative may have occurred to you. Let the Troubleshooters wander around the sewers with their prisoners until they starve to death or learn to live off the rats. Nice idea. Appropriately **PARANOIA**. But dramatically speaking starvation develops a bit too slowly, and *Sewerworld!* is a limited setting for a campaign adventure... Or is it? Hmm...)

Troubleshooter Headquarters

When they arrive at HQ, the PCs can't find Cleto-B, his Yellow aides, or anyone they can report to. Drop a hint that the Complex is now deep into night-cycle — dimmed lights, empty corridors — and have some guard tell the characters to get some sleep. And don't forget to point out just how bad the PCs look and smell — after all, they just climbed out of a sewer.

If the PCs report to The Computer, let them tell anything and everything they want. Pay special attention to whatever mention they make of their encounter with Teela O'Malley, but don't let on that there's any potential treason in being associated with Teela.

Award more than the usual praise and commendation points. Deal with the usual backbiting and betrayal of fellow Troubleshooters in the usual fashion — careful collection of evidence, gathering of all concerned, citation of accusations and innuendo, slow buildup of charges, climactic verdict, firefight, everybody dies — standard procedure.

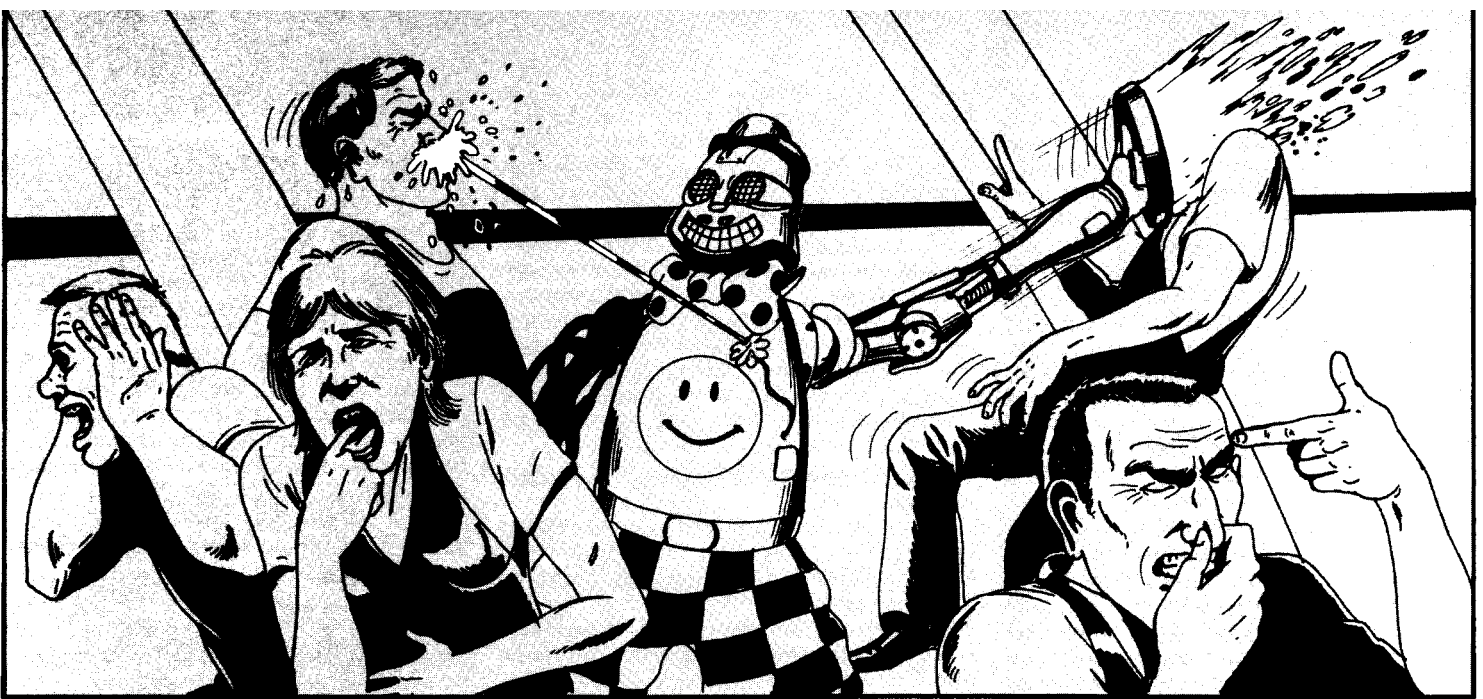
One way or another the characters, or their clones, should eventually be sent off to their beds. Mention that they are very tired. It's late. They could sure use some sleep. Hint, hint.

Give the players time enough to drift off into a relaxed sense that one part of the adventure is over, and that it's time for bathroom breaks and refreshments. Just when they have visibly relaxed, jump into your best Excited Sports-caster voice and read the following aloud:

Suddenly you're jostled rudely awake by guardbots! They roust you from bed, firing a few warning shots into the walls to inspire your complete and total cooperation.

You have only moments to struggle into uniforms and grab your weapons, then they hustle you out of your barracks. You're dog-trotted through darkened corridors, and stopped before a familiar elevator; the guardbots draw aside for a really LARGE guardbot, and the elevator doors open. You have a feeling of *deja-vu* as you are ordered into the elevator....

Now you can let them go to the bathroom.



“Isn’t it great? Isn’t it keen?” (SCHLOOMP!)

2. BUREAUCRACYWORLD!

2.1 Mission Summary

Snatched from bed, the PCs are hustled to a briefing with Cleto-B. Their assignment: find Teela O’Malley, recover biological equipment she has stolen, and terminate her.

Yes. Terminate Teela O’Malley.

But first, visit PLC for outfitting and stop by R&D to pick up experimental devices. Quicker than you can read the collected works of Charles Dickens, the PCs are ready for their unthinkable mission.

(Seriously folks, there are a couple of snags in the outfitting process, and some of the experimental devices turn out to be kinda dangerous. And the Funbot assigned to the party provides about all the fun the Troubleshooters can stand. And then some.)

2.2 Here We Go Again

When we left our heroes, they had been forced into an elevator by a very large guardbot. If the PCs don’t cooperate, kill them and send in the next bunch. Now there’s another long, agonizing ride down and down in the cramped elevator.

The very large guardbot can, if you wish, be played differently from the one in the first mission (section 1.2). Make it a rattletrap, clunky old model that isn’t holding together too well. Its laser tends to go off accidentally in a random direction (roll dice constantly; every sixth or seventh throw have the laser fire at the ceiling or graze a character’s ear).

What’s worse, its programming is a bit herky-jerky. Like a senile dodderer who drifts away from reality, the guardbot periodically decides that a (randomly chosen) PC is a convicted mass-murderer scheduled for immediate termination. Give it lines like “Have you an-nn-nythin-n-nng to s-s-ssay before before before you d-d-die?” and “Why-y-y did you kill (click) murder (click) destroy (click) annihilate (SCREEECH) kill those nineteen hi-i-igh pro-

ro-ro-ro-grammers?” Give the PCs the idea that the bot is about to self-destruct — and take them with it.

2.2.1 “Your Mission...”

Read this aloud:

In a familiar featureless room at the bottom of an elevator shaft you wait a very long time, standing at attention while watched by four familiar guardbots.

Finally, a familiar door slides open and the distastefully familiar Blue form of Cleto-B-QRK-2 enters, accompanied by his two Yellow level companions, Dewey-Y-JLK and Sunn-Y-LST.

Dewey-Y looks at [pick any PC] significantly, then leans over and whispers into Sunn-Y’s ear. If you listen carefully you can hear him murmur the words [roll two dice and pretend to consult a chart] — hmm, no, you can’t quite catch what he’s saying.

GM NOTE: Complete red herring. Invent other ways that Dewey-Y and Sunn-Y may appear to fulfill some important function in the adventure. They don’t, of course. Continue reading:

Cleto-B says, “Troubleshooters, The Computer is gravely disappointed in you! Against specific instructions, you did not return here promptly at the conclusion of your mission. This reflects very badly on your loyalty record.”

Let the PCs talk, whine, or bootlick their way out of this — a fairly straightforward task of explaining the circumstances, unless they did some unauthorized construction work on Cleto-B’s door after the sewer expedition. If they mention or admit having done this, Cleto-B coldly fines them four hundred credits each for destroying The Computer’s property “and letting that stink into the room.” (Remember, the sewer is right outside.)

When and if the PCs convince Cleto-B of their good faith, keep reading:

Cleto-B continues, “Pay close attention and don’t interrupt. The Computer has learned of your success in accomplishing its previous mission. Before hearing your... delayed report, I bring you news that The Computer has rewarded your success with another opportunity to serve. [Pause for loyal enthusiastic response. Nod approvingly. Then yell at them for interrupting.]

“You, honored Troubleshooters, have been chosen — selected from among all others — to take on a highly confidential mission.

“The video heroine Teela O’Malley is a traitor — of the basest and most devious kind. She and her associates have been conclusively implicated in the diversion of valuable biological research equipment to an illegal destination in NBD Sector. The Computer knows the nature of the equipment, but this information is not available at your security clearance.

“Teela O’Malley disappeared some time ago. The Computer has been using electronically-generated images of her during her absence. She was last seen in the Housing Preservation and Development & Mind Control division in NBD Sector.

“Your assignment: go into HPD & Mind Control, locate and retrieve the missing equipment, locate and terminate Teela O’Malley. Anyone who has associated with her recently is, almost certainly, a traitor and should be apprehended for interrogation and possible termination.

“The Computer wishes to stress the importance of secrecy at all times during your mission. Betrayal of the information I have given you is grounds for immediate and comprehensive termination. Here is an authorized termination voucher. Do not reveal it to anyone unless absolutely necessary.

“Who is the team leader?” [If there is any

hesitation or confusion, Cleto-B bellows] **“Who has the highest security clearance?”**

He then selects a leader from those with the highest clearance, breveting the leader to a higher clearance if necessary, and giving the PC a voucher good for temporary assignment of Kevlar armor and hand laser of appropriate color. The voucher states explicitly that this equipment is transferable to the leader's successor or replacement.

Cleto-B then gives the party leader a termination voucher.

2.2.2 Your Mission Reports, Please?

Continue reading aloud:

“Before proceeding with details of your glorious new mission to exterminate this unspeakably villainous traitoress, I would have you relate the details of your previous venture. Since the haste of your departure precluded assignment of the standard-issue multicorder, we must rely on your accurate, exhaustive, and unvarnished account of the episode. Be quick and succinct; waste no time with polite formalities.”

Oh boy. The reception given the PCs' account depends on two variables: whether they've already talked to The Computer concerning the previous mission, and whether they've mentioned Teela's role in the successful conclusion of the mission.

If They've Talked to The Computer: Cleto-B then has a transcript of their report, and this is a loyalty test. This report had better square *exactly* with the previous one, or a duplicitous player is liable for a hefty assessment of treason points.

If They Didn't: Wise move. They can lie, cheat, or steal here, and Cleto-B can't verify or deny any of it (openly, that is; of course he knows what happened in the *Captain Botaroo* studio because he's intimately associated with Teela O'Malley and the Clone Rangers).

If The PCs Don't Mention Teela: No trouble, as long as the account squares with The Computer's transcription (if any).

If the PCs Mention Teela: Trouble. The guardbots' lasers and blasters immediately lock on the Troubleshooters. Alarms sound. Cleto-B and the Yellows draw lasers and back warily out of the room into the sewer tunnels, ready to fire at the slightest provocation. They leave through this door, closing and locking it behind them. The Troubleshooters are left alone in the room with the guardbots.

If any PC reaches for a weapon, start a firefight — and for once, you needn't kill all the PCs automatically. Let them live or die according to the roll of the dice... and if they destroy all the guardbots, bring in the Vulture Squadron. Cleto-B has summoned by com unit. *Now* kill all the PCs automatically. Fair is fair.

If the PCs don't draw weapons, there's no firefight and the Vulture Squadron merely take them into custody. Read this aloud:

You're taken to a Detention Center by the Vulture Squadron guards, your weapons are taken, and you're left in a cell marked “FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION.”

Before you can straighten your rumpled uniforms, another troop of guards rousts

you out of the cell. Pretty soon you're standing on a rickety plastic gallows, all in a line, with nylon ropes around your necks. The traps are about to open. You're going to fall the last mile. Got any final words?

All you're looking for is treasonous statements, secret society mottos, and other bold gestures of defiance. “There's been a terrible mistake!” and other similar wimpy pleadings are ignored, as are transparent lies like “...But I've always been loyal to The Computer!” Give the PCs a few minutes to get themselves in real deep, then regardless of their statements, read the following:

The latch springs, the traps open, you fall through....

Suddenly buzzers sound, alarms shriek, and the traps close firmly around your torsos. The ropes are taut but not quite restricting your breathing.

A Red-level tech rushes over, sheepishly saws the ropes free with a knife, the traps open, and you drop (thud) beneath the gallows. As this is going on, The Computer's voice is heard over the loudspeaker system.

“An unfortunate clerical error has been brought to my attention. Please transfer the Troubleshooters from the cell marked ‘FOR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION’ to the cell marked ‘FOR IMMEDIATE INTERROGATION.’ Your cooperation is appreciated.”

The Computer feels — mistakenly, as it turns out — that the PCs' earlier contact with Teela improves their chance of earning her trust, aiding them in apprehending her; so the Troubleshooters live after all.

Anyone who shouted something imprudent at the moment before near-termination (“Well, I'm a bloody Commie, and proud of it, and The Computer is a muck-brained sweeper bot with delusions of grandeur!”) gets appropriate treason points. Then the Troubleshooters are interrogated to within a centimeter of their lives about their connections with Teela.

However, since the PCs' are at least apparently innocent, or perhaps because of another clerical error, they are released and escorted back to Cleto-B's mission briefing room, where the briefing continues.

2.2.3 Where Were We?

If the PCs' reports were accurate (fat chance), or they didn't mention Teela (fatter chance), or after having made whatever narrow escapes were required, read this aloud:

Cleto-B says, “Thank you for your mission report. Now you must proceed to Production, Logistics, and Commissary to receive special equipment required for the successful completion of this mission.

“After outfitting, proceed to Research and Development. Experimental equipment for testing awaits you there. Then return here immediately for your final briefing.

“Proceed without delay. This ruthless traitor presents a serious threat to the security of The Computer, Alpha Complex, and all its citizens. Failure to return promptly is evidence of treasonous intent.

“If there are any further questions, requisition an Information Inquiry form and dispatch it to Headquarters for processing at once. Thank you for your cooperation.

Serve The Computer. The Computer is Your Friend. Dismissed.”

Cleto-B and the two Yellows promptly head for the elevator. Sunny-Y lags slightly behind, turns, and mugs grotesquely at [pick any PC], then gestures vaguely at [pick any other PC; make a gesture like a secret society hand signal]. Then Cleto-B and his aides enter the elevator and the door closes.

Now the PCs get to wait for the elevator. (The guardbots won't let them into the sewer. Why not? Who knows?) The door finally slides open and the big guardbot herds the characters back onto the elevator for another long, grindingly-slow journey.

2.2.4 The Information Inquiry Form

The Information Inquiry Form is in the pullout section on page 26. See section 0.1.4, Other Stuff, for details on its use. Normally these forms are available from any terminal, and may be submitted to any Central Processing Unit office, but for fun, tell the players:

PC: Where can I get an Information Inquiry Form, please?

COMPUTER: Thank you. What is your security clearance please?

PC: Yellow, Friend Computer.

COMPUTER: I'm sorry. You must complete an Information Inquiry Request Form to receive clearance for an Information Inquiry Form. Please report to your local IntSec Information Window and complete this form immediately.

(Hours later...)

PC: Here's my Information Inquiry Request Clearance Identification Tattoo. (Displays bare stomach to security camera.) Now, where can I get an Information Inquiry Form?

COMPUTER: Your clearance for Information Inquiry Forms has been verified. Congratulations. You may now submit an Information Inquiry Form to request the information you have requested concerning Information Inquiry Forms.

PC: Whine whine whine.

COMPUTER: You heard me. Now beat it. And tuck your shirt in, slob....

2.2.5 Explanatory Interlude (or, What's With Cleto-B?)

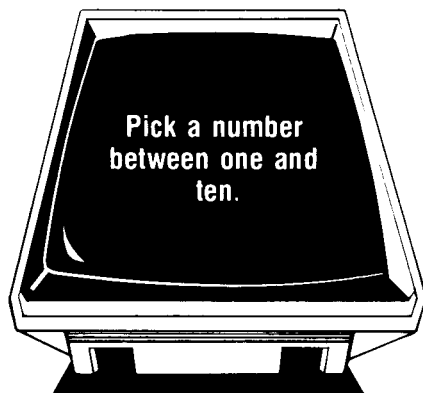
It is logical to wonder why Cleto-B — co-founder of the Clone Rangers and crony of Teela O'Malley — is dispatching a gaggle of Troubleshooters to find the Clone Rangers and terminate Teela O'Malley.

It's not that he's self-destructive — just the opposite. The Computer chose him, through its ineffable randomizing process, to brief the Troubleshooters. To disobey The Computer is grounds for instant vaporization.

But Cleto-B doesn't like the situation. Note that he hasn't been *real* helpful to the PCs. He

won't answer any questions or do anything to aid them.

However, when you think of all the Blue-level personnel available to The Computer, you have to be amazed at the perversity of the universe. Such an *incredible* coincidence, that the *one* pivotal traitor in the *entire* Clone Ranger operation happens, *happens* to be fingered as the *one* pivotal figure who can deeply screw up this entire Troubleshooter mission. It's as if the entire cosmos were being arbitrarily manipulated by a couple of writers for their own sinister purposes...



2.3 Outfitting: "Sorry. You Must Have The Wrong Section. Try 18.14.57B."

Read this aloud:

When you reach the end of your elevator odyssey, guardbots, waiting at the top of the shaft, dogtrot you back to your respective sleeping areas. You actually have time to catch a little sleep.

When morning-cycle arrives and the "Patriotic Alertness Reveille" sounds over the loudspeakers, you're ready to report to Production, Logistics, and Commissary for supplies.

If the players say they already have all the equipment they need, remind them that Cleto-B ordered them to report for outfitting, and said that their mission is assigned special equipment. (It is — but wait until the PCs try to get it.)

2.3.1 A Word about the PLC Bureaucracy

"Enormous."

There are lots of citizens in Alpha Complex, and The Computer doesn't trust many of them to work on anything without a lot of supervision.

Thus the Bureaucracy — thousands of persons who fill out forms that no one ever consults, write reports that no one reads, make up schedules that go out of date before the input key is hit, have meetings with each other, decide who is superior to whom and subordinate to what, form committees to correlate data produced by task forces and distributed by clearing offices, form sub-committees to decide which sub-sub-committees are under which other sub-committees... the list continues indefinitely. Never have so many consumed so much to produce so little for so few so so many can make so little trouble for so paranoid a Computer. Or something like that.

Look at the PLC Runaround Flowchart on pages 24 & 25. Looks complicated, doesn't it?

It's so complicated that not even the petrified civil servants in PLC understand it, and they work there. If someone comes up asking for a left-hand dorsal retaining wingnut designed for scrubot rotating squeegee attachment model S-165e-LL/XLII, the barnacle behind the desk may actually know where the customer *really* needs to go for that part — but the odds are against it, and even if the official knows, he or she may direct the customer halfway across the Complex, just for spite, or as an exercise in applied psychology.

This is the Sprawling Malevolent Octopus the PCs are up against.

2.3.2 Using the PLC Runaround Flowchart

When the PCs show up at Production, Logistics, and Commissary, they find the directory of offices, once quite extensive, has been reduced to six listings. (The directory board clearly shows the shadowy outlines of office names imperfectly removed.) The six remaining offices are potential starting places for the players in their journey through the realms of Supreme and Everlasting Paperwork.

The six offices, with their numbers on the flowchart, are given below:

1. Office of Production
2. Office of Logistics
3. Office of Commissary
4. Registration & Requisitions
7. Complex Supply Bureau
10. Complex Coordinating & Planning Commission (Water Recycling Division)

PCs can go to any of these. (If they ask a guard or The Computer what happened to the other listings, tell them a recent reorganization expunged all traces of filthy Commie subversion from PLC.) The office the PCs go to will lead to another office... and another... and another... and so on, until they work their way through the great chain down to office 15, "Supply." There they get the "special mission equipment" described below.

On the flowchart, each numbered office is briefly described. A waiting time is given, followed by a description of the official(s) likely to be encountered there. Lastly, the likely result of the encounter (usually a reference to some other office on the chart) is provided. To elaborate:

Description: You may wish to enhance the description provided. For example, describe how the PCs got to that office: "You tramp through a vast maze of identical corridors. Doors line the hallways on both sides; no sign tells what anything is, and you never see anyone enter or leave a room."

You might also find interesting things to do with guards (do *they* know where they are?), bots, (carrying indescribable objects from one door to another), or even other Troubleshooter teams.

Wait: Use this to increase player frustration. Since the PCs haven't been given a specific time limit for starting the mission, exploit this, and play on their uncertainties. While they journey between offices, drop a courteous word as The Computer over the public address system:

"I'm glad to see you taking such meticulous care in procuring your assigned equipment. I

hope you're planning to start your mission at the earliest convenience. It would be most unfortunate for such a fine party of Troubleshooters to be reassigned as sluice scrubbers in the Waste Recycling Subdivision." The messages grow ominously briefer and more polite as the runaround proceeds.

Officials: You can use the notes given in each encounter as a guide in creating your own personae to deal with the PCs. In general, each official encountered will (a) want to move on to something else other than "helping" the PCs, and (b) energetically and pointedly make the PCs aware of this.

Result: If the PCs don't state their needs forthrightly and aggressively, the official will likely shove a random form at them and wave them to another office — maybe the next one on the flowchart, or maybe just wherever you feel like sending them.

The players' actions *can* have some minimal effect on the outcome of any encounter. If they perform well (do something unexpected, clever, or entertaining), you may want to skip them over two or three (or more) intervening offices. Conversely, if they pull their lasers and fry some piddly bureaucrat, The Computer should take immediate action — politely reprimand the characters as the Vulture Squadron guards carry them to the termination center.

One way or another, the PCs should reach Supply with all proper forms *just before their tempers run out*. Timing is everything. Achieving the delicate balance between frustrated teeth-gritting and uncontrollable laughter is no simple task. But we know you're up to it.

Special Mission Equipment

Once they've reached the Supply office, a friendly Red clerk will equip them with most anything they could reasonably want at their security clearances, along with one special container of assigned equipment — a bulky padded box containing eight gross of Teela O'Malley souvenir pocket mirrors.

These mirrors, the clerk explains, are to be distributed throughout NBD Sector to Teela fans of all clearances as a means of enhancing citizen morale. The box isn't really heavy, but it's large and cumbersome. The unlucky PC who gets saddled with it (a decision left to the lucky team leader) will have to set it down before doing anything like fire a laser or run for cover.

And don't drop the box! The Red clerk is quite emphatic about this. The mirrors are amazingly fragile; the responsible PC will be profoundly and energetically fined — unto the sixth clone generation.

Of course, all PCs must sign the proper requisition forms for the equipment. The forms acknowledge responsibility if the equipment is damaged. It's useful to remind players about these forms shortly after they've broken a bit of The Computer's equipment. *Never* warn them before it's too late for them to do anything about the situation.

2.3.3 How to Handle the PLC Runaround

Fast and loose, that's how. The *characters* have to endure excruciating boredom, but the players should get their frustration in concentrated, rapid doses:

GM: You wait in line for half an hour, then just as you reach the desk, the clerk

puts up a sign saying NEXT DESK PLEASE, so you go stand in another line for another half an hour until you reach the next desk. The clerk is a little standoffish guy who blinks a lot. What do you do?

PC: We give our mission clearance identification code and ask for our assigned equipment.

GM: Blink, blink, blink. He stares at you for a minute and a half and says you're in the wrong office. He calls over his supervisor, a sweaty Yellow-clearance woman with a figure like a rolled-up mattress, and after a couple of minutes with the first guy, she also says you've got the wrong office. Now what?

— And so on. If your players begin to sit back and watch the show, step out of character long enough to mention that their constructive action can improve the situation. If their idea of constructive action is to mow down a room full of bureaucrats, suggest that bribery, bootlicking, fast talk, con or intimidation skills might work.

Will work? Well, it's up to you. Certain tactics might be particularly appropriate in certain circumstances. To avoid the need for careful judgement of circumstances on your part, we have thoughtfully provided you with a table to *randomize* the appropriateness of certain tactics with individual officials. (We also believe this accurately models the seemingly random manner in which most bureaucracies appear to operate.)

APPROPRIATE BUREAUCRATIC TACTICS TABLE

Roll 1D10 for each official encountered. For that official, the PCs' usual percentage chance for the use of the given tactic is doubled, or increased by 20%, or multiplied by 1.54, or increased by the PCs' shoe size, or arithmetically enhanced in any manner agreeable to the gamemaster.

- 1-2 Bribery
- 3-4 Bootlicking
- 5-6 Con/Fast Talk
- 7-8 Intimidation
- 9-10 GM choice, or roll again twice.

To apply this chart in play, consider that the PCs' percentage chance to use the given skill on the given official is double (after the character's believability bonus is taken into account). Remember that any character with Personal Development (1) will probably have about a 20% success chance with any of these skills, and maybe more. The doubled chance is going to be around 40%.

And if you think things need to move along a little more quickly, the chance can increase to whatever ridiculously high percentage you like. After all, why let a couple of lumpy percentile dice cramp your style?

On the other hand, you can take a *really* outrageously missed skill roll as a cue to send your player on a mission to Ultima Thule. It would be a shame, for example, to restrict their

runaround to PLC alone. Send them to the Food Vats. Reservoirs. The Waste Recycling Subdivision. Vulture Squadron Target Practice Range. They could even end up Outdoors — say, Yellowstone National Park. Nice country out there.

But sooner or later you'll have to let them reach the Supply office and pick up their invaluable crate of mirrors. Then it's off to Research and Development.

2.4 Research & Development: "No, It's Not Dangerous. Just Take It."

Read the following aloud:

You make your way through the cramped, maze-like corridors of Alpha Complex to the Research and Development facilities of QQQ Sector. Eventually you come upon the remnants of a once-sturdy metal door. It looks like a bank vault after skilled application of several tons of high explosives. Hanging from the ceiling above the rubble, a sign dangles from a chain. The sign reads:

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
QQQ SECTOR
ENTER AT YOUR OWN RISK
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Beyond the door the narrow corridor opens into a huge, airy, cavern-like room several kilometers across. You've never been in an area as open as this. [GM: Time to cue the players for gasps of awe and wonder.] It's hard to see in here — smoke from the constant explosions, perhaps. ZING! CRASH! BOOM!... Every so often a bit of shrapnel whizzes past your heads. Just a little less often you see entire buildings collapse.

The journey from the entranceway to the proper R&D building should be played like a scene from *The Longest Day*; the players are never sure where the next shell will fall.

2.4.1 Your R&D Tour Guide: Nerd-G-000

Just inside the door, the PCs are stopped by Nerd-G-000, a Green Tech who delights in showing off with his laser. He twirls it, holsters it, then quick-draws it, pointing it playfully at the PCs, all in one smooth motion. Well, maybe not always so smooth... Sometimes it spins and bounces to the floor. Sometimes it goes in the holster backwards. Sometimes it goes off. In just any direction.

You see, Nerd-G is just what his name implies. How he's managed to survive to Green level is anyone's guess — probably political connections. He's fat, ill-tempered, and foul-smelling... but the PCs must toady to him to get their experimental equipment. And of course the PCs want their experimental equipment. Not to want experimental equipment is treasonous.

The PCs' first encounter with Nerd-G should go something like this:

"Hey, pardners!" [Draw, twirl, twirl, point, twirl, ZAP!] "Oops. Sorry about that. Didn't mean to singe yer pretty little uniform there. So. How y'all doin'?" New around here, ain'tcha?" [kaaaaBOOM. Hiss. Zing.] [Roll dice, then frown in disappointment.] "Keep your head down there, pardner. Gotta watch

out fer them big chunks. Now, state yer bizness."

[Pause to let PCs state their bizness.]

"Oh, yer here to pick up ee-equipment, eh? Yew mean The Computer trusts the likes-a YEW with valuable experimental equipment? Thats-a-mite hard tuh buhlieve. (Ka-ka-ka-BLOOEY! POW! CRUMBLE!) Now listen, son, ya gots tuh duck when yuh hear them 'xploshuns. Now, where ya sposed to get this 'new equipment'?"

[The PCs don't know for sure.]

"Oh ya don't 'zactly know, eh?" (Draw, twirl, toss, ZAP!) Well, ain't that int'restin'. And I spose yew want me tuh lead yuh by the hand..."

[Yes.]

"What's yer mission? Yew a stinkin' mutant? Ah smells me a Commie rat! Ah should turn you traiters in-ta Internal Securitee."

His interrogation continues with questions about the Troubleshooters' personal hygiene habits, their mission, and the equipment they're supposed to test. He chastises them for not knowing precisely where they are to report.

Eventually he agrees to escort them to the Department of Experimental Apparatus, Testing Headquarters (D.E.A.T.H. — but you already figured that out, didn't you?) where they can pick up their goodies. The more toadying and bootlicking the players do, the easier it will be to get Nerd-G to cooperate. Bribery works real well, too (up to +20% success chance, at your discretion).

2.4.2 Til D.E.A.T.H. Do Us Part

Read aloud:

The trip through QQQ Sector's R&D facility is a lot like a tranquil jog through a mine field. As you dart from rubble pile to rubble pile, trying desperately to stay under cover, you and Nerd-G pass several buildings.

From within the buildings, you hear reassuring sounds of technicians developing marvelous devices in the service of The Computer. The most common reassuring sound is "Ouch!" Other comforting noises include the hum of heavy lasers, grinding and grating of great gears, and high-pitched, pain-inducing screeches of industrial strength drills. [This can be most dramatically suggested by scraping a finger across a blackboard.]

If players ask about the smoking piles of rubble, constant explosions, and the shrapnel flying around everywhere, Nerd-G will tell them that these are successful research projects in the final stages of testing. This should fill the players with confidence and an even greater zeal to serve The Computer. Continue reading:

Department of Experimental Apparatus, Testing Headquarters, is an island of calm in a stormy sea. From the outside, it appears to be intact; from the inside the sounds of battle — that is, successful experimentation — are barely audible. Techs of various security clearances move quickly, and with apparent efficiency, from door to door, some with huge instruction manuals, others with complex equipment and instruments. A Blue or Green security guard stands at each door.

Here, at last, the players may get the idea they can catch their breaths for a moment.

Soon, you'll have an opportunity to dispel this false impression.

Nerd-G motions the PCs into a soundproof, airtight, bunker-like room with one *thick* glass window. As the PCs enter the room, two Infrareds carry a body bag out. The bag sags in a way that suggests a horde of disarticulated parts rather than an intact whole.

Nerd-G remains on the outside of the room. He and a very nervous-looking Red named Scar-R-EDY stand on the outside peering through the thick glass window. Waldoes — mechanical hands — jut out into the inside of the room just under the window. Nerd-G and Scar-R use these to hand experimental equipment to Troubleshooters. They'll do this gingerly, with constant warnings:

"Careful now!"

"Don't drop this little number, or that's all she wrote."

"Don't even *breathe!*"

"Don't move a muscle, or this baby could blow!"

Scar-R knows better than anyone else the risks involved in using equipment developed in QQQ's R&D division. He is understandably ill at ease. (Perhaps you would be too if your job was to issue obviously dangerous equipment to people with laser pistols and no compunctions about using them.)

"Our, uh, superiors, uh, instructed us to give you this, uh, equipment."

"Is it safe?"

"Why, uh, of course it is, isn't it, Nerd? (Sweat, sweat, twitch, glance about, lick lips, and look wide-eyedly innocent.) The Computer wouldn't give dangerous equipment to valued Troubleshooters, would it?"

Nerd-G won't be any help at all, but Scar-R may be coerced (Intimidated, Conned, or Fast Talked) into discussing the equipment in some detail, telling the PCs something about each item's inventor, problems encountered during development of the various items, and so on.

If the PCs — some of whom are of higher clearance than the lowly Red — put up a fuss or refuse any of the equipment, Nerd-G threatens to report the lack of cooperation to The Computer (and he will, too), and "ask" the offending PC(s) to accept the equipment. Any PC foolish enough to refuse at this point ends up examining the business end of several Internal Security laser barrels. After the twenty

"You'll wonder where the Yellow went..."



or so Internal Security troopers have cleaned up the puddle that used to be the troublemaking Troubleshooter, the party will again be offered equipment.

Once the group has decided to accept the equipment Nerd-G and Scar-R offer, the team leader is given a Multicorder and asked to record the proceedings. Then the entire team is assigned a new clone delivery device for testing.

2.4.3 The CRUD System

The full title of this experimental project is CLONE RECYCLING UNLIMITED DELIVERY SYSTEM: QQQ-R&D-66-6. Each Troubleshooter is given something that looks suspiciously like a spiked dog collar (quite stylish). The collar fits tightly around each PC's neck. At random intervals during the adventure, the tightly-fitting collar will constrict even more, choking the PC to within an inch of his or her life.

Despite all appearances, this is not malfunctioning. It is simply monitoring the PCs' life signs. The players have no way of knowing this, of course, since they aren't even told what the chokers are for; they're just told to put them on.

If (when) a PC dies, the collar will alert The Computer through a radio link. The Computer will activate the former Troubleshooter's next clone and deliver it nearly instantaneously through the nearest Clone Recycling Unlimited Delivery (or CRUD) outlet. These outlets — sort of like giant pneumatic mail tubes — are scattered in selected sectors throughout the Complex — and coincidentally in NBD Sector, where the PCs will be searching for Teela. The Troubleshooters are going to give the new system its baptism under fire.

GM NOTE: The CRUD system is designed to keep all players in the game for the entire adventure. When a PC dies, wait until the next logical moment (or illogical moment, if that suits your fancy) and have the player's new clone drop through a CRUD outlet into whatever room the rest of the party is in.

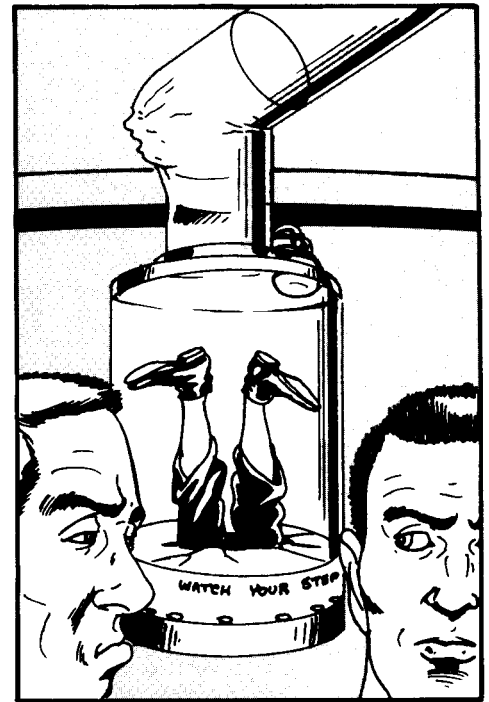
Amazingly, this intricate, high-tech device actually works! Of course, who are we to say it works all the time? Nothing works perfectly in Alpha Complex. If you want the CRUD to foul up, delaying the return of a new PC clone, go ahead. The radio link could get damaged and zap! — fresh, clean clones go smack into the sewer, or into the Waste Recycling Subdivision, or into the Food Vats.

The CRUD system can also send PCs to parts of the adventure they may have overlooked. Exercise your twisted imagination to the fullest.

And don't overlook the possibility that CRUD's high-velocity ballistic delivery can easily scramble a clone replacement's brains in transit. The poor jerk will probably be so dizzy upon arrival that he or she will just have to sit still for half an hour or so.

After much signing of forms and discussions of the grave responsibilities the PCs are accepting by "volunteering" for the CRUD project, the experimental equipment to be tested by the team as a whole will be presented and its principles explained. (More or less.)

At this point the Red Tech behind the glass will be joined by several Techs of varying levels. These are the designers of the equipment to be divided up among the Troubleshooters.



Bud-O-INK-2 makes a good first impression.

2.4.4 The Staff of D.E.A.T.H.

Rok-Y-TWO: Rok-Y is a huge, well-muscled goon, not at all the sort of person you'd expect to find working for R&D. He looks more like a boxer than an inventor, and is as dumb as he looks. (Picture a cross between Sylvester Stallone and Alfred E. Newman.) The other technicians tolerate him because he's as big as a refrigerator and could pound them into pulp. None of his inventions work, all are dangerous, but the PCs should have little trouble weaseling this information out of him.

Bulls-I-HIT: Bulls-I is an R&D star. He's earned his Indigo security clearance. His inventions really work — most of the time, anyway. He's perfect in every way — at least, he's sure he's perfect. He stands tall, thin, posture-perfect, utterly loyal to The Computer. (Picture Dudley Doright without his horse.)

Don't even think of questioning his loyalty or the quality of his inventions. He will report even the slightest hint of treasonous behavior to Internal Security. He will never allow any of his equipment to be given to *anyone* who doesn't give the impression of being as loyal as *he* is.

Bud-Y-BOY: A good-looking, well-muscled, perfectly-groomed (if hirsute) fellow. Quite self-centered. Some of his inventions work; others don't. He really couldn't care less. Players who fawn all over him earn his favor — which is worth exactly nothing. He'll ignore any questions.

Bab-Y-BOY: Bab-Y is the newcomer to R&D, a real youngster. The PCs are the first Troubleshooters to test his equipment, and boy, is he excited! He'll gladly explain how his devices work. (Actually, none of them work, but he'll explain the dubious principles involved.) If pressed — in private — he'll even reveal anticipated flaws or problems. He'll do anything to cooperate with Troubleshooters of Yellow or higher clearance, especially if there is some hint of possible advancement.

The Twelve Devices

1. FORCE FIELD: QQQ-R&D-57-543 (Bab-Y-BOY). A belt device worn by one PC. Once it's turned on, the PC is completely impervious to harm. It really works, but it has a few... bugs.

Its most obvious drawback (though by no means the most serious) is that it has to be plugged into a wall socket. Wall sockets can be found just about anywhere in Alpha Complex a PC might need one.

The Force Field belt taps right into the central power system. This leads to all sorts of interesting effects when a PC plugs it in and pushes the clearly-marked "On" button. For one thing, the lights dim throughout Alpha Complex. If the device isn't turned off within three rounds, all circuit breakers in Alpha Complex trip, and the entire Complex is deprived of power. If you're feeling particularly creative or nasty, Power Services could be called in to investigate the power outage. (Make sure they show up during the climactic battle in the Clone Rangers lab — see The Big Piefight.

And that's not all the PCs have to contend with if they're saddled with... uh, *given the opportunity to test the force field*. The field itself is airtight — in fact, it *consumes* oxygen. Within five rounds, the character begins to suffocate. The field stays on if the PC goes unconscious — but not to worry, the CRUD system will deliver the late Troubleshooter's next clone before you know it. The GM should give the player some warning — "My, it's getting stuffy in here!" and so on.

If this marvelous device accidentally proves to be useful to the PCs, it has a fuse which can conveniently burn out. Requisitioning this fuse requires Ultraviolet clearance. (Heh, heh.)

2. PETBOT: QQQ-R&D-12-34 (Bud-Y-BOY). The Computer has determined that workers are happier and more productive when they have a pet. So R&D has developed a little mechanical Petbot — sort of a cross between a poodle and a spider monkey.

Its primary function is to keep PCs company by extruding a super-glue from its "feet" and attaching itself — seemingly permanently — to the shoulder of its "owner." From this perch it spouts a ceaseless string of nonsense phrases (Polly want a lube job... The Computer is Your Friend... and so on). The Petbot can answer direct questions, but it has the processing capacity of a digital watch; the GM should have fun dreaming up profoundly stupid responses.

The Petbot also signals the presence of deadly gas, emitting a series of loud "Beeps." There's a button on the side marked "Test." When this button is pressed, the Petbot sprays deadly gas (weapon column 7) right in the character's face. (It does beep, proving the Petbot's warning system is functional, for what it's worth.)

The Petbot has a third-hand brain — in its first incarnation, it was a snooperbot. It notes and records the PCs' every action. (Through this device any PC trying to bluff his way through a final briefing will be revealed as a traitorous Commie mutant liar.) At some point the snooperbot brain was reprogrammed to act as a docbot. If the PCs should ask the Petbot for a medical opinion (we are hard pressed to account for this ever happening, but you never know...), it can give medical/first-aid advice — which may even be accurate (GM discretion).

NOTE: The Petbot can go berserk and lead the characters into trouble if the Funbot (the device intended for this purpose) has been destroyed.)

3. KLIEGUN: QQQ-R&D-987-321 (Bulls-I-HIT). Emits a highly directional, blinding light, leaving a victim unable to see for 1D10 combat rounds. It looks like a magic wand — a thin tube ending in a small, translucent bulb. Near the base of the tube is a small button — which can be used either as a thumb switch or a trigger, depending on which direction the button faces when the PC holds the rod.

There is no way to tell which way the button should face. In fact, the direction of the light beam varies — the reflector that focuses the beam has come loose and floats around inside the wand. The direction of the light blast should be determined by the roll of 1D10. Roll each time the device is used.

1-3: The desired target is affected.

4-6: The wand-wielder is affected.

7-10: Another character (PC or NPC) is affected, or all PCs and NPCs are affected. (GM's discretion)

4. MINI HAND-FLAMER: QQQ-R&D-2451-3 (Bulls-I-HIT). This is a modified Bic Clic. It works just like a full-size flamer — just really small. It works... once, emitting a large but controllable jet of flame (Stun damage to anything it hits). The second time it's used, it emits an amazing amount of flame for an instant, burning everything within a twenty-foot radius (including the person holding it), doing Wound damage. After the second use it runs out of fluid.

5. ICE GUN: QQQ-R&D-187-56 (Rok-Y-TWO). Just like a normal ice gun, except it uses a built-in water supply carried in a *big, heavy* backpack-like rig. Any PC saddled with this will have trouble walking, let alone fighting, climbing, running, or much of anything else. Oh, to hear the mellifluous tones of whining players! (+10 to any Agility check while wearing the backpack. Actually, a pretty minor inconvenience considering the device really works...)

6. HUNTER-SEEKER HOMING DEVICE: QQQ-R&D-34-40 (Bab-Y-BOY). A jet-powered magnetic ball which finds anything the PC asks it to find. Just tell it what you want; it compares what you say to a list of things in internal memory, and takes off with a whoosh. This device works *every single time!*

Only problem is, it takes off so fast that the person can't follow it, and there's no radio device by which it can be tracked. When (if) the PCs find (on their own) whatever they sent the Hunter-Seeker Homing Device to find, they'll find the device as well. This isn't particularly useful, perhaps, but it isn't dangerous, either. Be thankful for small blessings.

7. SMOKE ALARM: QQQ-R&D-911-411 (Rok-Y-TWO). Looks just like a regular smoke alarm. Anytime the PCs encounter a source of heat (greater than body heat, unless you're feeling really nasty), the alarm goes off.

It's very, very loud. Characters who don't plug up their ears (PCs and NPCs) take Stun damage and can't hear very well for the rest of the game. Anyone wishing to communicate with one of these unfortunates must yell. Characters with the wit to plug their ears immediately with their fingers take no damage.

8. SUPER GAUSS GUN: QQQ-R&D-7846-38 (Rok-Y-TWO). Just like an ordinary Gauss Gun, except it has an energy pack that's supposed

to be twice as good as normal.

In fact, it's nowhere near as good as the garden-variety GG. Instead of a range of 20 meters, it has a range of two meters. Instead of 100 rounds before reload, it fires only 50 times (and it's been fired 42 times already in testing, leaving just 8 for the PCs). Instead of malfunctioning on a 94, it malfunctions on a 59. Bad news all around, but if the PCs test it in the confines of the R&D lab, its faults may not be obvious.

9. SONOBLASTER: QQQ-R&D-123748-23487 (Bud-Y-BOY). An experimental version of the standard sonic rifle. The sonoblaster never needs reloading. The firer simply makes a sound — any sound — into a tiny microphone mounted in the gun's hilt, and the Sonoblaster turns it into a noise loud and concentrated enough to do damage. Otherwise it is similar to a normal sonic rifle.

Unfortunately, there is a good chance it will fire... and continue firing... forever. Each time the Sonoblaster is used, the GM should roll 1D100; on a 75 or higher, the Sonoblaster cannot be turned off.

Well, it can be turned off — if the PC is willing to smash it repeatedly against a solid object until it's completely shattered.

10. HEAT PISTOL: QQQ-R&D-19834122190-128732873 (Bulls-I-HIT). This is a modified Old Reckoning device, which the *players* — not the PCs — will recognize as a portable hair dryer (with various styling attachments). R&D techs have modified it and added a powerpack.

There are two switches on the side of the "pistol," a red switch and a blue switch. (Inferences made by players concerning the implications of security clearances should be blandly, and ominously, ignored.) When the blue switch is pressed, the pistol emits a warm gust of air (perfect for styling hair; somewhat disappointing as a weapon). When the red switch is pressed, the pistol emits a slightly hotter blast of air (perfect for drying hair; still unsatisfactory as a weapon). When both switches are pressed simultaneously, the pistol whines, whistles, and erupts with a red-hot gale-force blast of super-heated air. (Treat the Heat Pistol as a flamethrower when both switches are pressed.)

GM NOTE: If the smoke alarm is anywhere in the vicinity when both switches are pushed... okay, okay, just thought we'd remind you.

11. POUCH-O-SOUP: QQQ-R&D-1-0 (Rok-Y-TWO). Rok-Y claims to have invented this long-lasting, freeze-dried, delicious stuff — just add water and eat hearty. Yum, yum.

In fact, this artifact was discovered in an Old Reckoning ruin. It's about 200 years old and completely inedible. In fact, it's almost as bad as vat gruel. The stuff appears to be palatable when water is added, but a few rounds after it is consumed, the character suffers the equivalent of a Wound in the abdomen.

12. SPEED-O: QQQ-R&D-0-1 (Biochem Labs). Three little green pills. Each one increases a character's Strength by 5. Unfortunately it decreases the character's Endurance by the same amount. Since *PARANOIA* elegantly avoids cumbersome fatigue rules by omitting them from the game, you are completely free to improvise the effects of this change in character stats. We playtesters just let the PC rip off a few doors, then had him fall over and be carried by the rest of the Troubleshooters for a couple of encounters.

2.4.5 The Wondrous Equipment

The equipment-distributing tactics described in the adventure provided in the *PARANOIA Adventure Handbook* will work here.

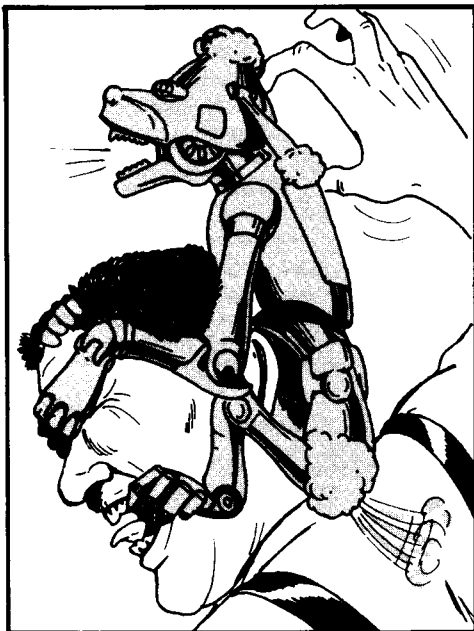
Tactic 1: Have Nerd-G read off the serial numbers from the equipment described above, then ask players to pick the numbers they want.

Tactic 2: Have Nerd-G grill the PCs about their mission, and the sorts of equipment they expect they'll need. Then ask them to pick a number between 1 and 12. Give them the item with that number *unless it vaguely resembles the sort of equipment they expressed an interest in.*

Tactic 3: Give the PCs whatever you feel like giving them — if a player has been giving you a hard time, give him something sure to cause trouble.

Once the devices have been assigned, the PCs may want to ask their designers some questions. The designer of each device is listed in parentheses after the serial number. Each designer has his own personal style, or lack thereof, in describing his equipment, but generally it is good politics to be completely positive about your own work in R&D.

When describing another designer's equipment, however, staffers tend to be a bit catty — "Oh, it's a very nice force field, sure. Of course, I would have designed one with a portable power pack, but it works just fine most of the time." "Field tested? Oh, sure, Rok-Y-TWO *always* field tests his equipment. Doesn't he, boys? (Smirks contemptuously.) ...if he can remember how to turn it on."



"How much is that petbot on the Yellow?"

2.5 Your Host for This Evening's Program...

Okay, the PCs have got their Teela O'Malley mirrors, their R&D gadgets, and their CRUD dog collars. With such armament, the world itself is within their grasp — but they're not quite done in R&D yet. Read this aloud:

Once you've signed for your valuable experimental equipment, Nerd-G-000 (or his next of kin) leads you out of the bunker and

across the battlefield — I mean, testing area — of QQQ Sector. As you all dodge and weave your way across the devastated floor, Nerd-G shouts at you, "We'z headin' for the most hahly confeedenshul area of this whole blasted Comm-plex. Beats me why this scruffy lot o' Troublemakers's gittin' sech priv'lidged access — but dontcha be gittin' hah'n'mahty, y'hear?"

ZING! FWOOSH! ZOOP-ZOOP-ZOOP! The noise is all around as you sprint for the far wall of the enormous chamber. In its vast expanse you see one single door, an insignificant blemish in the distance. Only as you approach do you realize it's as large as the casement of a vault.

Nerd-G punches an elaborate security code into an array of buttons to one side of the door, and with a groan that drowns out the chaos behind you, the barrier swings ponderously aside. Nerd-G barks, "Y'all gittin' in theah, or yuh gonna stay out heah an' become paht o' some feller's 'sperimint?" He turns and runs inside.

If the PCs stay outside — sigh. Deliver a short oration on tragic and senseless waste of life. Activate the CRUD system.

Continue reading:

You follow Nerd-G into a long dark corridor stretching into the distance. Along its length are batteries of lasers, security checkpoints, and iron portcullises that rise as you approach them, then fall with a clang as you pass. You march maybe a quarter of a mile, deeper and deeper into this sanctum. Every so often a pair of massive blast doors slide closed behind you.

If the PCs hesitate to follow Nerd-G down this hallway, The Computer's voice comes on their com units ordering them to follow Nerd-G. See? Simple. Read on:

Nerd-G stops at one checkpoint to hand you over to a Blue-level R&D technician, who silently escorts you further down the corridor and passes you to an Indigo at the next stop. The Indigo wears a powered exoskeleton and carries a plasma generator. He looks like he'll fry you if your breathing doesn't suit him [GM: he will] — and he never says a word.

At the last checkpoint he gives you to a Violet-level scientist who seems to have no armor at all — that you can see.

This citizen — Dave-V — speaks like a narrator for a 1950's "Wonderful World of Science" educational film:

"Greetings, Troubleshooters. I'm Dave-V-JNS, head of this sector's R&D program. You are about to be confronted with the end product of a major research effort. Vast resources, countless man-hours, untold credits have gone to produce this mechanism — and The Computer has chosen you to demonstrate that this effort has not been spent in vain.

"Your valor in voluntarily submitting to the testing of this new mechanism will long be remembered. Courage and sacrifice, citizens, in the service of The Computer! Now, please go through that door."

He gestures to an open vault door about a half a meter thick, pitted and blackened on its inner side. Beyond, you see only

blackness. You catch a whiff of metal and grease on a gentle current of air.

It's just possible that a PC, excited by his or her new stuff from R&D, will hesitate to go through that door. Before vaporizing this person, be aware that the CRUD system has not yet been installed in this sector. Anyone you murder will have to wait while the new clone makes it to QQQ Sector by conventional methods.

Now, it's entirely possible that the player in question needs to sit on the sidelines for a bit and calm down. In this case, summon a phalanx of guardbots. Everyone who survives the firefight goes through the door. (By the by, Dave-V really has no armor, but try to avoid wasting him here.)

GM NOTE: Study the principle at work here at the door of the vault. You put the PCs in an unpleasant situation, allow them to try wriggling out of their fate, then either kill or coerce (or both) them into it anyway. In this way you allow your players freedom of choice and *still* lead them around by their noses.

The official term for this is "Hobson's choice." Player coercion is discussed further in the next section.

2.5.1 Through the Door...

Complete Darkness. Close, stifling atmosphere. Flashlights or infrared goggles will show a small R&D facility identical to the one the PCs visited in the last section: bare walls, thick glass windows, waldoes, nobody in the room beyond the window, one door (locked) in the far wall. (The Klieggun will show all this, too, in the instant before blinding everyone.)

The vault door closes and locks behind them. **THOOM!** Silence.

If the PCs use a flashlight, a stern warning will sound over a speaker in the ceiling: "All light sources strictly prohibited!"

Why? No "real" reason — and in fact nothing will happen if a PC continues to bravely flash the light around, although you may feel like assigning the nervy little devil a treason point.

The only reason for the darkness is game-related. It puts the PCs in the dark. Alone. *Together. Alone.*

Think about it. This may very well be the first time they haven't been preoccupied by guardbots, briefings, sewer traps, sewer trapsters, kids, Captain Botaroo, Teela, PLCers, or R&D techs. And these PCs are all just yearning to plug each other.

Shouldn't you, the good and generous GM, find it in your heart to give them an opportunity? To say portentously, "You're all alone together, in the dark. None of you can escape. No one can see or hear you. I can receive any notes you want to pass me."

Then lean back and watch their eyes narrow (or bulge) with suspicion? Can you forsake this opportunity?

(What we said before, about not killing the PCs while they're in QQQ Sector — *forget it.* We were *joking.* Let them die like cattle! Hey, maybe the CRUD system *is* here after all! You're the GM — if you say it's here, who argues?)

But maybe no player will rise to the occasion. Maybe no one will kill anyone at all. Maybe you've got a wimpy bunch of do-gooders, little trusting lambs who stare at you with doe-like liquid eyes and say serenely, "Now what?"

Maybe your group needs to be led into major discomfort.

Have we got a guide for you!

2.5.2 — And Off the Wall

When the PCs have finished either killing each other or not, read this aloud:

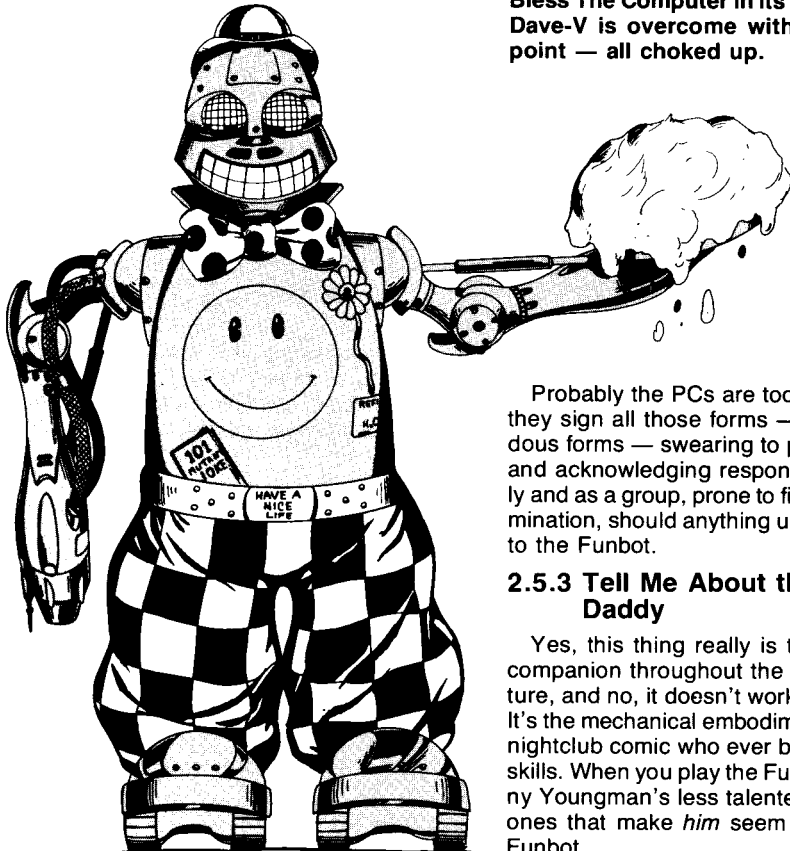
The lights come on suddenly. You're in a small R&D room just like the one where you got your other equipment. The lights are dim and flickering, the walls are bare, and the thick plexiglass window along one wall has a lot of deep gouges and cracks in it, as though it's yielded "valuable experimental results" in one test too many. There's a door in the far wall. Beyond the plexiglass window is the Violet technician who ordered you in here, Dave-V-JNS.

"Hello again, brave Troubleshooters," he says. "Prepare now to meet the newest, most advanced machine the fertile minds at Research and Development have yet produced."

GM: Begin reading the next three paragraphs in a hushed whisper, building gradually and dramatically in volume and intensity. Give the PCs the impression that from behind the far door anything might appear — the Mothership, the battleship New Jersey, or a Panzer division.

Suddenly, from beyond the far door, there comes a great rumbling. The floor trembles beneath you. Far off you hear sirens blare and alarms ring out. The deep rumble builds to a crescendo, until it sounds almost identical to the pre-festival warmup of the giant Hovercar Personnel Carrier Floats at the last

"How-are-ya-How-are-ya-How-are-ya?"



Vulture Squadron Support and Appreciation Celebration. Remember what happened to those Hovercars, just after that deep rumbling began? Sure you do — but this time you don't have any blast shields to protect you.

About the time your molars start rattling, the plexiglass window begins bulging outward, the ceiling groans, the walls seem to close in, and you can almost see the floor cracking — the noise stops.

Silence falls. The far door slides back. Suddenly you hear a strange, mechanical-sounding voice:

(GM: Brooklyn accent, very nasal tone, monotonous delivery, bush-league tacky comedian:)

"How-are-ya how-are-ya how-are-ya?!"

A strange-looking bot a little over a meter tall trundles into the room on tiny wheels. It has oversized metal ears and a little derby hat. A "Smile" face is painted on its chest plate. It wears baggy brown pants and a big polka-dot bowtie, which spins around like a propeller.

"Wow, what a crowd!" it says. "Troubleshooters. My favorite audience, never a dull moment, I love 'em. Just came back from WES Sector and boy, are my arms tired! Great crowd, terrific crowd. Hey, people are funny, y'know? Take my designer — please! But seriously, folks..."

At this point Dave-V interrupts, speaking into a microphone from behind the window. "This is the Funbot," he says. "Someday, bots like this will entertain citizens all over Alpha Complex, making our lives even more joyously satisfying. The Funbot's functions are many: it tells jokes, dances a little, and — uh — some other fun things. It will be your guide, entertainer, and constant companion throughout the rest of your mission. Bless The Computer in its infinite wisdom!" Dave-V is overcome with emotion at this point — all choked up.

Probably the PCs are too. Especially when they sign all those forms — endless, horrendous forms — swearing to protect the Funbot and acknowledging responsibility, individually and as a group, prone to fines, torture, or termination, should anything unfortunate happen to the Funbot.

2.5.3 Tell Me About the Funbot, Daddy

Yes, this thing really is the PCs' constant companion throughout the rest of the adventure, and no, it doesn't work real well just yet. It's the mechanical embodiment of every beery nightclub comic who ever bombed in the Catskills. When you play the Funbot, think of Henny Youngman's less talented disciples — the ones that make *him* seem funny. That's the Funbot.

Its most obvious drawback — aside from that nasal, whiny, all-smiles delivery — is that it's programmed with only five jokes, which it tells incessantly. And repetitively. At every free moment in the adventure, roll 1D10 and consult the Random Joke Chart (page 29). The Funbot tells it. If you roll the same joke six times in a row — well, practice makes perfect.

At the first sign of a tough audience (i.e., when the PCs don't laugh at the jokes), the Funbot emits clouds of laughing gas. Anyone in the area will be engulfed, laugh uproariously (and painfully) for a minute or more, and must make a difficult Endurance check to avoid being Stunned.

Clever PCs might use the Funbot to disable enemies — saying, "Hey, Funbot! Tell these Vultures the one about —" and pulling on their gas masks.

Let the PCs benefit from this shrewd strategy once or twice, but if they are filling too many rooms with gas and laughing opponents, the gas supply should run out at an opportune moment.

The Funbot also has a built-in cream pie dispenser. At random intervals, or at any appropriate time, the bot reaches into a slot in its side, pulls out a pie, and tosses it at the highest-clearance person in the room. Its aim is unerring. The PCs will have loads of fun explaining the Funbot's actions...

Besmirched

Indigo: That bot has covered my face and upper torso with an unpleasant creamy substance. Are you the felons responsible for it?

PCs: Well, it's not actually *ours*, it just follows us around.

Indigo: Then please destroy it immediately.

PCs: Oh, no! — uh — It's valuable Computer experimental equipment from The Computer's trusted servants in R&D.

Indigo: Yes? Well, then, it is obviously malfunctioning. You are therefore fined a ludicrous number of credits for improperly maintaining equipment.

Hygiene

Officer: Actually, our Robotics officer is respsn —

Robotics

Officer: Hey, you dirty Commie cheat liar, I am *not* responsible! You signed those sheets too, and —

Funbot: Hey, hey, ladies and gents, is this a great crowd or *what?* What's ten feet tall and —

Indigo: Shut up!

Funbot: Ssssssss! (lets loose laughing gas and throws another pie)

Should matters go as intended, the Funbot should be destroyed early in the adventure — say the tenth time it tells the same joke. This is an awful disaster for the PCs, and they're in for incredible fines and treason points, but since they're all likely to die anyway there's little point in belaboring this.

What matters is that the CRUD system immediately delivers a new *replacement* Funbot

Tammy-Y-NET-2

BACKGROUND

What's this vat slime about Central Processing taking heat for putting memory-wipe drug in the Armed Forces dopkits? You've dealt with enough nosewipes, chipbrains, and drelbs in CPU to learn errors like that are par for the course. Why is everyone so flustered? So a few battalions of Vulture Squadron Commandoes are busy stacking toy blocks in The Computer's kiddie-creches: Big Effervescing Deal!

And this bunch of Troubleshooters is no better than the nimrods in your own service group. If your High Programmer (serve and protect!) would only deign to notice your efforts for her Programs Group, she'd transfer you out of this pseudochick outfit. These high-strung deviants have some of the weirdest mentalities you've ever psyched — like that Eve-R-DEN, all she ever thinks about is fire — or Chock-O-BLK, who knows much more than he lets on about the memory-wipe scandal. Maybe you should try a little blackmail involving his oh-so-fortunate absence from messhall when all that chemical amnesia was ingested.

The spooky folks in this group are your fellow Yellow, Watt-Y-WHO, and that hunched over little feep Sam-R-KND — you can't read them at all. You're worried one or both may find out that you accidentally authorized the mistaken drug distribution. Time to show those clones who's in charge.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT: ROBOTICS OFFICER

Ensure safety of The Computer's valuable bots; retrieve damaged or destroyed bot brains.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION:

A high official in your Programs Group, Cleto-B-QRK, has been acting strangely. Your High Programmer (defend and obey!) requests you to secure details of a rumored secret project Cleto-B may be working on in NBD Sector. **Don't** interfere with it, and don't let others interfere — yet.

Fellow Troubleshooter Watt-Y-WHO has been found to belong to a rival Program Group; be a loyal servant and terminate him if you have a chance, okay?

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES	PC#1
Strength	10	Carrying Capacity	25
Endurance	8	Damage Bonus	—
Agility	9	Macho Bonus	—
Manual		Melee Bonus	2%
		Aimed Weapon	
Dexterity	8	Bonus	-2%
Moxie	10	Comprehension	
Chutzpah	14	Bonus	-1%
Mechanical		Believability Bonus	+7%
Aptitude	10	Repair Bonus	-1%
Power Index	13		

SECRET SOCIETY: Programs Group

SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 1

MUTANT POWER: Telepathic Sense

Watt-Y-WHO-2

BACKGROUND

Before your old Power Services buddy turned traitor and became an officially unofficial unperson, he taught you that dandy stunt of selective power shutdown that made your humdrum work so interesting. Switch off a couple of conveyor belts in PLC for a minute apiece, and suddenly — ooh you loved this! — twenty Armed Forces squadrons end up with memory-wipe drug in their evening cycle meals! Not everyone could have exploited the opportunity you got — but that's the kind of carefree, fun-loving guy you are.

True, your enthusiasm is a little dampened here among other Troubleshooters. You've already felt little tingles at the edge of your consciousness — as if someone was trying to rifle your brain like a file cabinet. But you clamped down, threw out the psychic intruder, and now you're nearly sure the intruder was a filthy mutant telepath — that Sam-R-KND looks like the culprit, or else the Orange with the greedy look, Chock-O-BLK.

Well, so someone finds your little role in rendering eighteen-hundred soldiers like unto freshly-decanted babes: you've got a fall guy set up

already. Some of your secret society buddies found out that it was fellow Troubleshooter Elm-R-FUD who mistakenly put the memory-wipe drug on the conveyor belt to begin with. Maybe you could have a little fun toying with his mind.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT: COMPUTER OFFICER

Identify threats to The Computer; ensure that all Computer equipment is operated properly and respectfully. Report any attempt by traitors to smash, sabotage, melt, slice, pasteurize, or staple Computer property.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION:

This whole mission looks like a covert action by Cleto-B-QRK, a prominent Blue in a rival Program Group. It's probably impolitic to off Cleto-B himself (though initiative is always admired) — but make sure this mission backfires in his face. Do whatever is necessary to confuse, obstruct, and otherwise discombobulate your fellow Troubleshooters. That other Yellow, Tammy-Y-NET, is in Cleto-B's Program Group; be a good scout and vaporize her at your convenience.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES	PC#2
Strength	9	Carrying Capacity	25
Endurance	10	Damage Bonus	—
Agility	8	Macho Bonus	—
Manual		Melee Bonus	-3%
		Aimed Weapon	
Dexterity	10	Bonus	-1%
Moxie	7	Comprehension	
Chutzpah	15	Bonus	-5%
Mechanical		Believability Bonus	+10%
Aptitude	6	Repair Bonus	-10%
Power Index	5		

SECRET SOCIETY: Programs Group

SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 3

MUTANT POWER: Mental Block

Chock-O-BLK-1

BACKGROUND

You heard the little voice saying "Don't eat at evening mess." That was enough for you — you follow your supraconscious mind's directives as obediently as those of your Armed Forces superiors or The Computer. More so, even, since your supraconscious is right more often.

And so you didn't eat the memory-wipe drug that turned the rest of your company into 150-pound infants. You breathed a relieved sigh — but about halfway through it you were hauled in by Internal Security. What provoked suspicion was not your narrow escape, but that you sold your meal to the clone next to you. But hey, you were just trying to make an honest credit!

You could have told IntSec that your fellow Troubleshooter, Watt-Y-WHO, was the real operator that put the brain-erase into the food, but then, they would have wanted to know your sources. Besides, before you turn Watt-Y in, you ought to see if he's willing to pay a fair price for a useful commodity — silence.

Now your little voice is giving you warning signals about those two inconspicuous Reds, Eve-

R-DEN and Elm-R-FUD: they'll be trouble. The air of IntSec reeks from their every pore.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT: COMMUNICATIONS/INFORMATION OFFICER

Inspect every team member's Com Unit II regularly; repair as needed. Ensure loyalty of fellow Troubleshooters and other citizens.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

We've pulled some strings to get you on this mission into NBD Sector. Once you arrive, try to establish contact with Hall-Y-WUD in HPD & Mind Control. He's a prominent Free Enterpriser; do what he says, and aid him in any way you can. The password is "*The show I like is My Favorite Computer.*" He will reply with the countersign "Yes, that's one of our most popular shows." Try to arrange a few transactions; if anything in NBD Sector looks commercial, bring back a sample.

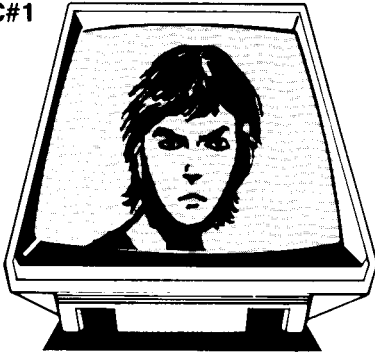
PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES	PC#3
Strength	7	Carrying Capacity	25
Endurance	7	Damage Bonus	—
Agility	11	Macho Bonus	—
Manual		Melee Bonus	+1%
		Aimed Weapon	
Dexterity	11	Bonus	+1%
Moxie	11	Comprehension	
Chutzpah	12	Bonus	+1%
Mechanical		Believability Bonus	+3%
Aptitude	10	Repair Bonus	-1%
Power Index	13		

SECRET SOCIETY: Free Enterprise

SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 3

MUTANT POWER: Precognition

PC#1



Tammy-Y-NET-2

SECURITY CLEARANCE: YELLOW
SERVICE GROUP: CPU

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser pistol
To Hit: 27%
Type: L
Range: 50m
Reload: 6r
Malfnt: 00

Neuronic Whip
To Hit: 42%
Type: M
Range: 3m
Reload: plugs into wall, has 5m cord.
Malfnt: 95

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (Yellow)
1 laser pistol
2 laser pistol barrels (Yellow)
jumpsuit and utility belt
Com Unit II
gas mask
first aid kit
knife
notebook and stylus
neuronic whip (treasonous)
multipurpose robot repair tool (with a thousand-and-one uses)

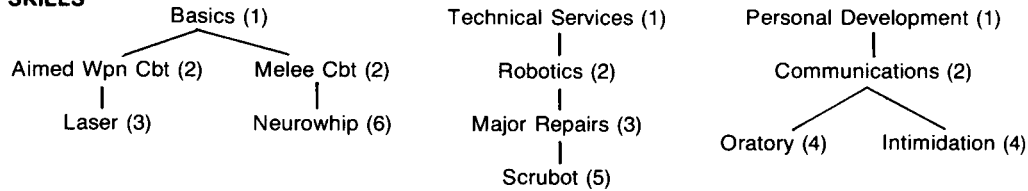
DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

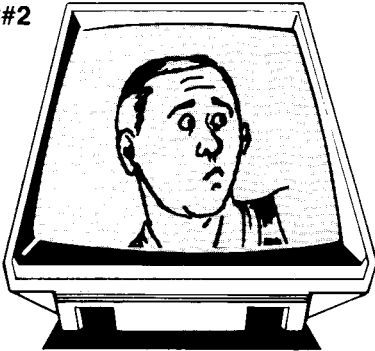
CREDITS

220

SKILLS



PC#2



Watt-Y-WHO-2

SECURITY CLEARANCE: YELLOW
SERVICE GROUP: Power Services

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser pistol
To Hit: 24%
Type: F
Range: 50m
Reload: 3r
Malfnt: 95

Tangler
To Hit: 24%
Type: F
Range: 50m
Reload: 3r
Malfnt: 95

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (Yellow)
1 laser pistol
2 laser pistol barrels (Yellow)
jumpsuit and utility belt
Com Unit II
gas mask
flashlight
infrared goggles
notebook and stylus
tangler (treasonous)

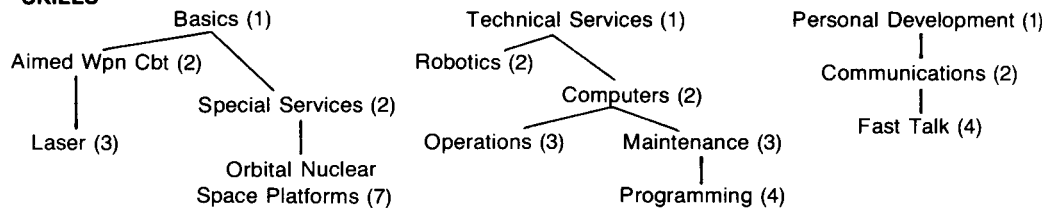
DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

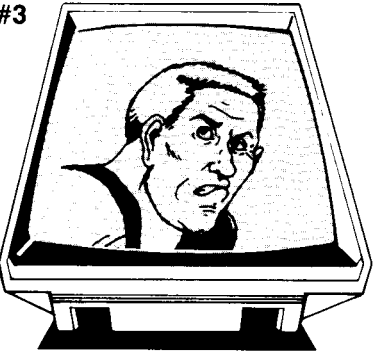
CREDITS

200

SKILLS



PC#3



Chock-O-BLK-1

SECURITY CLEARANCE: ORANGE
SERVICE GROUP: Armed Forces

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser pistol
To Hit: 26%
Type: L
Range: 50m
Reload: 6r
Malfnt: 00

Rock
To Hit: 51%
Type: M
Range: 2m
Reload: 1r
Malfnt: 00 (it breaks)

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

prefabricated official artificial rock (weight 50 lbs)
reflec armor (Orange)
1 laser pistol
2 laser pistol barrels (Orange)
jumpsuit and utility belt
Com Unit II
gas mask
knife
flashlight
notebook and stylus
Blue laser barrel (treasonous)

DAMAGE STATUS

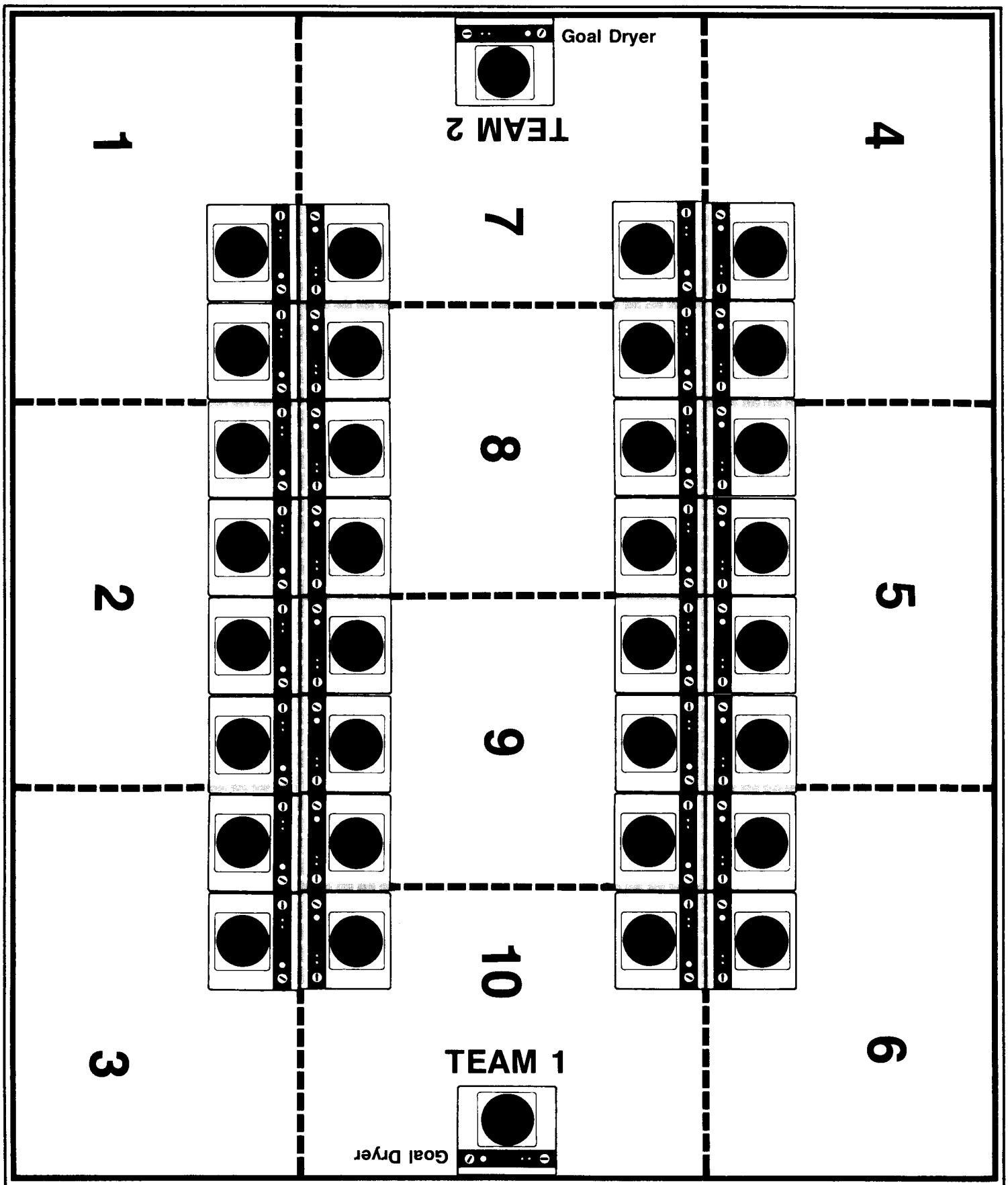
Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

CREDITS

300

SKILLS





The Arena
Date With Death, Round 2

PLC Runaround

(1) Office of Production

Huge room with about thirty desks — junior executive heaven. PCs can go to any desk, explain their needs, then be referred to next desk to repeat their story.

Wait: One hour total.

Officials: Various anonymous Reds, two Oranges, one Yellow supervisor.

Results: Yellow chief at last desk tells PCs they have the wrong office; refers them to (5).

(2) Office of Logistics

Huge room identical to (1). Thirty desks, each with its clerical drone filling out meaningless forms. Fluorescent lights that buzz. PCs given the same treatment as (1).

Wait: One hour total.

Officials: As (1).

Result: PCs referred to (6).

(3) Office of Commissary

Huge room identical to (1) and (2). Thirty desks — all but one empty. Long line for single Red drone.

Wait: One hour total.

Official: Busy-R-WEE; minor clerk, harried, rude. "All the others were terminated yesterday," he explains.

Result: Gives PCs salmon-colored form RSC-2544/E and refers them to (6).

(7) Complex Supply Bureau

A bewildering array of counters, attendants, and crowds. Any given clerk requires the PCs to sign loyalty oaths to The Computer and the Complex Supply Bureau.

Wait: 1-2 hours.

Officials: Squinty-eyed geeks who argue as much as possible before saying, "Oh, you want the Bureau of Complex Supply."

Result: PCs referred to (12).

(4) Registration and Requisitions

Small, boxy office with customer service counter. Behind counter are six Yellows, cleaning and readying laser rifles; air of determination and imminent action. "Moving to new quarters," they explain.

Wait: None.

Official: Bell-Y-DNC, supervisor, no nonsense. Won't listen long.

Result: Refers PCs to (8). "Better hurry though, they'll be in new quarters soon too." Rude, derisive laughter.

(5) Office of Intra-Complex Routing and Distribution

Dusty and unkempt little place about as large as Buckingham Palace's broom closet. Packed with stacks of forms, schedules, punchcards, and brooms.

Wait: About five long minutes.

Official: Tired-O-LIF; slow and insolent, yawns a lot. Needs form from (3) — if PCs don't have it, he refers them there.

Result: Gives PCs goldenrod form 3-67-492/X-11 and refers them to (9).

(6) Sector Office of the Production and Utilization Committee

Clean, well-appointed office with one desk and chair. No paperwork in sight.

Wait: One hour (see below).

Official: Mabel-B-LOO, a matronly biddy. Regardless of the nature of the PCs' inquiry, she will steer the conversation to an hour-long discussion on the need to maintain efficiency and avoid waste.

Result: Refers PCs (finally) to (9).

(12) Bureau of Complex Supply

Identical to (7), except the loyalty oath the PCs are asked to sign requires allegiance to the Bureau of Complex Supply, and not the Complex Supply Bureau.

Wait: 2-3 hours.

Officials: Just like (7), except they'll say, "Oh, you want the Supply Complex Bureau."

Results: PCs referred to (11).

(11) Supply Complex Bureau

Identical to (7) and (12), except that the oath requires undying loyalty to the Supply Complex Bureau and not the Bureau of Complex Supply or the Complex Supply Bureau.

Wait: 3-4 hours.

Officials: "Oh, do you want the Complex Supply Bureau?"

Results: PCs referred to (7).

Flowchart

(9) Troubleshooter Counseling, Loyalty, and Equipment Bureau

An office hardly larger than a conventional broom closet. Some PCs are left in the hallway. They won't be able to hear what the two inside say.

Wait: None.

Official: A cheery Jackobot, eager to please — but very inquisitive about PC's mission, goals, feelings, and everything else.

Result: PCs referred to (13).

(13) Inter-Sector Transport and Resource Allocation Division of the Greater Alpha Complex Supervisory Coordination Bureau

Wait: One hour (searching through countless hallways).

Official: None, sign on door says "OUT".

Result: Sign refers PCs to (14).

(14) Coordinating Administrative Council for Citizen Well-Being and Security, Division of Communist Genocide

Clerks behind a line of windows like tellers in a bank. Deathly silent, stifling atmosphere.

Wait: One day (come back tomorrow).

Official: Official, small-minded nerd who demands form from (3). If PCs don't have it, he'll refer them to (5).

Result: PCs referred to (15).

(10) Complex Coordinating and Planning Commission, Water Recycling Division

A luxurious individual cubicle, unoccupied. Cot, food, nothing treasonous.

Wait: 10 minutes.

Official: A portly, indolent Blue returns with more food — surprised to see the PCs, and quite suspicious. "Who sent you here? What made you think I could help?"

Result: No help, PCs referred to (13).

(16) Office of Nirvana

A calm, courteous staff which aids the PCs with utmost dispatch. They even offer to complete the mission for the PCs.

Wait: Instantaneous satisfaction.

Official: Hoo-O-RAY, the PCs' friend.

Results: None. The PCs can't get here. There's no way in. Say, how are *you* reading this?

(8) Registration, Requisitions, Food Additives & Sidearms

Door in deserted hallway; heavily barricaded — rifle barrels protrude through small ports. If PCs say anything, warning shots are fired over their heads. "Can't help you, go somewhere else!"

(15) Supply

Humble-looking counter with docile Red clerk. No line. Provides PCs with assigned equipment, speedily and without argument. Most reasonable equipment requests are granted. Proper forms must be signed.







The Gamemaster should read through the boxes on the flowchart to get a feel for the types of encounters the PCs will meet. The encounters are self-explanatory, but note the following

Wait: This is the amount of time wasted filling out forms, waiting in lines, and playing with pencils on the bench

Officials: These are the NPCs in charge of the various offices and bureaus. Sometimes officials will send PCs back for an extra form; this type of referral is termed a Backtracking Referral

Result: If the players wait the required time and make it past the officials, they'll receive a result. Results are referrals to other offices and/or forms which may help them later

How to use the PLC Runaround Flowchart

-  — Starting Box
-  — Bureaucracy Box
-  — Progress Box
-  — Runaround Referral
-  — Backtracking Referral
-  — Progressing Referral

To start the PCs on their odyssey through PLC, ask them to choose door (1), (2), (3), (4), (7), or (10). The Gamemaster may also make referrals as he sees fit.

Note that box (8) has no result; the players must come up with the next move on their own. Note also that boxes (7), (11), and (12) just lead back to each other in an endless loop. Be sure the PCs pass through this at least once, twice if they don't catch it the first time.

INFORMATION INQUIRY FORM

Name _____

Security Clearance _____

Authorization _____

Are you now, or have you ever been a
Mutant? (y/n) _____
Communist? (y/n) _____
(if yes, Reg. _____ Unreg. _____)
Secret Society Member? _____

The Computer is your friend. Are you The Computer's Friend?

Yes _____ No _____ Other (please explain) _____

Date information desired by _____ Date information needed by _____

2nd alternate date _____ 4th alternate date _____

3rd alternate date _____ 5th alternate date _____

Undersigned acknowledges that all information made available to him/her is considered privileged and highly sensitive. Any report is classified unless otherwise stated. Should this information fall into the hands of enemies of The Computer, undersigned agrees to report for immediate termination. Pursuant to The Computer's recent directive 199/3468 section III subsection C paragraph f, "Reduction of Paperwork Through Multiple-Purpose Documents," undersigned also assumes responsibility for reservoir maintenance bots in Waste Recycling Subdivision, agrees to supervise next Semannual Loyalty and Patriotism Festival, and requests information pamphlet C-27 "Captain Botaroo and Foodvat Show You How to Spot a Traitor."

Signature _____ Date _____

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY! DO NOT WRITE IN THE SPACE BELOW!

Attention Processors: To fulfill request for information, secure approval from ULTRAVIOLET clearance personnel in all Service Groups (initials or identifying below):

CPU _____	PS _____	IS _____	IS/InfCom _____
TS _____	AF _____	IS/Sup _____	IS/InOff _____
HPD&MC _____	PLC _____	IS/AssSup _____	IS/InOut _____

Result:

_____ Return for clarification
_____ Information unavailable at this security clearance
_____ Information not found
_____ Requestor terminated
_____ Request filled (state reason on attached sheet and submit to IntSec)

The Computer grants permission to photocopy this form.

Unauthorized reproduction is treason.

PARANOIA NOTES

NOTE 1

Your mind has been clouded — you don't know how or by whom. All you know is that you want nothing more out of life than to help Teela. Right now, that means doing one of three things (your choice):

1. Turn on your erstwhile companions and blast them.
2. Stand back and watch Cleto-B and his buddies blast your fellow Troubleshooters. (Don't worry, they'll be here any second now.)
3. Follow Teela through the open door behind her — There she goes!

Now what?

NOTE 2

For just a moment, you felt a little queasy, but now the feeling has passed.

1. You notice that your fellow Troubleshooters look a little strange.
2. You hear the sound of a crowd rapidly approaching from behind you.
3. Teela seems ready to bolt through the door behind her — there she goes!

Now what?

THE ALPHA COMPLEX SONGBOOK

SEND IN THE CLONES

Isn't it great?
Isn't it keen?
Living in complexes ruled by machine.
Where are the clones?
There ought to be clones.
Send in the clones....

Isn't it rich
Do we have six?
Well then let's go Troubleshooters —
C'mon, let's mix...
Where are the clones?
There ought to be clones.
Send in the clones....

Just when I start
Opening doors,
Looking for mutants and traitors
on ceilings and floors.
Shooting my laser again
with no malfunction roll...
Enemy bots...
Taking a toll....

Don't you love farce?
Traitors abound.
Won't you just go to the corner,
And look around?
Where are the clones?
There should be clones.
Send in the clones.

I'm just so mad.
It makes me red.
This is my very first mission —
Already I'm dead.
Where is my clone?
I must have a clone.
Send in my clone.

TOP HAT, WHITE TIE, AND LASER

(Way too treasonous to print)

WHAT THE HELL IS RAIN

sung to the tune of "Who'll Stop the Rain"

Long as I remember
The complex is underground.
Miles of twisty tunnels;
No exit to be found.
Would-be nature lovers
Tryin' to find the sun,
But I wonder; still I wonder:
What the Hell is Rain?

I went up six levels
Seekin' old man Yasgur's farm.
But Guardbots wearing Kevlar
Grabbed me by the arms.
"The Computer plans a new you."
"You must have gone insane..."
What a blunder, but I wondered:
What the Hell is Rain?

Now workin' in the foodvats,
My mind's not on escape —
While a Plasma Generator
Guards against mistakes.
Machines are barkin' orders:
"The Computer is your friend!"
But I wonder, still I wonder:
What the Hell is Rain?

I'M JUST WILD ABOUT MUTIE

I'm just wild about mutie.
And mutie's wild about me.
Computerly blisses — boos and hisses.
Commie's the way to be.
Life's sweet just like processed algae.
And just like Teela on TeeVee.
Oh I'm just wild about muties.
And they're just wild about—
Cannot live without—
They're just wild about ME!

I'M AN ALPHA COMPLEX DANDY

I'm an Alpha Complex Dandy.
Alpha Complex do or die.
A new clone version of my last five clones.
Like them I know I'll soon die.
I've got an Alpha Complex sweetheart.
Teela is my Alpha Joy.
Troubleshooters find the Commies.
Beat the mutants senseless.
I am an Alpha Complex boy!

I'm an Alpha Complex dandy.
Troubleshooter do or die.
A clone replacement of my former self.
Soon I will probably fry.
I've got to serve my friend Computer.
If I don't, I know I'll die.
Kill the Commie infiltrators,
Also Troubleshooters.
I am an Alpha Complex guy!

I'M AN ALPHA COMPLEX COMMIE

(subversive version of the above)

I'm an Alpha Complex Commie.
Alpha Complex do or die.
A new clone version of my last five clones.
Like them, I know I'll soon die.
I'm not an Alpha Complex sweetheart.
Girls are just the same as boys.
Commie mutants beat computers.
Troubleshooters, phooie!
I'm not an Alpha Complex toy!

IT'S ALL OVER NOW LEVEL BLUE

sung to the tune of "It's All Over Now Baby Blue"

"You must leave now," the guardbot says,
"An' I don't think you'll last...
So keep your lasers handy,
You better draw 'em fast."
We understand your orders aren't much fun,
Running from a glowing Plasma Gun.
Look out now there's mutants coming through,
And it's all over now LEVEL BLUE.

RED LEVEL is for gamblers,
Better use your Mutant sense.
Take notes on all e-vents that are trea-son-ous.
The empty-headed Funbot's about to speak,
Emitting awful jokes you heard last week.
The complex is falling in on you,
And it's all over now LEVEL BLUE.

Leave your secret society behind,
The Computer calls for you.
Forget the friends you had
They have re-ported you...
The warbot that's breaking down your door,
Is programmed in a way you can't ignore...
Hope your next clone will try and start anew,
'Cause it's all over now LEVEL BLUE.

After working in the food vats,
You're back at home,
And the smell from down there won't leave you
alone...
Your next clone has just walked in the door,
He says, "report for termination number four."
The floor is now moving under you,
Oops, it's all over now LEVEL BLUE...

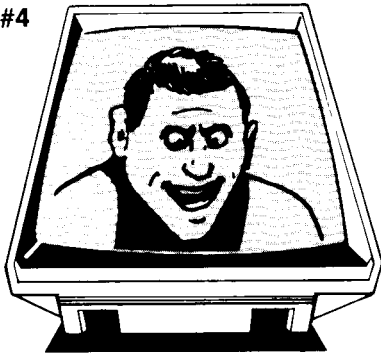
KELP!

Kelp! to feed my body.
Kelp! not just algae, buddy!
Kelp! don't even need a bun.
KELP!

When I was stronger so much stronger than today.
I used to eat French fries with ketchup everyday.
But now those days are gone and I'm just not really
sure.
To be quite frank, ya know; did our lunch really once
have fur?

Kelp! it taste so good now don't you know?
And it makes me want to crawl to bed and snore.
Help me keep my lunch up off the floor.
Won't you please, please ban kelp.

PC#4



Sam-R-KND-1

SECURITY CLEARANCE: RED
SERVICE GROUP: Technical

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser pistol
To Hit: 55%
Type: L
Range: 50m
Reload: 6r
Malfn: 00

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (Red)
1 laser pistol
2 laser pistol barrels (Red)
jumpsuit and utility belt
Com Unit II
personal hygiene kit
knife
notebook and stylus
100 personality stabilizer tablets
thermonuclear grenade (treasonous)

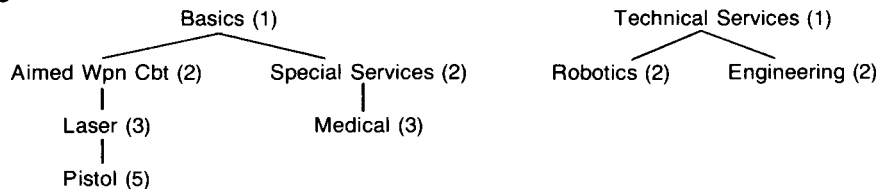
DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

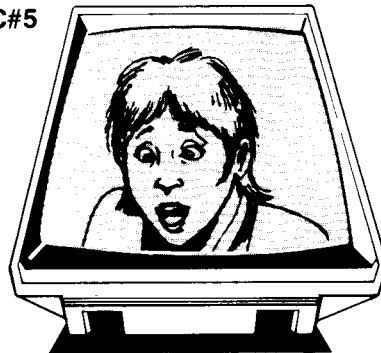
CREDITS

100

SKILLS



PC#5



Eve-R-DEN-2

SECURITY CLEARANCE: RED
SERVICE GROUP: PLC/Internal Security

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser pistol	Knife
To Hit: 40%	To Hit: 47%
Type: L	Type: M
Range: 50m	Range: 20m
Reload: 6r	Reload: —
Malfn: 00	Malfn: 00

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (Red)
1 laser pistol
2 laser barrels (Red)
jumpsuit and utility belt
Com Unit II
notebook and stylus
hand lens
hygiene kit
knife
Yellow laser barrel (treasonous)

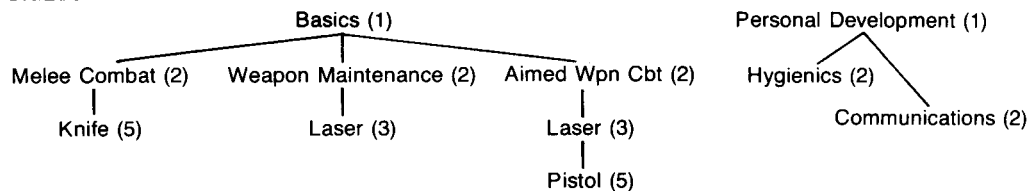
DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

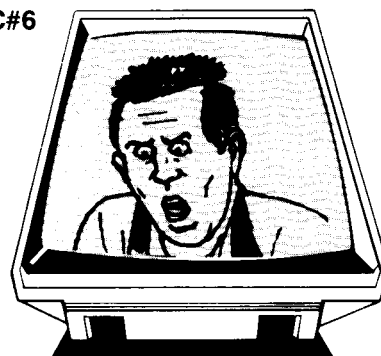
CREDITS

110

SKILLS



PC#6



Elm-R-FUD-1

SECURITY CLEARANCE: RED
SERVICE GROUP: PLC

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser pistol	Knife
To Hit: 43%	To Hit: 45%
Type: L	Type: M
Range: 50m	Range: 20m
Reload: 6r	Reload: —
Malfn: 00	Malfn: 00

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (Red)
1 laser pistol
2 laser barrels (Red)
jumpsuit and utility belt
Com Unit II
notebook and stylus
knife
Yellow laser barrel (treasonous)
hypnodisk (treasonous)

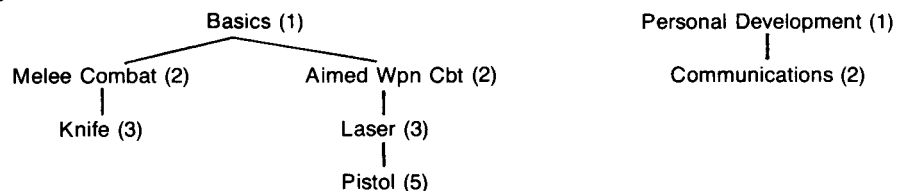
DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

CREDITS

90

SKILLS



Sam-R-KND-1**BACKGROUND**

This is neat! You're a **real** Troubleshooter, like the heroes on the vidshows. And you didn't even have to spend a lot of boring time in TechServ to get into the glamor job, which is just as well since you kind of made a mess of things your first day in The Computer's service. It must have been the thrill of being in among all those food-distribution pipes; you turned the wrong spigot, and the entire Armed Forces allotment of Bouncy Bubble Beverage was replaced with memory-wipe drug before it went out to PLC. Now, entire regiments of Alpha Complex soldiers are relearning how to put on their underwear. Well, it wasn't really your fault anyway. I mean, your supervisor, and fellow Troubleshooter, Tammy-Y-NET, approved the spigot turn that put the Armed Forces C-in-C into diapers.

You know the Troubleshooters are great, but those nasty, scummie commie mutants infiltrate everywhere. Already you've felt delicate probings into your mind — mutants! Telepathic brain-eaters! Good thing you brought up all the barriers before the slimy felon found anything — and you're sure

the soon-to-be-dead mutie is either Elm-R-FUD or Chock-O-BLK. Maybe you'll have to off both of them to be sure of combatting the subhuman threat — but that's the way the bubble beverage bounces. Pretty neat stuff, huh!?

TEAM ASSIGNMENT: MEDICAL OFFICER

Record team's physical and mental condition during stress situations. Render medical aid as needed. Dispense Personality Stabilizer Tablets to team members and advise them to seek therapy when appropriate.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION:

Kill the mutants! You had to ask? There's an unconfirmed report that Tammy-Y is a mutant — the best guess is that she has Advanced Hearing. Confirm this (roleplaying hint: whisper a lot) and, if true, terminate her. By the way, there's an IntSec plant in your group — we think it's one of the Reds. Happy hunting.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#4
Strength	10	Carrying Capacity		25
Endurance	16	Damage Bonus		—
Agility	15	Macho Bonus		-1
Manual		Melee Bonus		+10%
Dexterity	17	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	14	Bonus		+15%
Chutzpah	8	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		+5%
Aptitude	14	Believability Bonus		-5%
Power Index	12	Repair Bonus		+5%

SECRET SOCIETY: Anti-Mutant**SECRET SOCIETY RANK:** 1**MUTANT POWER:** Mental Block**Eve-R-DEN-2****BACKGROUND**

It wasn't your fault. You were conducting your undercover Internal Security investigation of PLC, doing PLC-type things like shifting boxes from one conveyor belt to another. Sure, you noticed that those containers of Bouncy Bubble Beverage had actually been filled with memory-wipe drug — but you didn't dare report it. That would show distrust of the wisdom of your superiors — and (shudder) The Computer. So just because seventy platoons of Armed Forces troops have been reduced to the education level of a broken scrubot — that's not your fault. Your superiors would certainly agree — but no sense bothering them with trivia.

That cold-blooded twerp Elm-R-FUD from PLC saw you carrying those containers — he should be apprised of the need to avoid cluttering your superiors' outlook with little details. Maybe you should steer him onto Sam-R-KND, the Tech who filled the wrong containers in the first place. Or maybe you could frame Watt-Y-WHO, who's supposed to be so deep into Free Enterprise the credits are bulging out his ears.

All this maneuvering wears you down. You'd like

to go outside, to that happy world of astroturf and animal droppings you've always heard about. There are small furry things there, and tall brown and green poles, and things growing on every exposed surface. You'd like to head into the world of nature — and set everything on fire, and watch it burn.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT: HYGIENE OFFICER

Ensure cleanliness and good conduct among fellow Troubleshooters; assign demerits for slovenly upkeep of uniform, person, equipment, etc. Ensure that all Troubleshooters conduct field tests of all equipment as per the manual — every half hour.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION:

IntSec has identified NBD Sector as the nexus of considerable black market activity. Your mission: identify traitorous black-market operators and mark them for interrogation by spraying them with this harmless spray which we have disguised as deodorant. The spray is invisible to the naked eye, but will register on our IntSec scanners. The spray will be included in your Emergency Hygiene Kit. Good luck, and good hunting.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#5
Strength	13	Carrying Capacity		30
Endurance	17	Damage Bonus		—
Agility	14	Macho Bonus		-1
Manual		Melee Bonus		+7%
Dexterity	15	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	12	Bonus		+10%
Chutzpah	7	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		+2%
Aptitude	11	Believability Bonus		-10%
Power Index	13	Repair Bonus		+1%

SECRET SOCIETY: Sierra Club**SECRET SOCIETY RANK:** 1**MUTANT POWER:** Pyrokinesis**Elm-R-FUD-1****BACKGROUND**

Put boxes on conveyor belts. Take them off conveyor belts. Wait for conveyor belts to be repaired. Not the most rewarding occupation for an exponent of the future glory of technology. In PLC you were wasted — no wonder you happened to make a small mistake, when your mind was occupied with higher matters. Anyone could have done it — those boxes of memory-wipe drug look awfully similar to the boxes of Bouncy Bubble Beverage those Armed Forces morons usually get. You put a few wrong boxes on the wrong conveyor belt, and now five thousand soldiers have regressed to staring at their fingernails and putting their toes in their mouths. It's no big deal from your angle (you'd never drink Bouncy Bubble Beverage anyway) — but it's a lucky break you got transferred to the Troubleshooters before anyone fingered you.

Anyway, you're in the clear if someone accuses you — just shift attention over to your "fellow PLCer," Eve-R-DEN. Not only is she so transparently an IntSec agent, but you know she

caught the memory-wipe/beverage mixup and didn't say anything.

TEAM ASSIGNMENT: WEAPONS OFFICER

Ensure weapon safety and function; inspect every hour and repair as needed. Confiscate illegally-held weapons.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION:

Greater humanity through greater machinery! Greetings, Pro-Techer: an unknown faction of purblind machine-mashers has diverted a valuable shipment of cloning equipment from the higher destiny to which we had previously diverted it. It's believed your fellow Troubleshooter Tammy-Y-NET works for this anti-future faction, aided by Watt-Y-WHO. Interrogate Tammy-Y and Watt-Y with this marvelous new Hypno-disk we secured; one look at it and they'll be forced to tell you everything. Oh, and don't forget to terminate them after questioning.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#6
Strength	14	Carrying Capacity		35
Endurance	13	Damage Bonus		+1%
Agility	17	Macho Bonus		—
Manual		Melee Bonus		+15%
Dexterity	12	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	11	Bonus		+3%
Chutzpah	9	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		+1%
Aptitude	12	Believability Bonus		-3%
Power Index	16	Repair Bonus		+2%

SECRET SOCIETY: Pro Tech**SECRET SOCIETY RANK:** 1**MUTANT POWER:** Empathy

RANDOM JOKE CHART

Roll 1D10 and consult the chart below to determine which joke the Funbot tells:

1-2: "What did the Red Troubleshooter say to the Yellow Troubleshooter after the Red Troubleshooter stepped on the Yellow Troubleshooter's foot?"
— "Please don't shoot me!"

3-4: "Why did the Orange Troubleshooter cross the corridor?"
— "To get out of the way of the guardbot."

5-6: "What's outside?" the Infrared asked the Indigo.

— "I'm sorry," said the Indigo. "Could you tell me where you heard that term?"

7-8: "What smells worse than the Food Vats?"
— "Nothing."

9-10: "What's ten feet tall and loaded for bear?"
— "What's a bear?"

wherever the PCs are. ("How-are-ya how-are-ya how-are-ya! I'm back for an encore. You're such a great audience I couldn't stay away...") And naturally the Troubleshooters are immediately notified by public address system that they are deeply responsible for this one, also.

2.5.4 The Funbot Goes on the Road

We'll be candid. The Funbot has nothing to do with this adventure. At least, it doesn't *have* to. Nominally it's a guide through NBD Sector where the PCs will be seeking Teela, but the Troubleshooters will quickly learn that the Funbot doesn't know any more about NBD Sector than they do. ("But what a great sector, I gotta tell ya. Hey, the people don't come any nicer than in NBD Sector. Anybody here from NBD? Give yourselves a hand! C'mon, let's hear it for our friends in NBD Sector!") To the players, the Funbot is just one big albatrossbot around their necks.

But for you, the GM, the Funbot has one great function that renders it indispensable in your adventure.

No, it's not that it gives you a "voice," a persona to take on while speaking to the PCs — though that's always helpful.

It's not that the Funbot complicates any delicate situation with laughing gas or a pie.

It's not that it can record and randomly repeat any treasonous statement made in its presence.

No, its primary function is not immediately apparent to the players... but they'll find out what it is eventually.

See, the Funbot goes berserk.

Yes, really. It runs away from the Troubleshooters whenever you wish. Either it leads them *exactly* where you want them to go, magically "repairing" itself at the destination — or (if you feel like throwing in a few arbitrary encounters) it begins hiding little *bombs* in the most interesting places. The bombs were supposed to make a loud "BANG!" to startle innocent bystanders — funny, right? Well, unfortunately, an overzealous R&D technician put a little too much explosive in them. Can you say "nitroglycerine"? Sure you can.

The beauty of this — which you will appreciate as the bombs explode, sirens blare, warnings sound over PA systems, and the sector is evacuated — is that the Troubleshooters are *responsible* for the Funbot. It's *theirs*. When it runs away, they have to go after it. No matter where they are. No matter what they're doing. They have to find and subdue it — without damaging it, of course.

Once you've made sure the players understand their responsibility, and that unnamed but certainly hideous fates will befall them if anything happens to the Funbot, you can dump on them any time thereafter. If things seem to be going too smoothly for the players, or they run out of clever ways to cause themselves trouble, or the action slows down, or you just feel impish, the Funbot burps.

Just a little burp. Hardly anyone will notice. It burps again.

Its speech slurs: "Hey-yy, I j-just gottt baaack from APV SSSsss-sector and boyboyboy BOYboy are my arms legs wheels pseudopods retractive metalized processor housing connections ti-ti-ti-tired." This should make the PCs perk up their ears.

Then it beeps and boops like a video game. It gets squat, then thin. Little tendrils of steam curl out of every joint. And *then...*

Read this aloud:

The Funbot is speeding away — like a bot out of hell. You see it race down one corridor, then skitter around a corner on one wheel, one hand on its head to keep the little derby in place. It's making very odd noises: "Woo-woo! Woo-woo! Eeeb-ee-beebee!"

Then it rolls out of sight beyond the corner. You hear a "clunk... BOOM!" Smoke billows through the corridors. Looks like some kind of explosion.

Now what?

The PCs have to chase it. *Have* to. If they don't, remind them that the Funbot is precious experimental equipment. If they still don't, it's a treason point apiece, and The Computer comes on over the PA system in its more-in-sorrow-than-in-anger tones:

"Attention, Troubleshooters. Sorry to

"You've been a great audience, but I gotta run...!"



bother you, but I've received reports that a valuable bot assigned to your mission is undertaking unauthorized demolition of certain facilities in your sector.

"Your calm reaction to this emergency is heartening. Such calm in the face of likely termination validates The Computer's faith in your bravery. Please secure the valuable bot at your earliest opportunity. Thank you, as always, your friend, The Computer."

2.5.5 The Chase is On

So the PCs run after the Funbot. The chase resembles an old Keystone Kops two-reeler — speeded-up motion and all. The Troubleshooters get lots of glimpses of the rogue bot as it skitters around corners and out of sight a la Charlie Chaplin. They get to bravely defuse little bombs (a difficult Manual Dexterity check or a Demolition skill roll) — or fail to defuse them (roll on column 7 of the Damage Table). The bombs are set in neat places like trash disposal chutes (easy Agility check or the disarming PC goes down the tube to the Waste Recycling Division), vidshow studios (see encounters in subsequent sections for show ideas), Green level guards' foundation gaments, and so on.

Don't worry if the PCs lose the Funbot while defusing a bomb — as each bomb is disarmed, everyone's favorite bot will peer around a corner, saying, "How-are-ya how-are-ya how-are-ya?" Then it's off again.

The Funbot can lead the PCs directly to their next encounter, or it can divert them into a little arbitrary chaos by leading them through the most heavily-populated parts of NBD Sector. To wit:

Commissary: Known throughout Alpha Complex for its Tetraoxychloramazine Soup and all-around awful food, the NBD Commissary is a haunt of many popular vidshow performers and behind-the-scenes technicians. It looks something like a 1950's automat (individual chemical concoctions available behind little windows), except that the ejection mechanism for the dishes is a little — *strong* — sometimes. In other words, duck when opening.

If the PCs have already met the various NBD HPD NPCs (like Hall-Y-WUD or Don-Y-OSM,

described in later sections of this adventure) when the Funbot guides them to the Commissary, they'll likely run into them again. There are also food service bots and scrubots and numerous actors in costume. (Is the Indigo who just got a pie in the face for real, or a fake? Only the GM knows for sure.) You'll find plenty of opportunities for food fights, slippery floors, and disgruntled high-clearance types caught in the middle of the maelstrom. Go to town.

Restrooms: Another great place for the Funbot to go. Alpha Complex restrooms are ultra-high-tech, using lasers in conjunction with flush mechanisms to, well, you know. It just so happens that when the Funbot bursts into a stall, it interrupts an Indigo IntSec trooper in a personal matter. The PCs arrive just in time to witness the following (and be implicated by their presence):

The sequence is: 1. joke, 2. laughing gas, 3. bomb. Streams of water arch from the ruptured water pipes. Maybe a little short circuit in the Funbot for seasoning. Let the PCs splash around a bit trying to get a grip on the careening gigglebot while the Indigo sputters indignantly and breaks out his summons book.

Then the inspector from the Waste Recycling Subdivision appears. "Hi, Perkins-R from Waste. Understand you had a little back-up here. (Water fountains from a dozen shattered pipes. The Funbot scurries about throwing up little rooster-tails as the PCs struggle to grapple it.) Could you answer a few questions for my report?"

If the PCs are real cooperative, perhaps it will be Perkins-R that shows up at the final debriefing, the only witness in their favor, eloquently pleading that they should be spared because of their loyal cooperation with the Waste Recycling Subdivision.

Dressing Rooms: The performers in NBD Sector have to don their costumes somewhere. Dressing rooms, complete with costumes, makeup, and dusty powder puffs provide ample opportunities for Funbot zaniness. Have the PCs charge into one after the Funbot, smack into a crowd of Blues and Violets — or, to be even more devious, a lot of Infrareds who comport themselves like Blue and Violets. Are they real, or just actors?

And suppose there's nobbody in the dressing room — just a rack full of *white* robes. Or violet, or indigo. How much would these be worth on the black market? Can the PCs disguise themselves? Can they convince a big, nasty IntSec agent who sees right through them when they



"No, no... everything's fine — now... really!"

claim they were "just fooling around" with those blue robes? It's your call.

2.5.6 How to Fix a Funbot

So you finally lead the PCs where they were supposed to go. Then the Funbot will stop rolling, burp once or twice, and come back to what passes for normal. "Hiya, I'm back again! That's what I love about Troubleshooters, always on the run. Hey, what is this, a mission or a marathon?"

Maybe the PCs want to fix the thing. Ounce of prevention and all that. Of course, none of them know how to fix it. If they try, they'll probably just make it worse.

They could try taking it back to R&D, saying, "Here, it doesn't work." But how to get it back to R&D? If they try to make the Funbot go under its own power, it will do just that — go away — and they'll just have to chase it again. As for the brute force approach, it's way too heavy to carry (at least half a ton).

So much for getting it back to R&D — and of course no one from R&D is going to come and pick it up, since that would be as much as admitting that the *important project is not going so well*.

Reprogramming the Funbot might work — sort of. This is, as you well know, treasonous. And any PC who tries to meddle with the Funbot's innards will activate sophisticated software protection systems (-10% success chance for reprogramming). Failure results in the Funbot "attaching" itself to the treasonous PC, following the offender around crying "TRAITOR-TRAITOR-TRAITOR-TRAITOR" without interruption for the rest of the adventure. What happens to the traitorous reprogrammer is up to you. Permanent assignment of the Funbot to the PC might be a suitable punishment.

In any case, it's a bad idea to let the PCs actually fix the Funbot. It's an incredibly useful device, far too useful to be fouled up by a bunch of upstart Troubleshooters. Funbots serve admirably as nuisance devices, narrative devices, nutritional devices (all those swell pies), and perverse-GM devices. Is the point made?

2.6 And Now for Our Feature Presentation

Finally.

Now the Troubleshooters have everything Cleto-B sent them to get. After Dave-V finishes collecting PC signatures on innumerable forms, Nerd-G leads the party back to the exit from QQQ Sector.

The party now resembles a gypsy caravan, constantly entertained and disordered by the irrepressible Funbot, and their passage along the halls of Alpha Complex may draw a great deal of undesirable attention.

Considerable time has passed since Cleto-B specifically admonished the Troubleshooters to avoid delays and return quickly for the rest of their briefing. However, when the Troubleshooters' little carnival pulls up in front of the familiar elevator to Cleto-B's office, the doors are closed, and the elevator does not respond to the PCs' attentions. When the PCs report to Troubleshooter Headquarters or The Computer, requesting directions, they are told to go to bed and get some rest.

When the phalanx of guardbots rumbles into the PCs' sleeping quarters, the Troubleshooters are probably all awake and expecting just such a visit.





Open call for Vulture Squadron Fights Commie Mutant Traitors in the Service of The Computer.

3. ENTERTAINMENTWORLD!

3.1 Mission Summary

Cleto-B dispatches the Troubleshooters to hunt down and terminate Alpha Complex's darling, Teela O'Malley. They are sent to make contact with Hall-Y-WUD of HPD & Mind Control, NBD Sector, for aid in locating Teela.

Hall-Y is a big help. He gets the PCs on a quiz show, *Date with Death*, where they can win a date with Teela. Win or lose, Hall-Y manages to arrange a meeting with Teela — though his directions to the meeting site are vague enough to permit the PCs to stumble into two secret society meetings before they run into Teela.

And, when they at last catch sight of Teela, she flees, leading the PCs into a climactic battle in the Clone Ranger laboratory where they discover that Teela O'Malley clones are being turned out in gross quantities. In this epic conflict the PCs are pitted against innumerable bootleg Teelas and myriad berserk Clone Rangers and Peppers of the Pepsi Generation.

After all this excitement the PCs are almost grateful when they are executed for treason at the debriefing.

3.2 Staging the Adventure

Now, GM, the overture and prelude has concluded. The outfitting is complete. The PCs have been saddled with the obligatory deadly experimental devices. The Funbot is established as guide and nemesis. The way is clear to NBD Sector. Do you realize that here, at long last, on page 31, the PCs are *actually going to begin their adventure?*

Now what?

To ease your transition into the more structured (ahem) sections of this adventure, we have prepared this lovely intermission essay. Here we will introduce you to the important narrative elements of the rest of the adventure, and we'll give you some tips on staging and pacing these elements so as to create a veritable masterpiece of roleplaying fun for your players. We'll tell you what encounters are coming up, what order they should come up in, and how much time each encounter should occupy in your sessions.

The Guided Tour

In Section 3.3 the Troubleshooters are ordered by Cleto-B to report to Hall-Y-WUD's office in HPD & Mind Control, NBD Sector. There they meet a variety of Hall-Ys — all identical members of a clone family — in circumstances engineered to confuse your players as much as possible. The six Hall-Ys, who can substitute and cover for each other with dizzying speed, comprise the Temporary Associate Director of Entertainment Programming in NBD Sector. They have been the Temporary Associate Director for twelve years, and now have enormous authority. They are Cleto-B's — and The Computer's — chosen contacts for the Troubleshooters.

Section 3.4 describes the encounter in Hall-Y's office. Apart from its comic elements, this episode provides what your English teachers always called exposition, or necessary background information. Here the PCs can pick up clues about the Clone Rangers, and about a treasonous new drug that's circulating throughout this sector. The drug will figure prominently in a later encounter — and how!

Because the PCs are essentially observers here, the pace should be brisk and direct, avoiding extensive digressions and arbitrary encounters, and consuming a minimal amount of session time. Move the players along to situations where they can more actively create incredible distress for themselves.

The quickly-resolved encounter in Hall-Y's office leads to the more restrained opening portion of Section 3.5, an episode on the vidshow *Wide Complex of Sports*, where the PCs struggle in vain to answer simple questions in a contest called *Date with Death*. The length of this encounter depends to a great extent on when a PC presses an unmarked button just sitting in front of him, begging to be pushed. The pace, however, is the leisurely, pleasant pace of the TV game show — questions are asked, the contestants fumble a bit, buzzers sound, the point is scored, and on to the next question. This low-key, verbal interchange provides a suitable contrast to the spirited hijinks in the second half of Section 3.5.

The PCs' failure to answer the simple questions in the first round (which is, of course, a pre-ordained GM-orchestrated hose-job) leads them to a laughably unbalanced battle against overwhelming odds in the second round of *Date with Death*. The action is fast and furious, with little dialog and lots of weapons-fire. This part of the adventure pits the PCs against a squad of NPCs in a mini-board game something like basketball, Roller Derby, and freestyle swimming in a shark tank all mixed together. Things move real quickly here, and the players scramble to keep their wits about them and their characters alive.

After this peak of frenetic action, we shift to Section 3.6 where the PCs encounter three closed doors. Behind the first two doors are cute little dilemmas involving the discovery of secret society meetings-in-progress. Though some useful clues are revealed in each meeting, these two encounters are basically minor dramatic digressions. Once you've set them up, and the PCs have reacted, move on to the third door as quickly as possible.

Behind the third door is Teela O'Malley, the hook that drags the PCs to the climax of the adventure. And once the PCs are in this room, they find a substantial militia of hostiles bringing up their rear, reinforcing their motivation to keep moving.

From this point on, the pace, action, and pressure builds right through the climactic battle — the Big Pie Fight. This is the super-slam-bang, megadeath, apocalyptic, Gotterdammerung grand finale. Like all climaxes, it may be fairly long, but the players must perceive it as short and constantly building in tension until the big blowout. That means they must have too much to do and think about — lots of hopeless situations and desperate straits.

Then ZAP! Suddenly everything resolves. The transition to the briefing should be swift and smooth — if possible, the PCs should be sitting in the briefing room before they can shake off the effects of the Big Pie Fight. Like all anticlimaxes, it should be brief — just enough time to wrap up any mysteries the PCs were unable to solve and to line them up for

the firing squad. Or the awarding of commendations, if you're *that* kind of *PARANOIA* GM. (We gave you a nice selection of ways to end the adventure — something to suit every GM style.)

Okay. To summarize, your preferred sequence is (1) Hall-Y's Office; (2) *Wide Complex of Sports* vidshow, featuring *Date With Death*; (3) the Three Doors; (4) the Big Pie Fight; and (5) Debriefing and Execution. *However*, the ordering is fluid — with minor tinkering, you can shift the first three parts around at will. Why? Because this is *PARANOIA*, and the players are *yours to command*. Here's how you can do it.

ACHTUNG!

Every roleplaying game tells the GM, "You're in charge." That's true... but in many cases the method of enforcing scenario control boils down to, "Uh-oh! The ceiling caved in! You all die." This is arbitrary and inelegant — though as *PARANOIA* designers we certainly admire the spirit here.

One of the unique aspects of Alpha Complex is the *institutionalized* ceiling cave-in — arbitrary and inelegant control techniques are *made* elegant by incorporating them into the game's world view. Don't like where the adventure's heading? Order the PCs somewhere else — or forbid them access to their chosen destination — or have their transportation or equipment malfunction — or wait for them to kill each other, or, yes, have the ceiling cave in and kill everybody in Alpha Complex, *this all makes sense*.

There are so many "channeling" devices available to the black-hearted referee that it's worth running down the list:

Couriers: "Special Emergency Dispatch from Troubleshooter HQ! Go somewhere other than where you are right now." Couriers can relay messages verbally, bring coded documents (requiring the PCs to return to Headquarters to find someone who knows the code), hardcopy printouts from The Computer (if the printer's return key got stuck, your PCs might meet a platoon of couriers struggling with huge bags of printouts, all of which read "Return to HQ" twenty million times), or they might even arrive empty handed ("Gee, I had that Violet-sealed envelope just a minute ago — think maybe you better go back to HQ in case it was something important?")

The Computer: Is the PCs' trusted friend ever far away? We've already established that public address speakers are everywhere. So are monitors and "confession booths." If the PCs try to disobey a direct command over the PA or com unit — well, The Computer always needs new volunteers for Side-Effect Testing in the Department of Pharmaceutical Novelties. Activate clones.

NPCs: Never overlook the possibility that some Blue or Indigo clown may be walking by and spot the Troubleshooters. "You! You there! This is a restricted-access area. Leave the premises at once and I won't turn you in. Oh, and when you go, would you be good clones and deliver this bulky, mysterious package to my fellow citizen Joey-B in PLC? I don't remember exactly which department he's in, but don't worry, you can find your way around easily. Just ask for help."

(GM NOTE: Contents of the package are left as an exercise for the apt pupil.)

The Funbot: The foolproof, fail-safe default option. The little metal monstrosity runs off at a moment's notice, leading the responsible PCs wherever you wish, then mysteriously "fixing" itself and calming down upon arrival at the destination. ("Hiya-hiya! Boy, what a great Complex, I love it. Isn't this great, folks? Let's give it a round of applause...")

We quote our esteemed editor: "Fundamental principle of *PARANOIA*: triple redundancy of player character coercion systems." This means that, should you feel the adventure is better served by throwing the PCs onto *Date With Death* before they've even met Hall-Y, or should you wish to blow off most of the encounters and get right to the Big Pie Fight, or should you have your own delectable ideas for paranoid encounters — well, no problem, right? Everything in whatever order you want.

You're welcome.

3.3 Once More, With Feeling

Once again the PCs are hustled into a very familiar elevator by a squad of very familiar guardbots. Suddenly, the guardbots part, and revealed behind them is a sleek, glistening duralloy guardbot about the size and shape of a golf cart without a sun canopy.

It glides silently into the elevator with the PCs. The doors close. The elevator descends, and halts abruptly. The doors open on a remarkable corridor — only three feet high and five feet in width — just large enough for the duralloy bot to fit. The corridor glows with an eerie, yellow-green light, and flesh prickles at a sudden gust of icy air. The strange bot slides silently out of the elevator and the doors close before the PCs can react. (Alternatively, the PCs who react disappear in a flash from the bot's indescribable weaponry.) The elevator descends again.

Just another one of life's little mysteries. Read this aloud:

When you arrive at the very familiar featureless room at the bottom of the elevator shaft, Cleto-B and his companions, Sunn-Y-LST and Dewey-Y-JLK, are waiting for you — impatiently.

Cleto-B barks, "Troubleshooters! Once again you have disappointed me beyond all expectations. Did I not emphasize the need for haste? Did I not adequately express the seriousness of the situation?"

Give the PCs a few moments to hem and haw, then the Funbot wheels forward and tests his audience. ("How-are-ya, how-are-ya, how-are-ya? Havin' a good time? Yuk-yuk-yuk. You betcha! Hey, what's six foot tall and loaded for bear?") Cleto-B reaches into his desk, pulls out a gauss gun and drills the Funbot right in the brain plate. The Funbot goes, "WheeeeeEEE-ELLLLLL...." spins about three times, and darts off smack into a wall. For the next two minutes it continues to squeal shrilly and tries to burrow through the wall. Cleto-B continues the briefing. The PCs must shout to make themselves heard over the din. After two minutes the Funbot quiets down and returns to normal, but is unusually subdued for the rest of the briefing.

Read aloud:

"As I was saying," Cleto-B continues, "your careless disregard for Alpha Complex

security is treasonous in the extreme. Fortunately, there is still time for you to redeem yourselves.

"I have arranged for you to report to Hall-Y-WUD in HPD & Mind Control, NBD Sector. He will assist you in locating Teela O'Malley, but you may not reveal the reasons for your search. I remind you, this mission is strictly confidential!

"If there are any further questions, please submit the usual Information Inquiry form. Thank you for your cooperation. Dismissed!"

Cleto-B and his aides head directly for the elevator. As they pass the PCs, Sunn-Y winks obtrusively at [pick a PC], then turns and gestures openly and at some length to [pick another PC]. The series of gestures resembles a third base coach giving signals. [He tugs his ear, pulls up his socks, scratches his nose, draws a finger across his name tag, rubs his eye, spits, hitches up his belt, takes his cap off and waves it vigorously, then crouches and leaps high into the air much like a mating bull frog. If you can perform such a series of actions for your players with a straight face, hats off to you. Really.]

Then all three enter the elevator and the door closes. The PCs wait forever for the elevator to return. When it appears, they ascend to the main floor and make their weary way to NBD HPD & Mind Control.

3.4 Hooray for Hall-Y-WUD

3.4.1 A Word About HPD & Mind Control

"Free-thinking." The lowly personnel of Housing Preservation and Development & Mind Control aren't going anywhere. Nobody likes them. The propaganda they pump out is by-the-numbers (and mostly written by The Computer, anyway). They're in constant, numbing contact with all those dreary Infrared drebs. "The Computer is my friend. So what? It's everybody's friend. Who really cares, you know?" Such an attitude, never explicitly stated, is still prevalent in this spiritless service group. The morale in HPD is low, but not as low as the quality of programming shoved on: Alpha Complex's single vidchannel. If morale were *that* bad, there would be high volunteer rates at The Computer's Happy Homecoming Euthanasia Centers.

Discipline is lax in HPD: HPDers routinely get away with statements that would send your standard Power Services technician to the recycler in a hurry.

Is this a sign of The Computer's confidence in its servants?

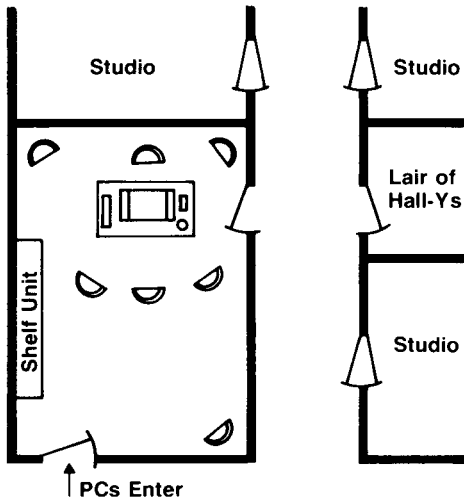
C'mon. Of course not. The Computer tolerates relative freedom of thought here because it figures that even if someone is a traitor, there's not much in HPD worth screwing up.

As a result, secret societies flourish in HPD and Mind Control, and the PCs may be astonished at the open and undisguised approach they find there. For instance, Hall-Y-WUD clones 1 through 6, all loyal servants of Free Enterprise, may cheerfully offer several black-market items to the PCs, even in the first meeting.

The PCs naturally want to turn the Hall-Ys in to The Computer or IntSec for a quick commendation point, right? Observe their disappointed reactions when The Computer says, "Thank you for your concern. Your report is noted. Now, please return promptly to your mission" — and then the same Hall-Y will be waiting for them when they return to his office!

The Computer may be paranoid, but not even The Computer gets real excited about anything in HPD. You may wish to exploit the player's bewilderment at Hall-Y's seeming invulnerability. Does he have a highly placed patron? Is he Internal Security, or some other kind of clandestine figure with mysterious power and influence? No, no, and no, but how are the PCs to know?

HALL-Y-WUD'S OFFICE



3.4.2 The Outer Sanctum

You can make the actual journey to NBD Sector as frustrating or hair-raising as you want. Maybe the malfunctioning auto car delivers the PCs to a Violet-clearance security area. Maybe a cross-scannered scrubot mistakes the PCs for lint. Maybe an intoxicated and malfunctioning guard misdirects the PCs to the Waste Recycling Subdivision. Maybe the Funbot goes bananas. Who knows...?

Note, however, that all such stuff is only window-dressing. The real adventure recomences when the PCs report to the Division of Entertainment and Education in Correct Thinking, NBD Sector.

The PCs should have no trouble finding Hall-Y-WUD's office. There are lots of signs everywhere, and helpful little Infrared pageboys are at every corridor ready to aid the glamorous Troubleshooters.

Read this aloud:

At last you find an ordinary door. The name Hall-Y-WUD is painted on it, and below the name are the words TEMPORARY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMING. The lettering looks old, faded, and the paint is flaking off. Beside the door is a little speaker panel with a button underneath and a sign reading VISITORS PLEASE PUSH.

If the PCs push the button, a recorded message says, "Hi, I'm Hall-Y-WUD. I'm not here right now, but if you'll enter my office and wait, I hope to be back before the end of the day. Thanks ever so much for cooperating. I really mean it." The door is indeed unlocked.

(See diagram of Hall-Y-WUD's office.)

Hall's office cubicle is unusually large and plush — thick carpeting, attractive wallpaper in a pattern resembling a giant photo of a microchip, weird kinetic sculptures like mobiles hanging from the ceiling, and one large steel desk with simulated aluminum finish. Stress that this is one of the most luxurious workspaces the PCs have ever seen. Right now it is empty. There are enough chairs for all the PCs to take a seat, and the chairs are even comfortable. Gosh.

Against one wall is a big bookcase-organizer shelf unit — no books, of course (not even Hall-Y is that treasonous), but lots of drawers and cubbyholes and doors. Make this as attractive to the PCs as a blank termination voucher. No tedious slot-by-slot description of the shelf unit's contents is necessary; just treat it like a kind of Self-Regulating Cluedropper Nexus. These drawers, slots, and cabinet spaces contain any number of clues pointing to the nefarious activities of Teela O'Malley, the Clone Rangers, or anything the Troubleshooters should be alerted to: cryptic notes, ambiguous warnings from secret society agents, treasonous black-market documents, Old Reckoning videotapes of *Eight is Enough* or its more recent remake, *Six Clones is Plenty*.

A few modest examples:

— Poking out from the corner of one drawer is the sleeve of what looks like a Violet jumpsuit. It's just a vidshow costume, but only an expert could know for sure.

— Some handwritten notes with cryptic messages: "Teela for John-V-LOX-5, 30M CR." (John has ordered his own Teela O'Malley clone for 30,000 credits.) "Four new Zelda-I-NRN, 3 mos." (Three months delivery time for a quartet of Zelda-Is.) "Need tongue covers size 6 pronto!" "Troubleshooters due soon. Send to Fan Club?"

— A large drawer filled with old-fashioned (20th Century) videocassettes, all unmarked. A player and battery pack are in the drawer beneath. (Make an easy Mechanical Aptitude check to operate.) The tapes may be viewed via a monitor on Hall-Y's desk. The subject of this large collection is a liquid — perhaps a drug. This liquid apparently caused an entire planetary population to sing together in perfect harmony, among other miracles. The tapes are profoundly treasonous... or would be, in the hands of someone who mattered. But this is HPD, remember?

— Tucked away in one slot is a rough draft of what looks like advertising copy: "Your immortality assured at a [reasonable? affordable?] price. Our innovative method gives you high-quality companions indistinguishable [word choice?] from your own clone family members! Contact Cleto-B-QRK for details, blah-blah-blah, SOL."

The number of these clues may proliferate endlessly, limited only by your perverse improvisation. Remember, however — ignorance and fear. Most of the clues can be complete red herrings or unintelligible gobbletygook. ("Requis. 2x cable benders for *Bedtime for Bon-G-OOO*." "Check with R&D on Funbot project status. Follow up on joke list specs.")

3.4.3 Taking a Meeting with Hall-Y-WUD

Hall-Y-WUD enters the office from the far door just as the players are up to their elbows in clues from the wall unit. If the PCs just sit around and wait, rather than rummaging through the wall unit, Hall-Y arrives in 45 minutes (45 seconds in session time).

When Hall-Y enters, read this aloud:

A slick, short, balding citizen sweeps into the room with a flourish. He wears dark eyeglasses, and is decked out in a rather splendidly ornamented yellow jumpsuit with a bright, geometric pattern in electric, shockingly contrasting colors. The suit is unzipped from throat to waist, revealing a rather sparse tuft of curly hairs. Dangling amidst these curly hairs from a yellow chain around his neck is an odd item — apparently a tiny little spoon.

He is apparently startled when he sees you Troubleshooters. He seems nervous and is obsessively wiping his lips. However, he does a quick, smooth recovery, greeting you energetically.

"Hey, hey, hey? Whatta surprise! (Pumping hands enthusiastically.) Hey, who loves ya, baby? Is this guy great or is he great! Marvelous! Marvelous! Hey, I'm sure we can get right behind you all the way on this. Hey, let's do lunch sometime, you total maniac, I love ya, come to poppa!"

Babble on in this fashion for a bit as Hall-Y invites everyone to introduce himself while exclaiming repeatedly and enthusiastically how

"Love-ya-baby, come to Poppa!"



great it is to see everybody and how wonderful a surprise. Keep it up until the PCs start fingering their lasers, then read the following aloud:

“Hey, listen boys and girls, my close personal friend Cleto-B tells me you’re looking for a confab with Teela, and Uncle Hall-Y is here to see that you get it. That Teela, she’s such a gadfly, she’s here, she’s there, what a total lunatic, I love her.

“The bottom line is — well, I don’t know exactly right where she is at this exact moment... but I’ve got a totally elegant — and are we talking el-lay-GHANT! — solution to this whole fubar. I mean, no problem, right? Hey, who loves ya, sure, I mean, totally the most?”

“So, you guys get to go on one of our most popular shows... (Pause for excitement.) Yeah! Sure! Wide Complex of Sports, of COURSE! Hey, how ‘bout a little contest of skill? Hey, hey, hey, piece-a-synthetic for Troubleshooter superstars like you guys, sure! I got the whole thing set up so you’re SURE to WIN, no problem, hey? And... the prize? Of COURSE! SURE! A date with Teela O’Malley! Huh? Hoo-hoo! When she shows up at the rendezvous — ”

Hall-Y’s voice trails off abruptly. His eyes seem to glaze over, tracking on some invisible object floating before his face. Suddenly he says, “Hey, excuse me, just a minute, right back, sit tight, love ya, baby, the most, sure!” He darts from the room through the far door.

GM: Pause here for just a beat. Give the players a chance to react; they might do something really impulsive and dangerous. If they don’t move instantly, however, continue reading:

After just a few moments, Hall-Y comes back in through the same door. He’s wiping his lips. He looks at you, does a double-take, then says, “Um — oh. Sure. Troubleshooters, right? I’m Hall-Y. Fabulous to meet you, just fabulous,” as he eagerly pumps everyone’s hand in greeting.

A new Hall-Y clone. Yeah, you guessed immediately, but it may take the PCs a while to tumble to this because all six Hall-Ys look, dress, and act exactly alike. All the Hall-Y clones are involved in Free Enterprise contraband, each in a different commodity, and they’re all experienced in covering up for each other. If the Troubleshooters say something like “But we’ve already been introduced,” any given Hall-Y clone will smoothly gloss it over. “Oh, right, man, what a total goof! My old memory, right? You know, plays tricks sometimes. Lotsa folks through here every day, busy, busy, busy! Now, what show was it that I said I’d get you on?”

The Hall-Ys resolutely maintain the pretense that there is only one Hall-Y as long as there is even a shadow of a doubt that the PCs have solid evidence. This will be long after the PCs are quite sure that something fishy is going on, and things may get a bit ugly. When the ruse is no longer even remotely plausible, each Hall-Y abandons the pretense and goes into his Free Enterprise spiel (about which, more later).

In portraying the Hall-Ys, remember that they are all excessively guilty. They all cover for each other. They all want to sell you something. (“Psst — can I interest you in — wink, wink — Gilligan’s Island vidtapes?”) All will pop in

and out of the rooms at odd intervals, to be replaced almost immediately by a new clone who’s wiping his lips as he enters. Play up the slapstick, vaudeville angle — strange people entering and leaving at speed, doors slamming, utter confusion.

3.4.4 He’s High on Life, Too

All the lip-wiping business is a clue to an important secondary plot in this adventure: a marvelous new illegal drug that is taking NBD Sector by... well, light drizzle. It’s newly rediscovered from Old Reckoning times, and (though most Hall-Ys don’t know this) has been conclusively identified by treasonous history texts as “co-cola.”

Hall-Y-WUD-5, who deals the stuff, knows it only as a “brown, bubbling liquid.” He may try to pitch it to the PCs, telling in glowing terms of its marvelous, stimulating, hallucinatory properties. “Believe me, I have never, I mean never, done anything like it — and I’ve done it all, my friends.”

Make sure the PCs are aware the drug is a Big Secret, not authorized by The Computer, and therefore treasonous. Exaggerate Hall-Y’s secretive, whispering manner. If a PC wants to sample the drug, Hall-Y produces a small plastic vial of it from his pocket, pours a drop or two into the small spoon hanging on his chest, and offers it to the PC — “First hit is no charge, hey?” (Remember: the multicorder and the Petbot are recording everything, but don’t remind the players.)

If a character pauses to drink the co-cola, he or she feels refreshed. No other effects. But roll dice, ask to look at the PC’s character sheet, and chuckle maniacally as you scribble lots of little notes behind your gamemaster screen. Psychological warfare, you know.

3.4.5 Roll Call

The six Hall-Y clones are Free Enterprise members, but each traffics a different traitorous commodity. Each also knows a different clue which may help the PCs — if they happen to get it out of him. Each Hall-Y can be intimidated or bribed easily (+10% success chance).

The Hall-Y clones are distinguished in the same way as all clones in Alpha Complex: get them to stick out their tongues. Each member of a clone family has his or her clone name and number tattooed on his tongue. Pass this information along to the PCs as if reminding them

of common knowledge: after all, they are clones themselves. For citizens who wish to mask their true numeration, rubber tongue covers are available on the black market — just ask Hall-Y-WUD-2, who runs a thriving sideline in tongue covers.

Here’s a run-down of the iniquitous operations of the Hall-Y-WUD crime family:

Hall-Y-WUD-1 — producer of *Bowling for Credit Vouchers* and other popular shows, secretly markets bootleg clones for the Clone Rangers. He’s the only Hall-Y clone who has reason to want the PCs dead — that’s why he’s sending them on *Wide Complex of Sports* — but he’s passed the word along to his brothers, and they are more than willing to steer the PCs to new deathtraps. (“Hey, what? didn’t like the sports show? Hey, bad vibes, sure, no problem. Hey, why not check out the old *Captain Botaroo* studio? Teela shows up there all the time, dontcha know.”)

Hall-Y-WUD-2 — guiding force behind the long-running serial *The Bot Patrol*, runs tongue covers, in a wide selection of sizes and numbers ready-made, and made-to-order special jobs in rush-time.

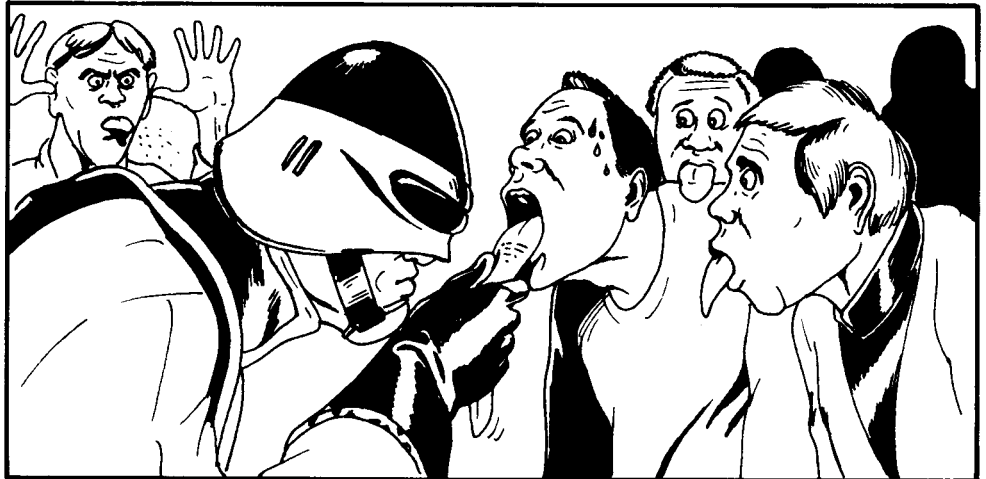
Hall-Y-WUD-3 — (*Name That Meltdown*) sells illegal videotapes of treasonous Old Reckoning programming: *Walt Disney’s Wonderful World of Color*, gymnastics tournaments, detergent commercials, test patterns.

Hall-Y-WUD-4 — usually handles a full line of exotic black-market weapons, but he’s been too busy lately with his legit job — producing the megahit adventure program *Vulture Squadron Fights Commie Mutant Traitors in the Service of The Computer*.

Hall-Y-WUD-5 — is best known for *One Clone’s Family*. He sells the illicit drug co-cola to the Clone Rangers, who use it as an ingredient in their cloning process.

Hall-Y-WUD-6 — runs the game show *Truth Serum* (featuring the exciting “electric chair” round). He sells co-cola to a newly formed splinter group of the Romantics — The Pepsi Generation. Since co-cola supplies are limited — the Hall-Ys can’t always bribe the techs in the Food Vats to divert critical supplies to them — the Clone Rangers and the Pepsi Generation sometimes come into conflict over scarce resources; Hall-5 and Hall-6 are often caught in the middle.

“...let’s see — Yep! This tongue is expired, boy!”



The Hall-Y Arbitrary Clue Availability Chart

Whenever the PCs get a Hall-Y in a tough bind (like peering down the barrel of a cone rifle), just consult this chart and pick a clue. This is *all* the Hall-Y will divulge on the subject. Subsequent torture and intimidation is for naught; Hall-Y will hold out like a French Resistance fighter tortured by heinous Nazis.

The Hall-Y Clue Chart

Clue 1: A secret society which calls itself the "Clone Rangers" is said to offer illicit clones for wealthy citizens.

Clue 2: The Romantics secret society has spun off yet another radical group. This new society is called "The Pepsi Generation," and their central ritual is the sharing of a new drug, known as "co-cola," with mysterious properties.

Clue 3: The current Teela O'Malley is the last in her clone family. She has let it be known that she is interested in anyone who can provide her with illicit clone descendants. Price is no object.

Clue 4: Don't press the fifth button labeled "X" on the *Date With Death* gameboard or your team is in real trouble.

Clue 5: It is said by those who should know that Cleto-B-QRK is a very big man in a new society called the Clone Rangers.

Clue 6: There are suggestions that the old studio where Captain Botaroo used to be produced is not a particularly healthy place to visit. (So this is not really a very helpful clue. So what? Maybe that's why you should make it seem very important.)

3.4.6 What If They Do This...?

Once the PCs have looked around Hall-Y's office, met a Hall-Y or two, and picked up a couple of clues, then it's time to send them off to *Wide Complex of Sports*.

Direct the Troubleshooters to Studio 54, just a couple hundred feet down a corridor outside Hall-Y's office. One of the Hall-Y clones may personally conduct them there. ("Hey, right this way, folks. Love ya, great act, socko, you'll knock 'em dead.") Or an eager-beaver studio page may show up to guide them. Or an announcement may be heard over the PA system, "Attention! Paging guests [list PC names] to Studio 54! Taping of *Wide Complex of Sports* is about to begin! Two minutes to taping!"

But suppose the players start to wander around on their own in HPD Sector or act uncooperative in various other ways.

Some suggestions:

If the PCs Follow Hall-Y Out of His Office: Beyond his door is a tan-colored corridor running right and left, with doors all along both sides of the hall (see diagram on page 33). The PCs see Hall-Y enter a doorway right across the hall just as another Hall-Y comes out the same doorway. The new Hall-Y energetically and urgently tries to herd the PCs back into the office.

If the Troubleshooters Enter the Room Across the Hall: They'll find another office, and five identical Hall-Y clones (unarmed), sitting around swilling the new drug co-cola from strangely shaped glass flasks (soda pop bottles). The Hall-Ys don't want any trouble. If threatened or intimidated, they'll spill general

information on any topic the PCs think to ask them about, though they'll clam up about details.

If the PCs Don't Follow Hall-Y into His Office and Instead Wander Off Down the Corridor: They can go into any door. Each door is tan-colored. The word STUDIO and a number is painted on it. A red lightbulb is on the wall just above eachdoor. None of the bulbs are lit. If the Troubleshooters enter any studio, they'll be in the *Wide Complex of Sports* deathtrap — go to Section 3.5.

If the PCs Leave Hall-Y's Office and go Somewhere Else: The Computer will politely inquire about the progress of their mission over the PA system. Perhaps gentle guidance is necessary — maybe a Vulture Squadron supported by a division of combots. Deliver them right to Studio 54 — go to Section 3.5.

If Chock-O-BLK Tries to Gain Hall-Y's Confidence as a Fellow Free Enterpriser: Play along. Agree to anything Chock-O says. Then send him directly to the deathtrap along with the others.

If the PCs Terminate All the Hall-Ys: Well. Makes for an interesting debriefing. A PA announcement tells the PCs that a priority request has been cleared, and that the PCs are to report at once to Studio 54 for Special Duty. (Who sends this PA announcement? Cleto-B-QRK? Hall-Y-7? The Ghost of Christmas Past? C'mon. Doesn't matter. Just do it.)

And remember the fail-safe option — Funbot on Parade.

And now we return you to our regularly scheduled program...

3.5 You're Going Out There a Youngster, But You've Got to Come Back a Star

Any surviving Hall-Y, studio page, or announcement over the PA summons the PCs to Studio 54, the scene of the next episode in this gripping drama. When the PCs enter the door to Studio 54, read the following aloud:

Before your eyes adjust to the darkened studio, a harried, hustle-bustle Green-level character waddles over, says, "All right, all right, it's about time, don't you know I've got a schedule? You're way overdue and I've had to remap the entire shoot. Over here, over here to the playing area. Pronto!"

The Green guy is Morrie-G-LSE-5, the director of *Wide Complex of Sports*. He's as authoritarian, officious, and persnickety as the PCs can stand without shooting him.

From this point on, Morrie-G is the Troubleshooters' "off-camera" contact in HPD. Hall-Y won't show up again here. He's a producer, so he hardly ever visits the set. Morrie-G knows and respects Hall-Y, insofar as respect is a significant concept in HPD. However, Morrie-G is seriously bugged that a lowly Yellow (Hall-Y) is his nominal superior in the production of the show. Oh, Morrie tries to conceal his resentment... sort of:

"Sure, Hall-Y is great people. All of them are great people, I mean. I'm sure eventually they'll perform well enough that The Computer will promote them to Green status, like me.

"Now, don't get the idea I hold their Yellow clearance against them. No sir, no

ma'am. Morrie-G-LSE can put pride aside to work for a Yellow. And no one will say different.

"You hear anybody say Morrie-G is sensitive about that clearance stuff, you say so right now, hear?"

"Well?"

"Okay, but listen, I don't appreciate that kind of rumor-mongering, that's all it is..."

Note that Morrie-G's babbling requires no response from the PCs. Morrie-G doesn't converse with the Troubleshooters; he bounces statements off them like handballs.

3.5.1 The Playing Area

Read this aloud:

The Green fellow introduces himself as Morrie-G-LSE-5, director of *Wide Complex of Sports*. He leads you through darkened areas of a very large studio, behind brightly lit sets, between partitions, over cables... The ceiling is lost in darkness. You can hardly see the far end of the studio.

You pass one set with a large painting of two autocars crashing. Another set shows two enormous Infrareds beating up on one another in a boxing ring. A third set is dominated by the giant logo COMMIE MUTANT TRAITOR HUNT. Finally Morrie-G escorts you to a well-lit, colorful set surrounded by cameras. The elaborate neon logo over the soundstage reads DATE WITH DEATH.

"Now pick one guy to represent your team and wait here for the other team's guy," Morrie-G says. "Oh, and I need to collect all your weapons and armor. Wouldn't want any accidents on the set, would we?"

So Morrie-G doesn't look intimidating enough to demand that a team of Troubleshooters deliver their weapons and armor to him?

Hah! Let them get stubborn, then let the platoon of security bots come whistling down from the darkness above them, support cables ringing with speed and tension, guns bristling from compact, well-armored flat-black capsules of awesome menace. If a PC looks cross-eyed, waste him. At Morrie-G's gesture, the bots disappear as suddenly as they appeared, reeling back up into the darkness above them.

Cute, huh? And if the PCs balk at any other point in Studio 54, these security bots zip down from the ceiling and clarify things.

No, Morrie-G won't tell the PCs what the game is about — "Whatsamatter, I'm supposed to hold your widdle hand?" No, he won't tell about their opponents — "Fairness regulations! Trying to get me in trouble?" No, he doesn't know anything useful about anything at all. No, the PCs can't leave — Hall-Y has seen to that. At each door the PCs find four combots blocking their exit route.

Can you say "railroaded"? I knew you could.

3.5.2 Blind Date

The PCs must now select one representative. This will be very easy or impossible, since they have no idea what qualities are useful. If they try to get some ideas by looking around the soundstage, read this aloud:

The soundstage is a fairly large semicircular area walled in by thin plastic partitions. At one end of the stage is a kind of lectern or podium with a microphone.

At the other end, near where you're standing, are two long desk-like metal things,

each with a row of large pushbuttons on the top and a big red light bulb in front. The desks are about five feet apart and oriented at an angle so they almost face each other. On the wall between them is a scoreboard reading TEAM 1 (and beneath that, WEAPONS — 0) and TEAM 2 (and beneath that, WEAPONS — 0).

That's right. It's a game show. Now, before you start this bit, get four index cards or pieces of paper and write the following in real big letters:

**SIGH!
LAUGH!
CHEER!**

SPOUT LOYAL SLOGANS!

Use these as cue cards. Whenever the read-aloud text calls for one of these responses, or when in the course of the *Date With Death* episode, you feel that one might be appropriate, hold up the card to the players and encourage them to simulate a canned audience response. This is a whole bunch of fun, and lets the players blow off a little of the steam they have built up as a result of your persistent abuse.

Give the players slightly less than a reasonable amount of time to choose the representative. Go ahead. Give them the idea that this is a critical decision. Build the tension.

Of course, as you have guessed, the choice is immaterial. Sooner or later, everyone is going to get marched up onto the stage, and none of them have much chance to succeed, anyway.

After they make their choice, read this:

Around the partition at the opposite end of the stage comes a scrawny little pencil-necked Red-level guy in a badly-fitting jumpsuit with an Armed Forces insignia. He takes position behind one of the desks. Morrie-G comes bustling up and says, "Hokay, showtime! Who's your guy? — Well, get up on stage behind your desk, pronto! The show's about to start."

You [the chosen player] stumble onstage and stand behind the second desk. The buttons on the desk are arranged in a square of four, numbered 1-2-3-4, and there's a fifth button labeled "X" and set off from the others near the upper right hand corner of the desk.

Morrie-G sits down at a control console offstage behind the cameras. Suddenly, lights flash and you hear bouncy theme music and recorded applause. Over the applause you hear Morrie-G's voice saying, "And now, it's time once again for... *Date With Death!* [Cheer!] Brought to you by... your friend The Computer! [Spout Loyal Slogans!] And here's your host, a loyal citizen, just like you, Don-Y-OSM!" [Cheer! and keep waving this sign before your players, encouraging them to sustain the racket.]

A really handsome Yellow HPDer trots onstage to the lecturn. The canned applause continues for a while, then Morrie-G turns a knob on the console and the sound fades. [Still hold the Cheer! sign up, but signal with the other hand to slowly lower the volume until you cut off the Cheer! by hiding the sign.]

"Hi, fellow citizens," [Cheer!] says Don-Y, "The Computer has lined up an exciting contest today — and what do you say to that?"

Morrie-G hits a button [Spout Loyal

Slogans!] and a chorus of voices praise The Computer's generosity. Don-Y smiles broadly saying, "Great. Great. Now, you all remember the defending champion representing Team 2, Ozzie-R-DIP-6? [Cheer!] Right! Now, let's meet our challenger, a heroic Troubleshooter representing Team 1, [give name of fingered PC]." [Cheer!]

"Hey, tell us a little about yourself, [name of fingered PC]!"

Don-Y asks a bunch of typically inane questions — "What sector are you from?" "Who's your closest and most trusted friend?" (The Computer! — or somebody is going to have some explaining to do at the debriefing.)

If the PC tries to ask Don-Y a question, Don-Y will laugh heartily and say, "Hey, what a kiddler! How about that, audience?" Morrie-G twists a knob and you hold up the Laugh! sign.

After the utter banality of the situation is clearly established, continue reading:

"Okay, studio audience and friends at the barracks, you all know how to play our game. By answering questions in our first round, the team will gain weapons that will aid them substantially in the second round, as they approach their — *Date With Death!*

"Right? Okay, let's go then to the first question. For one weapon, what is — your security clearance?"

Wait for a perceptible fraction of a second. The player may shout out the answer. A sharp one may say, "I'm pushing a button." Ask him which one. If it was one of the four numbered buttons, ignore the answer — whatever it is, the answer is wrong. If the button was the "X" button, see below in section 3.5.4.

If a player answers without pushing a button, hold up the Sigh! sign. Don-Y says, "Oh! I'm sorry. You must buzz before answering. But thanks for playing, and let's welcome the next player from Team 1." [Cheer!] Under cover of the noisy applause, Morrie-G gestures impatiently for the chosen PC to get off stage and for somebody else to get on. And fast!

If no one moves quickly to take the loser's place, Don-Y laughs, shouts encouragement, Morrie-G twists a knob, and you hold up the

Laugh! sign. Security bots come whistling down from the dark ceiling and loom menacingly.

If the PC hits a button before answering, read this aloud:

You hit the button well in advance of Ozzie-R from Team 2, but nothing happens.

After an extended pause, and after several expressions of alternating comprehension, confusion, inspiration, and motivation have played across Ozzie-R's face, he lunges forward and stabs at a button. [Pick a button other than the numbered button the PC pushed. Make a loud, annoying, "EHHNNNT!" noise.] A buzzer sounds, and the bulb lights.

Don-Y says dramatically, "For one weapon, what is your security clearance?"

Ozzie-R pauses, thinks a moment, and finally guesses, "Uh, Red?"

Don-Y shouts, "Yes! That's right!" Morrie-G twists a knob [Cheer!] and an audience tape blares.

If the PC didn't do anything at all, read the paragraphs above from "After an extended pause..."

Now, no matter what the player did, he failed to answer the question. Don-Y thanks him, asks for a hand for him [Cheer!], and summons the next pigeon.

As the PCs change their representative, Don-Y says something like:

"Well, Troubleshooters, am I right that you missed our last show? Eh? Am I right? Well, if you'd seen it, you'd know the button you should have pushed to work the buzzer to answer the first question today is the same number that worked for the final question last time! [Sigh!]

"Ah, well, it's all part of the fun and suspense on... *Date With Death!* [Cheer!] So now the score is... 1 weapon for Ozzie's Team 2, [Cheer!] and a big zipperoo for the Troubleshooters' Team 1. [Laugh!] Right? Ready? Okay, here's the next question..."

3.5.3 And So On

One by one the PCs come to answer some insanely easy question. Likely as not, one by one they fail. There *is* a pattern to which button works the buzzer (the button changes from

"Tell us about this high-tech armament, Donpard-O!"



question to question) — but since each team is allowed only one try per turn, the PCs may all go down to defeat before deciphering it.

The pattern is simple — after the casual hose job of question 1, where whatever the PCs do, it is defined as wrong. Button 2 answers question 2, and then the buzzer numbering goes backwards, 2-1-4-3-2-1-4-3-2, etc. Button 1 answers question 3, button 4 answers question 4, button 3 answers question 5, and so on until each of the PCs have been defeated. Ozzie-R, of course, knows the pattern.

A player may stab at a button at random, and accidentally activate the buzzer. You have two options then: Ozzie-R could beat the player to the buzzer and have first crack at the question, or you could actually let the player win one — and get a chance at the next question before being replaced. This is a good way to maintain player interest and avoid appearing arbitrary.

GM: “Gosh, me arbitrary? *How* could you say such a thing?” (Scribbles notes behind the GM screen and grins broadly while shrugging his shoulders in exaggerated innocence.)

The questions, with answers, follow. Ozzie-R, a lackluster dimbulb, might not know the answers to all of these. In this case he won't even hit the buzzer, and the question may pass unanswered.

Questions for *Date with Death*, Round One

1. What is your security clearance? (*Whatever.*)
2. (button 2) Who is your friend? (*Guess who. C'mon. Get serious.*)
3. (button 1) What is six times nine? (*54.*)
4. (button 4) Who wears white? (*High Programmers. Ultraviolet Clearance.*)
5. (button 3) What popular video heroine is The Computer's most trusted, loyal, and beloved servant? (*Teela O'Malley — ahem!*)
6. (button 2) What did the Red-level Troubleshooter say to the Yellow-level Troubleshooter when the Red-level Troubleshooter stepped on the Yellow-level Troubleshooter's foot? (*“Please don't kill me.”*)
7. (button 1) How many fingers am I holding up? (*Whatever.*)
8. (button 4) Who is your friend? (*See question #2.*)
9. (button 3) Who do we hate? (*Commies, Traitors, or some such.*)
10. (button 2) What do Troubleshooters do? (*“Shoot trouble” is the simplest correct answer; dull but accurate answers are acceptable.*)
11. (button 1) What's between Yellow level and Blue level? (*Green level.*)
12. (button 4) What color laser barrel can a Red level Troubleshooter carry? (*Red.*)
13. (button 4) Who is your friend? (*See question 2.*)

... and so on, until the players are completely convinced that they are hosed. Deliver the questions in a high-powered, glad-handing, mock-friendly manner. Keep thinking “Bob Barker, Peter Marshall, Richard Dawson, Bill Cullen, Gene Rayburn, Wink Martindale” like a mantra. Announce the team scores after each and always dwell on the wide gap between the two. And always — always — smile.

Of course, accidents happen. The PCs could get lucky or too smart, tumble to the button pattern early on, and walk all over poor Ozzie-R. And don't discount the possibility that some rat-fink player has read this fine roleplaying supplement already, and has discovered the pat-

tern. If this happens, change the button pattern or make the questions tougher. (“Which High Programmer is the inventor of the new fertilization process which tripled algae yield in Hydroponics recently?” “How many Computer Bytes can dance on the head of a pin?”)

3.5.4 What If Someone Presses Button “X”?

Read this aloud:

You press the button marked “X,” and suddenly a loud gonging noise fills the studio. Don-Y gapes in amazement. The “crowd” goes wild. [Cheer!]

“Incredible! Studio audience! Viewers! The Troubleshooter challengers have elected to forfeit all weapons to Team 2 and go directly to Round Two and their Date With Death!” [Coax players to frenzy by madly gesturing as you display the Cheer! sign.]

Stop the questioning and go directly to the next section — Round Two.

3.5.5 Round Two

No matter what, the Troubleshooters do not fare well in Round One. Whether Round One ends because someone pushes button “X” or because each PC has been eliminated by giving a wrong answer or no answer at all, at best the PCs may answer a couple of questions, while Ozzie-R will answer quite a few and win a dandy selection of portable ordnance to employ in Round Two.

When Round Two is ready to begin, read the following:

“Time for Round Two!” says Don-Y. [Cheer!] All at once, the soundstage floor begins to vibrate. Upstage center the partitions divide, slide back, revealing a wide, brilliantly-lit concrete ramp leading into some kind of arena. Ozzie-R trots blithely up the ramp. Offstage, Morrie-G gestures frantically for you to follow. He indicates the security bots dangling from the ceiling.

Anyone who doesn't go up the ramp gets to check out in a blaze of glory, in a fatal fire-fight, Commie-execution spectacular televised Complex-wide.

The arena is a spacious, historically semi-accurate reconstruction of an Old Reckoning site. It seems to have been a center for ancient pagan rituals. (At least that's the way you'll have to describe it to your players.) If they reveal any knowledge of this site's true purpose during play, that should be worth a treason point or two.

You're sent up the ramp into the arena, while Morrie-G's recorded voice blares out, “Today's Date With Death is set in The Computer's faithful recreation of an ancient site recently rediscovered by The Computer's loyal servants in the Office of Culture Propagation and Improvement, Division of Discoveries and Patriotic Suppression.

“This site was used by primitive cultures for bizarre pagan rites of water worship. It should make us thankful that we're living in a happier, more sensible age, under the loving care of our trusted, dependable mentor, The Computer.” [Spout Loyal Slogans!] [Cheer!]

The arena is a long, rectangular room with a high ceiling and strange cubical machines arranged in two rows from one end to the other. Each machine is a large white box

with an open lid on the top. Along the walls are large dark machines with glass portholes for viewing, but what they reveal is incomprehensible — bits of cloth tossing and twirling in the obscure patterns of some unknowable ritual. The sounds of rhythmic bumping and humming machinery fill the arena, and the air smells unnaturally — fresh! clean!

That's right — a laundromat. Your players have probably also guessed, but you must remind them, this alien environment is nothing like their characters have ever seen.

3.5.6 Ozzie-R and his Friends

The PCs are standing in the arena with Ozzie-R, whom you should now describe in much greater detail — a tiny, skinny guy, with a whiny voice; looks like he'd blow over if you whispered “stiff breeze.” He looks real nervous. If any of the PCs try to intimidate him with fierce looks, he skitters away like a squirrel.

Read this aloud:

Don-Y-OSM trots into the arena with an armful of weapons: a laser rifle with an indigo barrel, a tangler, something that looks an awful lot like a plasma generator, and others. He gives them to Ozzie-R, who just barely avoids collapsing under the weight. Ozzie-R looks more nervous than ever.

If the PCs got any questions right in the first round, read this:

Then Don-Y trots over to you and, with a broad smile, reaches into his pocket and brings out [GM: number equal to the number of questions the PCs answered correctly in the first round] laser pistol(s) with red barrels. “Congratulations, Troubleshooters!” he says sincerely.

These are ordinary laser pistols. Then, in any case, read the following:

Don-Y trots down the ramp and in a moment his voice resounds through the arena. “We'd like to thank Ozzie-R and his defending team for their diligent service to The Computer in testing several experimental weapons provided to us today by the brilliant technicians in Research and Development. Let's give them a big hand, citizens.” [Cheer!]

Enormous applause is heard in the studio, and Ozzie-R seems to shrivel a bit.

Probably the Troubleshooters — if you've elected to foster their little illusions — are breathing fairly easily now. This misguided sense of well-being should be encouraged. Then read this:

Don-Y continues, “And now let's welcome the rest of Ozzie-R's team! From the 256th Vulture Squadron, let's give a warm Alpha Complex greeting to Biff-G, Magilla-G, Gorgo-G, Goliath-G, and Megatherium-G from GOG Sector!” [Cheer!]

Amidst tumultuous applause, the room seems to shrink as five gigantic Green Armed Forces Troopers trundle into the arena and loom protectively around Ozzie-R. Each Vulture grabs one of the experimental weapons in a hand the size of a gruel-bucket, glances at it in distaste, and lays it aside with a grunt. They place the weapons on the floor almost without bending over. Their knuckles brush their knees. They look at you, grinning broadly.

In comes a trio of tall spindly bots in black and white tunics with little whistle attachments on their faceplates. Each has a laser built into one arm.

Don-Y-OSM continues, "Here are the three rebots to judge today's match, and here's the game ball, a precisely-shaped, sixty-kilogram sphere of solid steel from our friends in Technical Services."

One rebot is listing to one side under the weight of this big steel ball. One of the Vultures takes the ball and tosses it one-handed to a teammate.

"Remember, audience, each team is trying to get that steel ball in the porthole at the other team's end of the arena," says Don-Y-OSM.

Suddenly, spotlights shine down on two portholes at opposite ends of the arena, and they flip open automatically. The Vultures lope to their end, and the rebots guide you to your own.

Don-Y finishes, "And don't forget, citizens — anything goes! These brave contestants want that date with Teela O'Malley and they'll stop at nothing to get it! It's all part of the fun on... *Date With Death!*" The partitions are sliding closed behind you and the rebots are signalling for the game to begin. The Vultures are pounding their fists into their palms and growling. Gee, isn't this exciting?

3.5.7 King of the Laundromat: The Rules of the Game

As a special treat, we've organized the *Date With Death* bloodbath in the form of a boardgame. In spirit, this boardgame is typical FRP combat, but boardgame format makes it easier for the GM to run the NPCs and maintain some illusion of balanced, objective conflict.

In fact, it doesn't matter too much who wins; the adventure will continue in any event. The opponents are considerably tougher than the PCs, but their chart-driven tactics give the PCs plenty of opportunities. Further, the random element of penalty assessment by the rebots is a big factor in determining the winner (most casualties, for example, are inflicted by the lasers of the rebots). Therefore, no matter how tactically brilliant the PCs are, they could lose by a bounce of a die. And finally, since you are the referee, you have plenty of opportunities to influence the outcome.

So, remember, this is a roleplaying game, not *Stalingrad*. The point is to do some full-tilt roleplaying and have fun.

If the PCs manage to figure some way to win this apparently lop-sided match... well, bully for them.

RULES OF PLAY

INTRODUCTION

The playing area is a reconstructed Old-Reckoning laundromat. The opposing teams are, on one hand, the PCs (Team 1), and on the other, Ozzie-R-DIP and his Green Vulture Squadron companions (Team 2). The object is to advance a sixty-kilogram steel sphere to the opposing team's goal and stuff it inside the goal (an open clothes dryer). There are some rules about what sorts of things are illegal, but the players are not told about those rules, and learn only from experience by watching the kinds of penalties the rebots assess.

COMPONENTS

The Arena (the Laundromat)

The Playing Area is printed on page 23 of the pull-out section and should be set between the GM and the players so everyone can see it.

The Playing Area is an arena resembling a laundromat, with rows of clothes dryers along the walls and two rows of washing machines running the length of the area.

For game purposes, the area is divided into ten sectors, numbered 1 to 10. At each end is one special dryer designated "The Goal."

The Player Characters, NPCs, Rebots, and The Metal Sphere

Also on page 23, markers for six player characters, six NPC opponents, three rebots, and a metal sphere are printed.

In printing the markers on an important page, we have confronted you with a pretty tough decision — should you chop it up just to get those silly markers, photocopy them, or make your own markers?

Remember, damaging Computer property is a treasonous offense, punishable by summary execution.

(If you are too fastidious to chop it up, and too-la-di-dah to use regular, paper-thin copies of the markers, well, you can just make your own elegant markers, or use metal miniatures, or adapt some of the counters from one of West End Games' award-winning science-fiction or historical boardgames like *Web and Starship* or *South Mountain*. Pretty smooth little plug there, eh?)

Setting Up the Game

Read the following aloud:

The rebots direct the members of each team to stand in their appropriate goal areas. Do you follow directions like a good citizen?

Execute uncooperative traitors. Studio security bots and combots offer support if the rebots request it.

Place all Team 1 markers in Sector 10. Place all Team 2 markers in Sector 7. Place one rebot in each of Sectors 3, 4, and 9. Place the metal sphere in Sector 8.

Then read aloud:

See. Here are your PCs. [Point. I know, it isn't polite. Do it anyway.] **Here are Ozzie-R and his Green Vulture Squadron buddies. You notice that Ozzie-R has strapped on the weapon resembling a plasma generator and is cowering behind his hulking comrades. There is no sign of the other weapons. It seems the Vultures disdain the use of experimental weapons. I wonder why...**

Here are the rebots. They all have a multi-color laser built into one arm.

So, did you guys get any weapons? If so, who's going to start out carrying one?

Now, remember, nobody has any armor, Ozzie-R has got something that looks like a plasma generator, and you guys have [either no weapons, or one or more Red laser pistols.]

Everybody ready? Okay, the rebot in Sector 9 has dropped the sphere in Sector 8. That is closer to Team 2 than it is to you. Does that seem unfair? Anybody want to complain?

Yes, it is unfair. No, complaining does no good. The rebots ignore PC and NPC comments alike. Unruly contestants get shot. *Period.*

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Now you're going to explain how the game turn proceeds. Read aloud:

Okay, Troubleshooters, here's how things are going to work.

First, everybody writes down on a piece of paper what his character is going to do in the next five-second combat round. Here's what has to be on each note you give me:

One: your PC's name.

Two: which sector you will end up in. You can end up in any sector you choose. Don't bother telling me all the swell things you want to do on the way to that sector. You move to, or stay in a sector, then you do something. Got it?

Three: what you intend to do in that sector. Shoot? Shoot who? Clobber someone? Who? Pick up the sphere? Attack a rebot? Hide in a dryer? Sing "I'm an Alpha Complex Dandy"? I'm the guy that decides whether you can do what you say you intend to do. Of course, as always, I'll be reasonable.

I bet you want to know what kinds of things I will and won't let you do. Well, I'll give you some examples, but mostly I'm going to keep you in suspense. You'll find out as we go along. Won't that be exciting?

Here are some examples:

YOU CAN:

- melee
- shoot weapons
- exchange, steal, or throw weapons
- hide
- use mutant powers, if any of you are traitors
- try to pick up the sphere and then try to score by putting it into the other team's goal
- help each other
- make eloquent pleas for justice to the rebots
- appeal to the reasonable natures of Ozzie-R and his buddies
- attack the rebots
- direct questions, statements, or orders to other PCs, but the communication must be real short, and it is likely that that is all I'll let you do in one round

YOU CAN'T:

- do impossible or silly things. Exceptions may be made for incredibly clever or entertaining proposals
- break any normal *PARANOIA* game rules, though I may make exceptions
- The more you try to do in a five-second round, the more likely you will foul up in an entertaining fashion.

Okay, that's the first part — writing your intention in a note to me. You will write your notes simultaneously and without consulting each other. You will have about thirty seconds to write your notes.

Next, I'll collect and read your notes. I'll figure out what your character can do and arrange the PC markers in their new positions on the Playing Area. I'll let you whine and plead a little, but mostly I'll impress you, as usual, with the wit and discernment of my judgements.

Then, I will use a bunch of neat little charts to figure out where the NPCs are going and what they are going to do.

Then I will rearrange the NPCs on the

KING OF THE LAUNDROMAT CHARTS AND TABLES

TEAM 2 GREEN GORILLAS TABLE

- **Gorilla #1** automatically rolls a one each round. He is the goalie.
- Roll on this table every round for each other Gorilla not holding the sphere.
- Any Gorilla (includes #1) holding the sphere rolls on the "Gorilla With Sphere Table."

1 Go to Sector 7 and guard goal.

If PC w/sphere in sector: grab sphere.

If PC w/out sphere in sector: melee.

2-3 Stay in this Sector. Rip a chunk of metal from an appliance or wall (dryer door, soap dispenser, change machine) and throw it at a randomly-determined PC victim. (5% — column 6, Damage Table.)

4-7 Run to Sector (1D10).

If PC in Sector: melee.

If no PC in Sector: yell "Hey, look, here, I'm open, throw it! throw it!"

8 Run to randomly-determined rebot and attempt to rip its head off. (Unarmed combat)

If no functioning rebots surviving: run to sphere and grab it.

9-10 Run to sphere and grab it.

If PC(s) in sector: make unarmed combat roll to grab it. If successful, roll on Gorilla With Sphere Table next round. Place Gorilla marker under sphere.

GORILLA WITH SPHERE TABLE

- If a Gorilla has successfully grabbed the sphere, roll on this table.
- If a Gorilla with sphere is in Sector 10, the roll is automatically a 10.
- If two or more Gorillas are in the same sector with the sphere, and no PCs are in the sector, those Gorillas automatically roll a 4. That means they'll just stay there and argue over who should take the sphere. The deadlock can be broken only by a PC taking the sphere away from them, or if the excess Gorillas are diminished by PC combat or rebot laser fire. (Note delay of game.)

1-2 Stay put.

If PC in Sector: melee. (That is, if PC is struggling for sphere, make unarmed combat roll to maintain grip. If PC is not struggling for the sphere: bash him with the sphere — column 8 on Damage Table.)

3-5 Stay put and bellow in bewilderment. Example: "Hey, now what?" or "What's the plan?" or "Hey, Ozzie, cover me! Ozzie? Hey, where's Ozzie?"

If PC in Sector: make unarmed combat roll (if necessary) to hold onto sphere, but do not melee.

6 Move toward Sector 10 (1 sector/round).

If PC in Sector: make unarmed combat roll (if necessary) to hold onto sphere, but do not melee.

7-8 Throw sphere to Sector (1D10).

If Gorilla receiver in sector: roll 1D10.

• *If 6 or less: Gorilla receiver catches sphere and rolls on Gorilla with Sphere Table next round.*

• *If 7 or more: Gorilla fails to catch the sphere.*

If PC in sector: roll throwing Gorilla's primitive aimed weapon chance (5%) to hit PC.

• *If PC hit: column 8 on Damage Table.*

• *If no character is in the sector, if a Gorilla fails to catch the sphere, or if a PC target is missed: the sphere smashes into wall or washing machines. (Note damage to Computer property.)*

9-10 Gorilla tries to score.

If Gorilla is in Sector 10, and no PC is in Sector 10: score is automatic.

If Gorilla is in Sector 10, and one or more PCs is in the sector: the Gorilla tries to bash a randomly-determined PC with the sphere.

• *If successful: column 8 on Damage Table, and Gorilla maintains grip on sphere.*

• *If failure: Gorilla loses grip on sphere.*

If Gorilla is not in Sector 10: then Gorilla throws sphere at goal (5% to score.)

• *If he misses: the sphere smashes into a wall but remains in sector. (A PC in the goal should be asked before you roll the 5% chance to score if he'll try to block the throw.)*

• *If a PC tries to block a shot: he is automatically successful, but takes damage on column 8 of the Damage Table.*

OZZIE-R TABLE

"Hides" means tries to get into a washer or dryer and peek out from under or behind a partially-closed lid or door.

1-2 Hides in this sector.

3-8 Runs to Sector (1D10) and hides.

9-10 Hides in this sector and fires the plasma generator wildly into Sector (1D10). Since it is an area weapon, don't bother rolling for a hit. The whole sector is applesauce.

The plasma generator malfunctions on the second firing. Ozzie doesn't even dream of fixing it. Ozzie's Dexterity is 5, so he must roll a 5 or less on 2D10 to remove the backpack. It may take him a number of rounds, during which he will be screaming for assistance. His teammates will ignore him. If he gets loose, he'll run as far from the backpack as possible and hide there for the rest of the match.

An intrepid PC may try to salvage the plasma generator. Very tricky, but if successful, a clean win for the PCs is likely. See page 50 in the **GM Handbook** for details of remedying the malfunction. If repaired, it has a normal malfunction chance (92%).

REFBOT TABLE

Roll 1D10 each round for each rebot.

1-2 Stay in this sector and observe.

3-4 Run to Sector (1D10) and observe.

5-10 Blow whistle and assess penalty.

Look for rules infractions (see below) nearest the rebot. Don't get fussy about the "nearest" part. If two or more candidates seem equally near, roll some dice. Whistle loudly (if you have a real whistle, great), announce the penalty ("Delay of Game!"), and drill the victim with laser fire.

You may show favoritism to one side or the other. It happens. Just do your best to cloak it in apparent impartiality. Roll lots of dice. Pretend to be objective. Appear to be surprised or sympathetic when "luck" seems to favor one side more than another.

Playing Area and tell you what each of them is doing this round.

Now it's time for all the action — melee, missile, mutant powers, all kinds of exciting stuff, just like in every **PARANOIA** free-for-all. Anything that comes up that isn't covered in the **PARANOIA** rules I'll judge with typical impartiality and generosity.

One thing — to make the action extra fast and furious, we are going to ignore all combat modifiers. Any character who says he is hiding and is, in my judgement, out of line of sight (LOS) is not a target for laser fire. As far as hiding from the plasma generator... well, good luck.

Finally, the rebots decide if there have been any infractions of the rules, and assess penalties.

"Rules?" I hear you say. "There are rules? Shouldn't we be told about the rules?" Gee, it must be some oversight. I'm sure The Computer will fix everything in good time.

Oh yes. How to win. The first team to advance the sphere to the other team's goal and stuff it in the goal-dryer wins the game.

How to lose. If all members of one team are incapacitated or dead, that team is the loser. If both teams get wiped out simultaneously — always a possibility with the plasma generator — then both teams lose.

RULES INFRACTIONS AND PENALTIES

After all combat and other actions have been resolved, roll for the rebots' actions. Sometimes they move around, sometimes they just observe, and sometimes they assess penalties.

When they assess a penalty, you must look around the playing area for the excuse for the penalty. Here is a list of five rules infractions. You can add to the list, or improvise them on the spot. The penalty is always the same — the penalized character is shot at by the rebot's built-in laser.

Rules Infractions

1. Damaging Computer Property: fire and miss with an aimed weapon (including the sphere) or area weapon, or bash with the sphere and miss.

2. Out of Bounds Play: hiding in a washer or dryer.

Note: Hiding often protects the guilty party from rebot laser fire — GM option.

3. Delay of Game: holding sphere without advancing it. Happens a lot when there is a struggle for the sphere.

4. Improper Conduct: damaging a rebot or making treasonous statements.

5. High Humidity: this is in case you can't find any real rules infractions. Excess humidity causes rebots to malfunction, whistle, announce a penalty in unintelligible gibberish, and fire at hapless victims at random. (Your choice.)



“Chock-O blocks as GOG sector’s Magilla-G drives in for the SCORE!!”

SPECIAL COMBAT RULES

Plasma Generator

The plasma generator’s blast area is one sector. All characters and rebots in that sector are affected. All artifacts are partially melted and probably useless. Also, this is an experimental plasma generator, and, therefore, automatically malfunctions the second time it is fired. (See sections 13.6.2 and 13.7.8 in the *GM Handbook* for entertaining details.) In short, a warning buzzer sounds, and, if the malfunction is not repaired, the weapon explodes in 1D10 rounds; everyone in the sector or in an adjoining sector (roughly equivalent to a 10-meter radius) takes damage on the 20th column of the Damage Table.

Struggles over Objects (Specifically the Sphere or Weapons)

If two or more characters in a sector are struggling over possession of an object, each rolls his Unarmed Combat success chance. Anyone who fails loses grip of the item. If all fail, the item falls to the floor in that sector. Characters who succeed continue to grip the item. **Note:** the plasma generator can’t be taken from Ozzie-R unless he’s dead and the PC has managed to remove the backpack. (See the Ozzie-R Table on page 39.)

An object cannot be moved to another sector if characters from opposing teams are struggling for it.

Exception: Team 2 members are very strong. If two or more Team Two members have a grip on an object, they can drag the object and any Team 1 members at a rate of one sector per round.

Delaying an Opposing Team Member

The PCs may try to grab Team 2 members to keep them from moving. The only way to do

this is to obtain a combat result on the Damage Table that Stuns (or worse) the opposing team member. Other methods, like hanging onto or tripping Team 2 members, have no effect.

Laser Fire Into Crowds

If there is more than one character in a sector, roll chance to hit. If success, swell. If failure, pick victims at random and roll for success again and again until somebody gets hit, or everyone is missed.

SPECIAL MOVEMENT RULES

Any character carrying the 60-kilogram steel sphere can move no more than one sector per turn. Assistance from other characters will not increase the movement rate.

3.5.8 In Search of Teela

“And the Lucky Winners...”

If the PCs won Round Two of *Date With Death*, it’s time to award them their prize — a date with Teela O’Malley. Well, maybe not a real date. Actually, it’s just a chance to see her for fifteen minutes at a Teela O’Malley Fan Club meeting.

Don-Y makes a big announcement, there’s a lot of cheering, and the PCs are hustled off-stage as Don-Y launches into a long-winded hype praising the generosity of The Computer.

Backstage Morrie-G gives them an address in NBD Sector where they are to meet Teela — “Room 13, corridor QB-7 on the Victory Promenade” — returns their equipment, and shoves them rudely out of the studio.

“Too Bad, But Our Consolation Prize...”

If the PCs lost the gladiatorial contest, Morrie-G returns their equipment and dispatches the disconsolate losers to Hall-Y’s office (or the CRUD system delivers clone replacements there). After suitable expressions of sympathy,

tch-tching, and clucking of tongues (covered tongues), Hall-Y shows what a swell guy he is.

“Oh, bad scoobies, guys and gals, really bad vibrations — but your pal Hall-Y just may be able to do you up after all. Hey, hey, no, don’t thank me, it’s just the kinda crazy guy I am, right?”

“Now, I hear from some very close personal friends in Public Relations that our gal Teela, is planning a special surprise guest appearance at a Teela O’Malley Fan Club meeting —”

Hall-Y gives them the address, tries to sell them something illegal, and sends them off.

Don’t worry that they’ll encounter the Green Vulture Squadroniers there, even though by all rights those goons won the meeting with Teela. Artistic license, right? But feel free to let the players worry.

3.6 Pick a Door. Any Door.

3.6.1 Room 13

After leaving the *Date With Death* studio, the PCs are sent off to find Room 13. If you’re picking up here fresh for a new session, you might want to give them a little improvised runaround on the way to Room 13 — you know, nosy Vulture Guards, malfunctioning transbots, a wise old wizard at the crossroads, stuff like that. Otherwise, take them directly to Room 13.

Read aloud:

Uh-oh. You’ve come to Room 13 — miraculously without any mysterious delays, casualties, or Kafkaesque encounters with the citizenry of Alpha Complex. Here, at last, you are going to meet the elusive Teela O’Malley.

The problem is, there are three Room 13’s — three identical doors arranged in a row, reading 13A, 13B, and 13C.

There’s a corridor directory on the wall nearby. You read a lot of names you don’t recognize, and near the bottom, “Teela O’Malley Fan Club — Room 13.” That’s all it says. The hallway stretches in both directions, but there are no other doors in sight. No one is around.

You know Teela is behind one of these doors. Which one do you want to try?

Listening at doors conveys no benefit (“You hear a muffled voice — it might be Teela’s”), and no one is around to help. Hall-Y, Morrie-G, the studio pages, the whole population of NBD Sector — they’re all nowhere to be found. The PCs will just have to choose one (or more) door(s) at random. (They’re all unlocked.)

The Real Story Behind Door 13

You’ve probably already realized that the choice of doors is completely irrelevant. No matter which door they choose first, the players will run through the encounters below in a predetermined sequence.

If the PCs want to try more than one door simultaneously, the plot can handle that: split the party as desired, let them open two doors at once. The third door is now locked. If they try to blast it open, that will work — but the contents of the other two rooms should distract them before they can manage this.

The first two rooms can be run alternately, as you shift from one group of players to another. Note that the separate encounters will probably tend toward the same outcome. (Snort, snort.) After the first two firefights are

resolved, *then* the Troubleshooters, or their heirs, can open the third door. This time it's unlocked.

Keep in mind that the PCs should go through all three doors in sequence, and that at the last of the three doors, the PCs should all enter together. To encourage them, keep reminding them that Teela *must* be around here somewhere...

The only situation you can't allow is the players' refusal to open any door. In this case, remember all the coercion devices described in Section 3.2. The Funbot can go bananas and dart through a door at the drop of a derby hat. ("How-are-ya how-are-ya how-are-ya? New crowd, new show, new laughs! What's ten foot tall and loaded for bear?") Or let them return to Cleto-B and explain that they couldn't find Teela. He will yell at them a lot and send them back to investigate the Mystery of Room 13.

Anyway. The PCs choose a door and go through it. Oh, gosh. How unfortunate. They chose the wrong door. They meet...

3.6.2 The Pepsi Generation

Comin' at ya, goin' strong. Got a lot to live and a lot to give...

Let's talk for a minute about secret societies. Now and again they influence life in Alpha Complex (witness previous *PARANOIA* adventures for documentation). But usually they're so small, so loosely organized, and so heavily infiltrated by Internal Security that they're ineffectual against the ever-vigilant Computer. (Recall that The Computer itself started most of them as harmless outlets for conspiratorial impulses.)

Given this sense of futility, secret society members tend to turn from grand, long-range plans to more easily-achievable short-range goals — like individual wealth and aggrandizement. As a result, society infighting is pretty fierce.

Any given society harbors so much petty politicking, backbiting, *back-kissing* (ahem), sneering snobbery, craven deference, and internecine warfare that it makes the A.F.L.C.I.O look like pantywaists. Imagine the Fort Dix League of Officer's Wives trying to cooperate with the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Is it any wonder that The Computer has stayed in power for generations?

Sometimes factions breed so much animosity that the society splinters. Offshoot groups, a dozen or so strong, break from the hated parent organization to "recapture the true ideal of our founders." They often die out in a couple of years, but the less likely an organization is to achieve its goals, the more idealistic its factions grow — and so the splintering continues. (Factional idealism is inversely proportional to group effectiveness. Students, feel free to steal this for your next Poli Sci paper. But if you flunk, don't blame us — that's what you get for relying on a roleplaying supplement for political theory.)

Thus, the Pepsi Generation.

Members of the Romantics secret society are united by their lofty aim to reestablish that long-ago golden age, when the godlike "Me Generation" ate "fried french" and "burgers," rode "roller coasters," and traveled through the Outdoors to wondrous places like "Disneyland" and "Vietnam."

But factions within the Romantics differ, often violently, on the ways to recapture that lost

Utopia. Some spirited intellectuals favor close study of ancient documents (travel brochures, matchbooks, *Car Wars*, Sears catalogues, *Wonder Woman*), while another group demands focused concentration on the politics of the time (as revealed in an ancient videotape of the 1976 Republican Convention and scholarly treatments of the mysterious Pat Paulsen). Other factions recommend attention to the arts (Harold Robbins, Nelson Eddy, *Wonder Woman*), or the three great "religions" of the time (Fundamentalism, Rosicrucianism, and the Sons of UFO).

And then there's the bunch the Troubleshooters meet as they enter the first of the three doors.

Read this aloud:

Well, Teela's not here. Instead there are half a dozen oddly-dressed citizens gathered around a strange mechanical apparatus resembling the fluid-distilling systems in the Food Vats. The liquid this machine produces is different, though — it's brown, it smells sweet, and it bubbles.

The citizens — they're pretty strange-looking. They're wearing weird multi-colored shirts and blue, stitched pants, and they're pouring this liquid into strangely-shaped flasks with strange metal caps. Some of them are slurping down this odd liquid, burping, and humming along with a melody that issues from a wall vidscreen.

The screen shows a large triangular array of citizens dressed in the same, weird, colorful garments, all swigging this brown fluid from the strange flasks and raising their voices in song — in praise of the virtues of this mysterious substance — well, what else can it be but some kind of *drug* — which can apparently unite all citizens in perfect harmony.

But nothing can unite all citizens but The Computer! Everything in this room definitely looks treasonous.

As you stand there trying to figure this out, the six citizens in the room turn to you, flasks raised on high, and call out to you — a ritualized greeting? "We're all Peppers. Wouldn't you like to be a Pepper, too?"

Now what?

If the PCs' Actions Are Friendly...

If the PCs agree to "be a Pepper," or otherwise behave in friendly fashion, the Pepsi Generation gives them a taste of the brown liquid, the re-discovered Old Reckoning drug called "co-cola." Pepsi Generators live for co-cola and despise above all things the mythical "uncola" which they believe to have been the cause of the downfall of Old Reckoning civilization.

If a PC drinks the co-cola, he or she feels refreshed. He or she will also be branded a traitor at the mission debriefing — not only are the multicorder and Petbot recording everything, one of the Pepsi Generators is an Internal Security plant who will squeal like a baby to the Troubleshooters' superiors. (At your discretion, you can pass a note to Eve-R-DEN, the IntSec PC, telling her she recognizes the IntSec plant. The discovery is unlikely to comfort her, in any case.)

If the PCs Are Hostile or Suspicious

If the PCs decline to try co-cola, or are uncooperative and threatening in some other way, the secret society members will open fire

immediately, firing laser pistols and throwing bottles (Primitive Aimed Weapons skill and column 5 of the Damage table for a bottle hit). Make a point of hitting the Funbot with a bottle — it breaks, dousing the bot with sticky, syrupy liquid. (In case you don't follow, this provides a plausible excuse for the Funbot to go ding-dong later on — as if you needed an excuse.)

Firefight! The PCs can stay and blow the Generators away, die gloriously for The Computer, or run away. If they choose the better part of valor (i.e., run like bunnies), the Pepsi Generation will chase them all over NBD Sector, shouting slogans like "Death to Unsweetened-Beverage Consumers!" or "Remember the Cyclamates!" The chase can lead the PCs to some of the more interesting locales the Funbot was supposed to drag them to, or to some other part of the adventure. ("You're chased into a studio with a bunch of stage sets labeled *Wide Complex of Sports...*") Another amusing idea is to chase the PCs in a large circle, down lots of hallways with lots of doors (all locked and miraculously resistant to weapon fire), until they happen by — yes — the same three doors of Room 13. They can go in a second door, or you can take them through the loop again. And again. And when the PCs reach the second encounter, you can have the pursuing Pepsi Generators conveniently vanish in a cloud of artistic license.

But say the Troubleshooters don't run. They either make friends with or slaughter the Pepsis; either way they get to look around the room they're in. If they do, read this aloud:

The walls of this room are covered with what look like battle plans. It seems the citizens here have been preparing for war. On one wall is a map of the sewers beneath NBD Sector — you remember the sewers, don't you? One area you don't recognize has a big "X" drawn on it, and beside the "X" the words "Clone Ranger Lab." A banner spread across another wall reads "Death to Clone Rangers, Abusers of Co-Cola."

There's nothing else of interest in this room except a big, bulky distilling apparatus, a bunch of glass flasks of this liquid "co-cola," and the vidscreen displaying the treasonous programming. [GM: Ancient soda pop commercials, provided by Hall-Y-WUD-3.]

The Pepsi Generators, as it turns out, are mortal enemies of the Clone Rangers. Co-cola is a vital ingredient in the revolutionary new Ranger cloning process (hey, c'mon, isn't it said that the stuff "adds life"?), and since supplies of the beverage are limited, the two organizations are in constant conflict over this scarce resource. Thus the Generators are planning a raid on the Ranger lab.

If the PCs engage the Pepsi Generators in conversation, they can find out all of this — but they *can't* learn (A) exactly what the Clone Rangers are or Teela's connection with them, (B) Teela's whereabouts, or (C) the time of the planned raid on the Clone Rangers laboratory. The raid will take place — of course — later in the adventure, just as the Troubleshooters discover the lab themselves.

3.6.3 Moving Things Along

Don't forget that you want the PCs to go through all three doors in this encounter. You can drive them like sheep to the next door with laser-toting Pepsis, make them chase the wicked Funbot, or just make the Pepsis disappear

behind locked, secret doors, then say, "Now what?" Sooner or later they'll either pick Door 13 again or receive some imperious command from Cleto-B to "Find Teela, you incompetent vat slime! Hall-Y says to look in Room 13. Do it. Now. Thank you for your soon-to-be-more-satisfactory-or-you'll-be-reactor-shielding cooperation."

But suppose everyone is behaving calmly, chatting with the Pepsis, wondering what's supposed to come next. Consider these suggestions for poking your players in the proper direction:

1. Suddenly you see Teela O'Malley herself run by the open doorway outside. You hear a door open nearby, then close again.

2. The Funbot pipes up with, "Hey, ladies and gents, what's a drink without a main dish, am I right?" *Sloop!* The Funbot hits one of the citizens with a cream pie. The citizen wipes away the white stuff and says, "Uncola-drinking deviant! I'm part of an original crowd! How dare you?" He pulls a laser and aims it at the Funbot. Initiate firefight or chase.

3. Ooops! The ceiling looks like its going to collapse. Cliffhanger! Maybe you all die, maybe not! We'll find out next week... (Use this when the evening is getting long and you're ready for a co-cola yourself.)

4. When playing the Pepsi Generation, remember that, though superficially mellow, they're fanatics, caffeine freaks, and a little spaced out from sucrose overload. In other words, they can go bonkers at any moment — for any reason.

PC: So, you fine folks know where we can find Teela O'Malley?

PG1: Teela! I saw her the other night! She played a helpless ordinary citizen kidnapped by Commies! (Glug.)

PG2: If only they'd *paused*, to be *refreshed!* The magic of co-cola would have changed their Communist ways!

PG1: What, surely you don't want to give our precious elixir to *Communists*, citizen? (Gulp-gulp-gulp.)

PG2: Do you deny any person the right to find the path to apple trees and honeybees and snow-white turtle doves, you callous revisionist backslider?

PG1: Commie-symp anarchist non-Pepper! Let's ask these valiant Troubleshooters who's right! Who do you agree with, noble Troubleshooters?

There is no right answer to this question, and both parties have laser pistols. Take it from there, and be sure the surviving Troubleshooters get chased or led to the next door. When they open it, they'll learn that...

3.6.4 I've Got a Secret

Let's talk for a moment about secret society meetings. Several societies don't ever have meetings — Computer Phreaks, Psion, spies for service groups or other Alpha Complexes, Frankenstein Destroyers, PURGE, and (of course) the Illuminati. Others meet all the time — FCCCP, Humanists, Romantics — or splinter groups thereof.

The level of paranoia surrounding each meeting varies by society. Communist gatherings are hushed, rushed, and participants keep weapons trained on every doorway. Conversely, meetings of societies tolerated by The Com-



"Will the Real Thing please step forward?"

puter — FCCCP, Anti-Mutant — are enjoyed by their members for their "naughtiness." Getting caught at one of these is about as serious an offense as reading comics under the covers after bedtime.

In HPD&MC, the tolerance for such goings-on increases to the point that many meetings are held with no security precautions at all — no sentries, no locked doors, no camouflage.

Like this one. Read aloud:

Well, Teela's not here either. But when you open this door you find half a dozen citizens of Yellow clearance gathered around a small table. When you enter, they look terrified — but in a moment, they calm down.

Why do they calm down? They see a face they recognize! That's right. This is a meeting of one of the PCs' secret society! Pick some PC who's square at the front of the group of Troubleshooters, or who needs a challenge to rise to his full potential, or someone you want to get even with. Describe the trappings of the meeting according to that PC's secret society.

Appropriate descriptions for the secret societies of each of the pregenerated characters provided with this adventure are found in the Secret Society Meetings box. Follow the read-aloud paragraph above with the appropriate read-aloud paragraph for the secret society of your chosen victim.

If you're running *Send in the Clones* using your own PCs (sigh — all our work for nothing), take these descriptions as examples in exercising your own evil imagination to describe other secret society meetings.

Take a moment to consider your chosen PC victim's options in this situation.

He can greet his fellow secret society members cordially, introduce other Troubleshooters as friends, and try to brazen it through. You probably have an idea about how well that will go over with the other PCs.

He can deny knowing his fellow Troubleshooters, whereupon they will open fire on the traitor and his companions.

He can shoot his fellow troubleshooters, and — should he survive — try to figure out what to say at debriefing.

He can smile widely and back out of the room, then run like blazes. The secret society members will get wise and give chase, firing at the traitor's fellows as well.

Or he can stand paralyzed by indecision, or sink to his knees blubbering. You won't believe how many PCs pursue this course of action.

Regardless, you should have *somebody* start shooting. Then the encounter can become a fight or a chase — and you can use the options described in the previous encounter to bring the PCs back to the third and final door.

How sad that this moment — this exquisite freeze-frame of one PC caught between his own personal Scylla and Charybdis — cannot be drawn out at length. It is a quintessential Alpha Complex incident. Help your players appreciate, as they drop like flies in the subsequent firefight, that this is one of those situations unique to **PARANOIA**.

Our advice is to turn this into a combat no matter what approach the PCs take. To be bluntly frank, this encounter exists only to bedevil your players; it makes no contribution to the development of the plot.

Sure, maybe Pro Tech or Programs Group members could drop a few significant clues to the motives behind the Troubleshooters' mission, but why tell the players?

It doesn't help them find Teela; it only gives them a better idea of what is happening behind the scenes. Who needs a bunch of smug, savvy players? Let the encounter dissolve in laser fire, and they'll never tumble to its complete lack of motivation.

The PC survivors (or successors) will want to go through the third door. They will *want* to. Or else! Coerce them through Door #3 if necessary (you're getting to be an old hand at this by now). They'll thank you, because here they'll find Teela — eventually.

3.6.5 You Mean... Teela's Really Here?!

Read this aloud:

Well, Teela's not here either. In fact, no one's here. But you can hear Teela's melodious voice coming from a lot of vidscreens on the walls. The screens display views of a huge laboratory — it looks like some sort of biological facility. Teela's voice-over is an extremely odd little jingle: "One clone, two clones, three clones, four; five clones, six clones, seven clones, more!"

There are a lot of chairs facing the front of the room, where a very large vidscreen features a continuous teletext display —

lines of text that roll upward. Beside the vidscreen is a small closed door.

The door is locked. It wouldn't do for you to let them shoot through the door right at this moment; if they try, go directly to the next read-aloud section.

The vidscreen teletext displays the Clone Rangers sales pitch, presented to the wealthy and influential high-clearance clients the Rangers cultivate.

This is probably the most important and coherent source of information the PCs will encounter in the adventure. It can give away as much or as little as you like about the Clone Rangers' origins and doctrines, bootleg clones, the missing cloning equipment, Teela and Cleto-B's positions in the organization, robot alligators, Tupperware, or whatever else you want.

An example pitch:

"Immortality assured through infinite clones!

"For the people of status and influence in Alpha Complex, the perfect hedge against age, disease, and the unfortunate misunderstandings that can bring a swift and surprising end to one's six original clones.

"New, fully-formed adult clones, at only a few months' notice!

"For those willing to grasp the opportunity, the Clone Rangers offer endless clones, guaranteeing that your lineage survives troubled times and goes forward to greet our glorious destiny. Clones for yourself, for friends,

SECRET SOCIETY MEETINGS

Programs Group (Tammy-Y-NET or Watt-Y-WHO)

One of them smiles, looks at you [Tammy-Y or Watt-Y] and says, "Oh, it's you. You're late. Our esteemed High Programmer has given us strict orders to take care of Cleto-B-QRK-2 and his Troubleshooter mission. If The Computer finds out, we'll be argon vapor."

Another Yellow points at [Watt-Y or Tammy-Y] and says, "Hey, I recognize that clone! Isn't [he/she] from a rival Programs Group?"

Now what?

Free Enterprise (Chock-O-BLK)

There's lots of treasonous merchandise around — vidtapes, flasks of the bubbling brown liquid you saw before, real, printed books — lots of other things you've never seen before. And the six Yellow citizens are passing a lot of credits back and forth — credits are changing hands freely. On the wall is a banner with a big, winged dollar sign.

One of the citizens smiles, looks at Chock-O-BLK, and says, "Oh, it's you. You're late. Have you got anything to sell? Who are your friends? They interested in anything in particular?"

Now what?

Anti-Mutant (Sam-R-KND)

One of them smiles, looks at Sam-R, and says, "Oh, it's you. You're late. We're making plans for some mutant genocide in KIA Sector. That lily-circuited Computer has tolerated the mutant menace far too long. Now we'll take matters into our own hands."

They all chime in with enthusiastic fervor, but one of the others suddenly looks

for supervisors or subordinates, for the Indigo who has everything...

"And not just any clones, no.

"A clone of any desired individual can be yours, for your own use or to give as the perfect gift for that special someone.

"Our introductory offer: clones of beloved entertainer Teela O'Malley, ready for immediate delivery — and at affordable prices.

"Contact Cleto-B-QRK-2 or Hall-Y-WUD-1 for free pamphlet and further details, or talk to our founder, Teela O'Malley herself, after tonight's presentation. No obligation; no Free Enterpriser will call."

And so on. Give the players ample opportunity to mull this over; they should figure out quickly enough that they've hit paydirt. At that point, who should enter but Teela?

Read this aloud whenever the players have finished talking things over or are about to do something significant:

The small door next to the vidscreen opens, and who should enter but your intended victim, the lovely, elusive Teela O'Malley! She sees you and gasps. Just as you spot her, you hear a door opening behind you.

Now, I need to know from each of you whether you're facing forward toward Teela, or backward toward the door opening behind you. Raise your right hand for forward, left hand for backward.

Ready? Hands up!

carefully, and points at [another PC] and says, "Hey, isn't that the mutant scum we ordered you to terminate? Why did you bring that subhuman filth to our meeting?"

Now what?

Sierra Club (Eve-R-DEN)

You see there are lots of banners on the walls with slogans like "Green Is Beautiful" and "Destroy All Dams" and "Euell Gibbons Will Live Forever." There are treasonous documents all around — Old Reckoning propaganda with titles like *National Geographic*, *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau*, *Tropical Fish Quarterly*, *Donald Duck*, and *House and Garden*.

One of the citizens smiles at Eve-R and says, "Oh, it's you. You're late. We were just about to let loose a mosquito that Herbie-Y brought in from the Outdoors. Isn't it great?"

"Say, who are these people you've brought with you?"

Now what?

Pro Tech (Elm-R-FUD)

You see a big banner on the wall reading "Better Living Through Technology." One of the citizens smiles at Elm-R and says, "Oh, it's you, Reddy Kilowatt [Elm-R's code name in Pro Tech]. You're late. We've just broken one of The Computer's software protection codes and determined the whereabouts of the cloning equipment we sent you to retrieve. It's in the Clone Ranger laboratory, down in the sewers.

"Say, who are all these people you've brought with you? What are your Pro Tech code names, citizens?"

Now what?

Anyone who didn't choose either is assumed to have dithered — a cardinal sin in **PARANOIA** — and they spend a round wool gathering. Anyone who tried to do both — face both ways — is showing the right spirit — just roll dice to determine which way they were looking when everything gets interesting.

PCs facing *forward* can get off a shot at Teela in the nanosecond before she ducks back through the door. If a shot hits, roll the dice for the Damage Chart and cluck sympathetically, "Shucks. No effect. (Shake your head regretfully.) But you shot at point blank range — okay — the door jam buckles, and it can't be locked."

If the PCs don't fire, of course, they just watch their quarry get away without opposition. They can follow but are vulnerable to laser fire from...

...What the *backward*-facing PCs see coming through the door: Cleto-B-QRK and a crowd of Violets and Indigos (six, all told, all armed with laser pistols).

If *no* PCs are facing backward, they'll all get drilled (+20% success chance) by the high-clearance mob.

If any Troubleshooters are facing backward, as seems likely, Cleto-B will not risk endangering his own Blue hide and his high-level customers; he'll bluff it out. "You! Troubleshooters! You're very close to foiling one of the most elaborate covert Internal Security operations of all time. If the traitor Teela escapes, it will go very hard for you at Troubleshooter headquarters. Pursue her at once! Shoo!"

No, we don't expect your players to fall for this, but if you deliver it forcefully and angrily, you may create enough doubt in their minds to achieve the desired result — they'll follow Teela. The deck is definitely stacked toward this end, since few PCs would desire to stick around and deal with a crowd of people whose security clearances are so high the Troubleshooters can barely recognize the colors.

And, if they do stick around, it's their funeral.

Use whatever coercion you feel is appropriate to get the PCs to follow Teela. ("Teela! Teela *baby*, how-are-ya how-are-ya how-are-ya? Am I or am I not your *biggest*, most *devoted* fan? Don't run away, dollink! What's ten feet tall and...") Then Cleto-B and his group follow the PCs to ensure they meet their death at Teela's destination — the Clone Rangers laboratory.

3.7 The Big Pie Fight

It's just barely possible that you are tired of sending the PCs into deathtraps, or that the PCs are tired of dying. Now's the time to get them into *real* trouble.

The PCs probably followed Teela from the Clone Rangers showroom. If they delayed chasing her, or were delayed by a firefight in the showroom, when they pick up the chase again, they discover that Teela has been listening behind the door to see how things were going. She has taken flight again, and is at extreme range, but the PCs can just manage to keep up.

If the PCs haven't come from the Clone Rangers' showroom, presumably you have run Teela across the PCs' trail at some point and gotten them to chase her. In any case, here's where the action picks up.

3.7.1 Back To the Sewers

Read aloud:

You follow the fleeing Teela down the chute-like access tube from NBD Sector and into the sewers. She lands gracefully at the bottom of the tube and sprints down the muck-strewn tunnels.

GM: PCs make an easy Agility check — if they succeed, they land on their feet; if they fail, they end up in the sewer flow with a splash. The Funbot automatically slips into the muck, and will be unappetizingly soiled for the rest of the adventure.

Slogging through the muck of the sewers you take off after Teela, who is just far enough ahead to be out of laser range, yet close enough to remain tantalizingly within view.

This part of the sewer looks familiar — this is where you encountered the old Troubleshooter and the kids. You stay in pursuit, and finally see Teela pause ahead of you, open a metal door, and fling herself through it. You hear a series of bolts sliding home in the door.

Then, silence.

When you reach the door, there is no sound from within. There's a panel of buttons next to the door.

Now what?

In order to make the buttons work, PCs make a difficult Mechanical Aptitude or Maintenance skill roll. If the PCs succeed, the door swings open. If they fail, the door doesn't budge. If they try pushing on the door, they'll find it was open all along!

If the PCs stand around for a while before doing anything, they'll hear the sound of feet sloshing through the muck and mire, and Cleto-B's voice (or the voice of a surviving compatriot) saying, "Quick, they're over here. Want your merchandise? Then hurry up! And keep your lasers handy!"

3.7.2 The Antechamber

If the players manage to burn through, break down, or just open the door, read the following:

You find stairs in a tunnel leading down about twenty feet. Teela is just disappearing into a room below at the end of this descending tunnel.

Sooner or later the PCs will head down these stairs, either on their own or because Cleto-B and his buddies are right behind them.

As you reach the bottom of the stairs, you see a small room, and Teela, fumbling with another panel of buttons. As you enter the small room, a big, big door swings slowly open behind her. Beyond the doorway you see a railing, and beyond the railing, a big, big laboratory.

Like the third room in the last section, this antechamber is filled with Clone Rangers' promotional material — pamphlets featuring the image of Teela O'Malley, videos featuring Teela O'Malley, audio announcements featuring the voice of Teela O'Malley extolling the virtues of the Clone Rangers' up-to-date cloning system ("As new as tomorrow, yet available today...")

Let this sink in — especially if the PCs managed to avoid the third room in the last encounter. Once the enormity of what they've discovered has had a chance to sink in, read

the following aloud:

Teela turns toward you, and a shudder passes through her as she realizes that her days — nay, her seconds — are numbered. Then she smiles, just a little.

"Why, it's you, my valiant band of Troubleshooters. I was so deathly afraid... but I know you'll protect me from that terrible Cleto-B and his evil minions."

Suddenly, you start to feel a little — odd. Like the room is moving. You can hear Teela talking ("I know you'll help me... I know you'll help me... 'I know you'll...'), but it sounds as if she's far away and underwater.

Teela is using her power to *Cloud Men's Minds* (see section 0.4.3) in an attempt to save her skin. In the pullout section (page 26) are two notes that should be handed to the PCs at this point.

Actually, you need three copies of each — a total of six. The notes are printed on page 26 and you may have already duplicated it a couple times, but if you are living far from the conveniences of a cheap copy machine, you can always copy them by hand — a charming personal touch.

Okay. Who gets which note? Any PC with the Mental Block mutation (in this adventure, Watt-Y-WHO-2 and Sam-R-KND-1), has immunity to Teela's power, and should receive note 2. Otherwise, the notes are distributed to the players at random.

Read these notes before you hand them out. In brief, note 1 tells the player that his character has had his mind clouded by Teela, and that he is irrationally compelled to aid Teela. Note 2 tells the player that he felt funny for a second, but the feeling has passed and some of the other PCs look a little strange.

You have divided the Troubleshooter Mission group into two opposed parties with opposite objectives — as though the players needed any further motivation to shoot at each other.

Before the players get a chance to digest the notes, all hell breaks loose in this antechamber. Let's see if we can keep this straight:

First, the players have to decide who they're blasting — each other, Teela, or Cleto-B.

Second, Cleto-B and his modest horde of three Violets and three Indigos burst into the room, lasers blazing at anything that moves.

Third, Teela leaps through the open doorway into the laboratory shouting, "You'll never take me alive, coppers!"

3.7.3 We'll Return to "Send in the Clones" After This:

This seems as good a time as any to interrupt our adventure for this important word about Teela's big death scene. (It should be coming up any second now.) Teela's a star, and she plans to go out in style. No puff of smoke and... gone. She's got a speech all ready — an homage, if you will, to every treasonous, Old Reckoning vidprogram she's ever seen. Of course, she hasn't seen many, but that's not going to stop her from giving it a good shot.

As soon as she is hit by sufficient laser fire to drop a bull elephant, she falls to her knees and cries, "Computer of Mercy, is this the end of Teela? I ain't so tough! Top o' the Complex, Computer... top o' the Complex."

(GM: This is a particularly moving speech. We're quite proud of it. Make sure the PCs have ample opportunities to riddle Teela with

laser fire so it gets used. Have her pitch from side to side, clutching her wounds, moaning with each shot. Add your own pop culture references — heroic death scenes you know your players will appreciate. Thank you.)

And, with those last words, Teela falls — deader than a Troubleshooter.

Listen. The disposition of her body is going to be very important in the debriefing. Sure. The PCs need to have proof that they have fulfilled their mission and terminated Teela. (They may regret having preserved the evidence, but more on that later.)

Normally it wouldn't be a big deal to keep track of a body. Normally...

But to cap off this big action scene we are going to flood the Clone Rangers lab with the mighty currents of the Alpha Complex sewer system. This is going to make keeping track of a body pretty tough, not to mention the PCs' problem of tackling deep torrents of water without a Swimming skill.

We just thought you'd like to know.

Oh, and by the way, don't worry about Teela. We're not going to kill her off. She has to be around for the sequels. Relax. Leave it to us. Where there's a clone, there's a way.

3.7.4 And Now, On With the Show...

So the PCs have a decision to make. Cleto-B and his band of merry Indigos and Violets — all carrying lasers of appropriate security clearance — charge into the fray, shouting, "Traitors! Commies! Mutants! Free Market Suppressors!" and other appropriate epithets. Teela is leaping through the door into the lab. Got it?

The only way out for the PCs is through the door, over the railing, and down after Teela. How far down? The PCs can't tell. Won't it be exciting finding out?

Actually, it's only a drop of five feet. If Teela is still alive when she hits the floor, she'll run off across the floor amongst the lab apparatus, providing a fine target for concerted laser fire.

If the PCs seem reluctant to enter the lab, the Funbot can grab a PC by the shoulder and drag him or her through the door. ("Hey, tough audience or what? Let's get out there and mingle!")

3.7.5 It's the Real Thing

The PCs are now in the heart of the Clone Rangers lab. Read the following aloud:

This is the laboratory you saw in the treasonous promotional literature outside. It was described as an up-to-the-minute cloning facility — capable of turning out full-blown, fully-grown clones.

You're in a room hundreds of meters long. There's a funny ozone smell in the air. Your hair stands on end.

Conveyor belts carry bubbling pie-tins of protoplasm and big two-liter unbreakable bottles of co-cola toward huge molds. The gooey, jello-like stuff and the bubbling brown liquid are poured into the human-shaped molds.

Each over-flowing mold is picked up by large pincers, shaken well, and carried to a huge, open-topped freezer tank. Suddenly a bolt of lightning leaps from a pair of enormous electrodes to the freezer tank, and the tank and the air around it glow for a second.

Then another set of pincers picks the mold from the freezer tank, whacks it against the wall of the tank and shatters the mold. This leaves a hunk of human-shaped, quivering stuff the consistency of jello. This semi-gelatinous, quasiorganic protoclone conveniently flops onto another conveyor belt which takes the clone-to-be to a holding tank. There are numerous holding tanks, and each contains a clone in various stages of completion.

(GM: All the real wonderful pseudo-scientific wizardry occurs in these holding tanks over a period of several days to a few months, depending on the clone. But a sense of decency and respect for centuries of dedicated theory and research in the various fields of science force us to rush hurriedly past the preposterous processes implied by this hokey lab. Or, for those of you who find this perfectly plausible, we recommend an excellent volume, *Science Made Stupid*, available at many book stores.)

Here is a perfect place for a little creative improvisation on your part. The lab is filled with devices that can be turned to your own perverse ends. The huge pincers could grab a PC instead of a protoclone. The Troubleshooters might swing from them like circus acrobats. Conveyor belts are convenient for swift transport of PCs from one trouble spot to another. And who knows what happens if one of the PCs gets dropped in the freezer tank, or is plopped into one of the protoplasm-co-cola-filled molds?

We're confident you'll think of something.

The air in the lab is charged with electricity. Anybody holding anything metal can be zapped by pseudo-lightning bolts that leap from the giant electrodes (column 7 on the Damage Table). (Of course, everyone in Alpha Complex has something made of metal.)

Static electricity causes everyone's hair to stand on end for the rest of the adventure. No electrical device works properly here. *Period*. Anything electrical malfunctions the moment it is turned on. Then a lightning bolt hits it.

This is particularly entertaining when the first PC thinks to radio in for an airstrike to eradicate this illicit cloning operation. (Click. "Troubleshooter Chock-O-BLK calling for..." Com unit squeals, buzzes, rattles, falls silent, and a tiny plume of smoke rises from it. Then... BBBZZ-ZZAAAAP-P-P! P-SISSSS...)

Continue reading aloud:

You've had a chance to look around — briefly. Now, you hear Cieto-B and his minions pressing their attack. Better push on. (Of course, you can hang around and get blasted if you like.)

But wait!

From all sides you hear the pounding of running feet. Lots of them. Then, you see the most horrifying sight you've ever witnessed — Teela clones, in all sizes, shapes, numbers of limbs, and states of completion. Dozens of them!

At this point, Stanl-Y-LRL-1 and Oil-Y-HRD-6 appear at the door of the lab. They're a couple of saps from Power Services sent down here to investigate the strange power fluctuations caused by the firefight and the errant cloning mechanisms.

They're unarmed and have no idea what's going on. In fact, you don't even have to include them — their only function is to tap various PCs

on the shoulder and ask them if they know anything about the power fluctuations. They never, ever, get hit by anything — pies, lasers, co-cola — nothing touches them. Make up outlandish reasons why lasers fired at point-blank range miss them.

If the Funbot is still with the PCs — and unless they've destroyed it, it is — it, like everything else that depends on electronic circuitry, will go berserk (yes, again!) at this point. Read the following aloud:

Just when you thought things couldn't get any worse, the Funbot goes berserk (yes, again!) — letting loose its laughing gas, hurling cream pies, and shouting, "How-are-ya! Pies! How-are-ya! Pies! How-are-ya! Pies!" It launches itself toward the conveyor belts, toppling pie-tins and co-cola bottles, flipping globs of protoplasm and fountains of pop.

That's when you see the scrubots move in...

If the Funbot isn't around, the Petbot will serve a similar purpose by going berserk at the peak of confusion. If the Petbot isn't around, have one of the scrubots go berserk. Have *something* go berserk — the PCs don't have nearly enough to worry about — yet.

Now read the following aloud:

You're surrounded by berserk bots, mutated Teelas, and The Computer only knows what else. But don't worry. It's always darkest right before it gets really dark.

Suddenly the room seems to be filled with a charging throng of citizens waving lasers and screaming. No, it's not... but it is! Yes, it's the Pepsi Generation! They're screaming death threats and horrible oaths — "Give us co-cola or give us death!" "We're the Pepsi Generation, comin' at ya, goin' strong!" "Death to the Uncola!" They want the co-cola in this lab, and they'll stop at nothing to get it.

Now what?

3.7.6 A Scholarly Survey of the Tactical Options

Sure. We're just kidding. These are just some hints on how to stage this gala free-for-all.

The first thing to know is that you probably won't keep this up for more than four or five combat rounds. It will give the players plenty to do, because of all the action and confusion, but the walls are going to cave in any minute, and the lab is going to flood with water. That will bring an end to the conventional gunfight part of the climactic ending, and the PCs will have to deal with a more unusual life-threatening challenge.

Now. What are the PCs likely to do? And what are you going to do to bedevil them?

One real good PC tactic is to hide. Once the PCs are in the lab, there are opportunities aplenty to crawl under conveyor belts or squeeze in between tall vats of protogoo. From a relatively safe vantage point a PC can sit and take pot shots at targets of opportunity.

You can tolerate this cleverness or you can persecute the PC by sending the Funbot over to drag the PC out to join the fun. Squads of multi-armed Teelas can saunter over and *Cloud Men's Minds*. The scrubots may busily attempt to remove the offending bit of refuse to a trash bin. And so on.

A classic routine in this sort of a slugfest is to stand toe-to-toe with the opponents and shoot it out. Here it's pretty much the luck of the dice. You'll be studying the NPC roster on the inside of the cover and plugging away at the PC as he plugs away at your NPCs. This PC is obviously trying to rack up a good Commie traitor bodycount for the debriefing, so give him a chance. And if he goes down fightin', well, drink a round of vat slime for him at the end of the adventure.

If a PC wants to get fancy about this firefight, looking for fine tactical maneuvering and advantages, okay. If he is creative and entertaining, indulge him. If he is boring and analytical, make sure his opponents are tactical geniuses — taking perfect advantage of superior numbers, superior firepower, and superior organization — veteran fireteams that take no chances, no prisoners, and make no mistakes. He who lives by the sword...

A shrewd PC may try to join the opposition. Short of mutant power assistance, no soap. All the attackers here are ready to shoot first and ask questions... well, maybe the following week.

Maybe a PC wants to play dead, or surrender, or in some other way take himself out of the confusion. No problem. Indulge him. When the water starts pouring in, this is not going to be a viable solution any more, but you can give them a few moments of peace and repose.

PCs may express an intense desire to escape this madness. Too bad. The exit is clogged with off-brand Teelas, berserk scrubots, or raving Pepsi Generators. But this is the right spirit. And when the room begins to flood, it is going to be a *real good idea*. In fact, the *only good idea*.

Oh, yeah! We almost forgot the mirrors. You know — the crate of Teela O'Malley souvenir pocket mirrors the PCs got from the PLC clerk back in the PLC Runaround. These mirrors have a magical effect on Teela clones. Just hand one to a Teela and she'll immediately stop everything, gazing carefully into the mirror, primping and fussing with her hair, checking her eye liner and complexion.

Big deal, huh? Well, maybe it's not Excalibur or Stormbringer or something of that stature, but in **PARANOIA**, when something you are issued *works*, it is a sort of special occasion.

Let them break open a couple of cases of co-cola and celebrate if they like.

3.7.7 Just Add Water and... Poof!

You've conducted four or five rounds of epic confusion in the Clone Rangers' lab. Lots of things have been broken, lasered, abused, and squirted on. Now it's time for a dramatic twist.

Normally, a battle to the death between the Forces of Good and Evil is a necessary climax to a good roleplaying adventure. However, since the concepts of Good and Evil are of dubious import in the context of **PARANOIA**, it is better that an Act of God interrupt this Final Conflict, leaving it unresolved... and therefore full of potential for intentional loose ends, escaping villains, and sequels.

So, how about a flood? It worked with Noah.

Setting Up the Dam Burst

In the course of the confusion, some accident ruptures a wall of the lab, allowing sewer water to rush in. However, you want to set this up so it seems to be a result of some action

a PC takes. (Otherwise this is just another iteration of "Oops, the ceiling collapsed.")

Here's a few suggestions. Remember, the opportunity doesn't have to come in the last round. Something that happens in the very first round could slowly unfold in a series of linked accidents that results in the desired destruction of a wall.

1. Weapons fire: a perfect device. The effect can be direct (the shot hits the wall, plaster shatters, and a thin stream of water appears) or indirect (the shot hits a tank, which then explodes, or a scrubot, which then goes berserk, rams into a column supporting the ceiling, which topples into a great vat, which explodes, cracking the wall behind it, producing a thin stream of water).

2. The Funbot: Sure, the Funbot isn't really under their control, but they're responsible for its actions, which is just as good. Even better, have the Funbot request permission to do something awful. We know it is going to do whatever it wants, but making the PC respond in some way makes him think that there must have been *something* he could have done to stop it. Further, let the Funbot act slowly enough that the PCs get the idea that they might be able to stop it if they hurry or do something drastic.

For example, the Funbot asks, "Say, what a crowd! Hey, chief, suppose I go up there on top of that big vat — the one bristling with fragile-looking pipes, valves, and instruments — and entertain the troops?" And the only way to the top is a spindly ladder, and the Funbot must drag his massive bulk up, gripper-over-gripper, his little treads spinning and whining, searching for traction.

3. Fooling with the machinery: This can be done directly (for example, by punching buttons which seem like a security door lock, but which really activate a doomsday device) or indirectly (by setting in motion some activity which results in disrupting some mechanical or electronic process.)

For example, a PC hiding under a conveyor is being pulled out by the Funbot and a squad of scrubots. He hangs on, and accidentally

grabs a lever which stops a section of the conveyor belt. Nothing happens immediately, but in a round or two something bounces off onto the floor when it meets the stopped section of conveyor belt. This object bounces under the tread of the Funbot, which squeals and cartwheels like a comedian slipping on a banana peel. Crash! the Funbot slams into a control panel and... so on.

4. Misconstrued statements: Stanl-Y-LRL-1 and Oil-Y-HRD-6 are perfect for this. They will keep bothering the PCs for explanations of the puzzling power fluctuations here, and the PCs may say something in response. Whatever it is, the pair can misunderstand or mishear it as a suggestion to go mess with the control panel. (Okay, they are very polite — they tip their hats and say, "Thank you, sirs, for your aid. Did you say it was the control panel over there that we should check? Yes, we must see to it right away, mustn't we, Oil-Y?")

For Forty Days and Forty Nights...

Once you've set things in motion, you are ready for the dramatic flood scene. For improvising color and details, keep in mind all those great Hollywood scenes of dams breaking in monster movies.

Read the following aloud:

Suddenly, the noise in the lab has diminished perceptibly. Everyone's head seems to be turning to view the narrow jet of water spraying from the widening crack in the wall. The crack seems to be getting larger... Bits of concrete are crumbling away...

And then, all at once, the wall shatters! Like a waterfall, the flow arches and tumbles to the floor of the lab, where machinery, bots, and human figures are tossed about like kindling. In an instant, the floor is awash with dark water — sewer water, you suddenly realize! The waters are rising rapidly, currents swirl litter and various objects around first your knees, then your waist.

Some machines carry on, oblivious of the rising tide — pincers grappling objects from the foaming streams, submerged conveyor belts still carrying half-submerged clone

molds through the crashing surf — while other, more delicate equipment, like the scrubots, is shorting out and flailing about like palsy victims.

And the citizens, standing knee-deep in the foul flood, scan the room for exits, but realize there is only one — the door that you entered through. That door is, even as I speak, slowly and ponderously drawing closed, as impassive and final as the white-pearled gates of the Termination Center.

Now what?

Okay. Now we have taken everyone's weapons away from them (shorted out by the rising flood), and substituted a swimming lesson for a shootout.

Here the players are going to have to improvise clever solutions to the problem. This problem can be broken down into several stages:

Looking for Other Exits: Nope. Not unless they blast one, which results in a second cataract. Nice work.

Trying to Open the One Door: Nope. Profoundly locked and remarkably resistant to damage from knives and clubs, which are about the most sophisticated kind of weapons still working in flood conditions.

Staying Afloat: Very important. May be achieved by learning how to swim (bad idea) or by learning how to hang onto stuff that floats (much easier).

Getting Out Alive: The final exam. The only way out is through the big hole in the wall, and they will have to wait until the flow into the lab has stopped. This is just before the lab is filled completely to the ceiling. That means the PCs will have to make their way out the hole while completely underwater.

On Staying Afloat

You can make this very simple. Just let things float in front of them, just begging to be grabbed. Or you can make them scrounge around for suitable objects as the water rises about their necks. Suitable floating objects include plastic cargo containers, empty vats, light-weight plastifoam partitions and furniture,

That Teela, always cloning around.



ice (from the freezing vats), and clone molds.

You can also complicate the floating problem by arranging for other citizens — Clone Rangers, Pepsi Generators, Cleto-B-QRK-2, and oodles of Teela Clones — to successfully solve the floating problem. Real fanatics like the Pepsi Generators may carry on their feud even if they have to paddle about and melee in the water.

One more serious challenge for the PCs is the problem of retrieving valuable objects and keeping them afloat — for example, Teela O'Malley's laser-riddled body, or — gasp — the Funbot. Don't make it easy, but indulge this dedicated effort as much as you can — encourage the PCs to improvise, and give them the benefit of the doubt.

On Getting Out Alive

When the floating PCs' heads are bouncing against the ceiling, tell them that the flow into the room has stopped.

Maybe the players will get the idea. It isn't so difficult — they'll only have to hold their breaths for two rounds to get through the hole and into the treatment reservoir on the other side of the wall. They may rig safety lines from power cords, or try to hold air in their gas masks, or improvise diving bells from empty slime vats, or try any of a billion hare-brained schemes. Go ahead. Cut them a break. You can always kill them off in the debriefing, anyway.

Now, if they don't get the idea that they have to go through the hole, you can show them how. Easy. Let someone like Cleto-B or a Teela clone float toward the hole and visibly, purposefully push him or herself under water in the vicinity of the hole.

3.7.8 Beyond the Valley of the Clones

When the PCs leave the lab and emerge on the other side of the wall, they find themselves in a vast underground treatment reservoir. There is a walkway with a railing running around the rim of the reservoir, but since the water level has fallen as the reservoir drained into the lab, the walkway is now six feet above the water level, and the sides of the reservoir wall are wet, steep, and slippery.

You can let the PCs improvise a way out of the mess or wait until the officials from the Water Recycling Subdivision and the IntSec troopers show up to investigate the mysterious sudden drop in the water level of this reservoir. In either case, IntSec troopers will of course be glad to assist the Troubleshooters into the heavily-guarded transbot which waits to transport them to Troubleshooter Headquarters and their debriefing.

3.8 Nothing Fails Like Success

Well. If you've gotten this far, it means that at least some PCs managed to survive all the deathtraps we provided. (If your players routinely complete **PARANOIA** adventures, perhaps you should consider going back to a game that is less fun than **PARANOIA**.)

But celebrations may be premature.

See, the multicorder (and/or the Petbot with its built-in multicorder) recorded the entire episode. If the PCs slipped up anywhere, engaging in anything even vaguely treasonous, the debriefing is the time to air dirty laundry.

Treasonous activity you could bring out in the debriefing includes partaking of co-cola, purchasing tongue covers (or anything else) from Hall-Y-WUD-1 through 6, damaging valuable Computer property, uttering treasonous statements on *Date With Death*, attending secret-society meetings. And even if your players committed no treasonous acts, they'll be taken to task for *succeeding* in their mission — but we'll get to that in a minute.

3.8.1 Life is Just a Bowl of Commie Mutant Traitor Cherries

When the PCs arrive (under IntSec trooper escort) at Troubleshooter Headquarters, they are sent immediately to a debriefing center. They are permitted to bring any evidence: prisoners, witnesses, or exhibits they may have in tow at the time. Since they have come fresh from the sewers, they will drip on the carpet, smell bad, and generally present an appearance unbecoming a Troubleshooter. Make them self-conscious about this, then send them into the debriefing room.

Read this aloud:

When you are hustled into the briefing room, Cleto-B-QRK-3 sits waiting behind a large desk, flanked by his flunkies Sunn-Y-LST and Dewey-Y-JLK. "Oh, it's you. About time. I've been waiting for your report. Close the door behind you."

He gestures to a row of chairs in front of his desk, then notices your disheveled condition. He wrinkles his nose, then says, "Well then, perhaps you'd better stand. Now, what's going on here?"

Without even pausing for a response, he continues, "I can see you're shocked to see me here. I am Cleto-B-QRK-3. Cleto-B-QRK-2 has been reassigned. Now, give me your multicorder and fill out these mission report forms immediately. Quickly, now, I haven't got all day-cycle."

If the multicorder didn't survive, Cleto-B will ask for the Petbot. If that didn't survive, the PCs can give their own account of the mission — that is, lie, and backstab to their heart's content without fear of contradictory evidence.

Cleto-B waits for the Troubleshooters to fill out the complicated mission report forms. If you like, actually have them fill out the forms given in the **Adventure Handbook**. These forms provide a lovely opportunity for creative and anonymous backstabbing and misrepresentation among the players — generally accounted to be a Good Thing in **PARANOIA**.

Read the following aloud:

When you've filled out the forms and turned over the multicorder [or Petbot], Cleto says, "Fine. Good. Now, before I examine these, I would like oral reports."

"You, [he says, pointing at the Team Leader] report! What was your mission? Were you successful? How did the other members of your team perform? Did you notice any strange behavior on their parts? Speak up! Quickly now!"

He asks the same questions of each player in turn, bang-bang-bang. No time for thought, or diplomacy. Just the facts, Ma'am.

Read the following aloud:

After this brief but harrowing exchange, Cleto-B leaves the room, taking the multicorder (or Petbot) and all the mission reports

with him. The Yellow flunkies stay with you.

A few minutes later, he returns looking very, very grim.

3.8.2 You... Killed... Teela O'Malley?!

The reason for his grim visage varies according to the oral reports, the written mission reports, the mission recordings from the multicorder or Petbot, and whether or not it is a leap year.

It all depends:

If They Didn't Kill a Single Teela: If the multicorder reveals that the PCs failed to kill any Teelas at all, read the following:

Cleto-B looks at you as if you were the lowest of the low. It's almost as though he can peer into your heart and see you for the Commie mutant traitor (and secret society member, yes?) you really are.

He composes himself, then begins reluctantly, disgust evident in his tone.

"You've failed miserably — delayed reports... Teela O'Malley loose... Computer property destroyed... disgraceful!"

GM: This last is just a guess on our part. We're betting the PCs destroyed *something* during the course of the mission.

"But your friend The Computer recognizes your inherent worth as citizens of Alpha Complex. You — and all of your clones — are to be reassigned. You have all been given the rare opportunity to serve The Computer in the Waste Recycling Division. This temporary reassignment is hereby made officially permanent. Congratulations, Effluent Engineers, and best wishes in your new positions."

Guardbots clatter into the debriefing room and escort you to your new assignments. As you travel along the halls to the familiar elevator, you hear over the loudspeakers the swelling strains of "I'm an Alpha Complex Dandy."

Fade to black.

If the PCs Terminated One or More Teelas:

If the multicorder reveals that the PCs killed one or more Teela clones in the Clone Rangers' lab, they will find themselves in the middle of a positively Orwellian episode — the PCs, who have done nothing more than fulfill the goals of their mission, are indicted for vaporizing Teela, a valued friend and servant of The Computer.

Read the following aloud:

Cleto-B looks at you as if you were the lowest of the low. It's almost as though he can peer into your heart and see you for the Commie mutant traitor (and secret society member, yes?) you really are.

He can barely stand to look at you. A tear rolls down his cheek as he murmurs to himself, "Teela... can you really be gone?"

Then he gets control of himself, and he spits out at you, "How could you? How could you kill the darling of every loyal citizen of Alpha Complex? How could you..." And he breaks down again.

After a few moments of uncontrollable sobbing, he pulls himself together again and continues.

"But, The Computer, in its infinite and inscrutable wisdom, is nothing if not compassionate and lenient. So, despite your heinous crime against humanity and Alpha

Complex, you and your clone family will only be mercifully terminated immediately."

Squadrons of guardbots carry you to your final resting place, the pearly gates of the Termination Center. The theme, "Send in the Clones," rises softly in the background, swelling as the gates close behind you.

Fade to black.

If at any point in the proceedings the righteous PCs produce their authentic termination voucher and display it to Cleto-B-QRK-3, Cleto will take it, examine it, leave the room (without his Yellow flunkies), and return after a few moments without the voucher. He will begin the debriefing process over again, as though the characters had just returned from their mission, and as though he had never seen them before. The two Yellows with Cleto-B will swear by The Computer that they've never heard of any termination voucher, much less seen one — and the PCs are hosed again. Continue with the debriefing where you left off.

If You're Just An Old Softie: If you don't care for downbeat endings (and they don't come much more downbeat than in *PARANOIA*),



here's a happier ending for you to read to your players:

You wait in the debriefing room for hours, afraid to move, wondering where Cleto-B could be. What terrible mistake did you make? What deadly *faux pas* did the multicorder replay? Which of your teammates turned you in for a fleeting moment of personal glory?

Designers' Afterword: Allen Varney and Warren Spector

We are loyal and happy writers, happy with our lot are we, oh yes. We had great fun writing this *PARANOIA* adventure — an insane amount of fun. We almost went crazy, we had such fun. Oh yes.

Send in the Clones is the longest, most involved *PARANOIA* adventure to date. If that record stands for awhile, we won't be surprised. There is a reason previously published adventures follow the format of three or four brief Troubleshooter missions instead of one long one. The *PARANOIA* mood is best evoked in short, sharp doses. Set the stage, build tension, tighten the screws of ignorance and terror, spring the deathtrap, and get out fast.

At longer lengths, *PARANOIA* adventures risk monotony of effect. Plotwise, they can be reduced to a series of deathtraps. When you string together a bunch of them, as we did, you have to work like a ballerina to avoid desensitizing (and thus boring) your players. Hope we pulled it off.

Of course, the preeminence of mood in *PARANOIA* helped us in other ways. We didn't have to sweat the small details of internal consistency that plague other science fiction games. *PARANOIA* doesn't depend on such attention. The R&D Department in this adventure is different from the one in the original *PARANOIA Adventure Handbook*. So is the PLC. Likewise, in *Vapors Don't Shoof Back*, Alpha Complex is a huge dome that looms across the landscape like some steel-and-polystyrene mastaba. But in *The Yellow Clearance Black Box Blues* it's almost all underground, with a few little domes visible on the surface. And of course, at the end of that adventure, Alpha Complex is totally destroyed.

But who cares, right?

Really. When the goal is to inspire an emotion — paranoid fright, in this case — the little details are much less important. When the game lets you die four or five times and keep coming back where you left off, it's clear that verisimilitude is not a priority. When the atmosphere is consistent, the background furniture can be rearranged at will.

We had to grapple with this idea. At first we tried end-runs around narrative inconsistencies — "Hey, we could say that was another Alpha Complex" — but finally we realized the awesome truth: *nobody cares*. It's a liberating, even brilliant concept. Alpha Complex is not a place but a state of mind.

Sincere admiration and gratitude to West End's Chief Paranoid, Ken Rolston. He saw and communicated to us at every step the tone, narrative devices, and referee support he wants for any *PARANOIA* module. Ken is also allowing us to be nasty, snide, and self-righteous by letting us pass along to paranoid referees the incredibly treasonous article "Unauthorized *PARANOIA* Repair Kit."

Now we'll let Ken tell you about this swell offer.

Developer's Post-Afterword Afterword: Ken Rolston

Before I tell you about this swell offer, let me say that Messrs. Varney and Spector are inappropriately humble about the quality of their efforts. We thought this adventure was megaswell in manuscript and had a dumpload of fun testing and developing it. We suspect you'll have a dumpload of fun with it, too.

Also, The Computer told me to tell you this adventure is perfect. It is a Good Idea to agree with The Computer.

Finally, Cleto-B returns, a look of shocked amazement on his face. He says, "Wonderful! Simply wonderful! You did everything The Computer expected of you and more!"

"Already the videotapes of your exploits have been seen by the entire citizenry of Alpha Complex. You're heroes! But, even more important, the ratings for the vid-program were the highest in Complex history! You're Stars!"

"The Computer has reassigned you to HPD and Mind Control where your special talents can be fully exploited — there to serve happily all the rest of your days, Computer willing. You've been scheduled for some of Alpha Complex's biggest vidscreen hits — *Truth Serum! Vulture Squadron! Wide Complex of Sports!*"

This may be a good time to tell the PCs that the average life expectancy of those who appear on *Truth Serum* is one appearance; ditto for *Vulture Squadron*; ditto for *Wide Complex of Sports*. Indeed they will serve for the rest of their days, though there may not be many of them.

I mean, it is about time somebody published a perfect game.

You're welcome.

Now, this treasonous article "Unauthorized *PARANOIA* Repair Kit" appears in *Space Gamer* magazine #76 (Sept-Oct '85) and contains truly contentious assertions about how marvelous *PARANOIA* would have been if Spector and Varney had designed it.

Of course, we could have said, "If you're so smart, why didn't you create this game?" But we're too mature — by far — for that.

We don't necessarily agree with what these deviants think, but will defend their right to say it — er, maybe not to the death, but at least as long as we think they are pretty clever (even occasionally divinely-inspired) game designers.

All you have to do to receive this fascinatingly treasonous document is send us a self-addressed business envelope with two ounces worth of postage (finding out how much two ounces of postage will cost from your friendly U.S. Postal Service employee is great practice for appreciating the finer points of bureaucratic runarounds in Alpha Complex), and we will send you the "Unauthorized *PARANOIA* Repair Kit" and maybe some other stuff, like solicitations encouraging you to blow your "up-front whipout" (spending cash) on swell *PARANOIA* products.

Also, we will know where you live. If that thought makes you uncomfortable, perhaps our literary efforts have not been in vain.

Ken-R-STN-1
Registry of Treasonous Documents
West End Games, Inc.
251 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001

send in the clones

By ALLEN VARNEY and WARREN SPECTOR

INTRODUCING THE NEWEST INNOVATION FROM R & D — THE FUNBOT

“HOW-ARE-YA HOW-ARE-YA HOW-ARE-YA?”

“Let me tell ya, Commie mutant traitors are funny people. Just yesterday I was talking to a loyal stoolie in the Political Orthodoxy Assurance Retraining Theme Park and Organ Transplant Center, and d’ya know what he said to me?”

“Take my life... please!”

(Big Laugh)

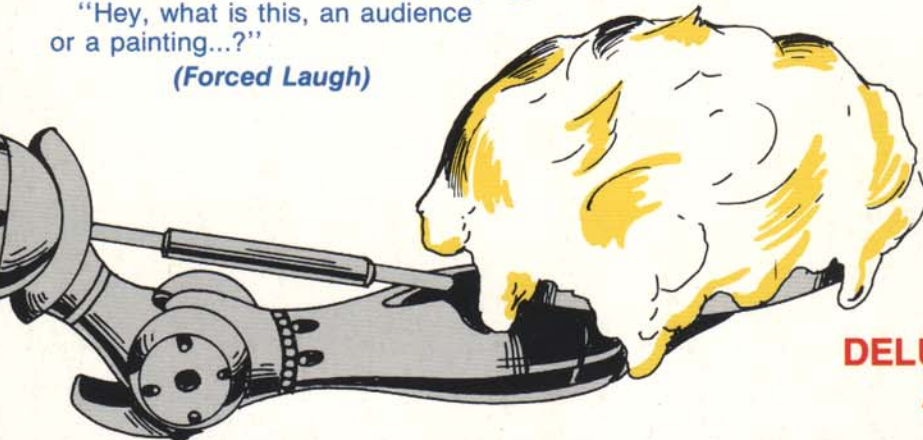
“And did ya hear about the new mass termination center they’ve disguised to look like an auditorium?”

(Dead Silence)

“C’mon, I’ve heard of comics dying, but a whole audience...?”

“Hey, what is this, an audience or a painting...?”

(Forced Laugh)



**DELUXE 48-PAGE
ADVENTURE!**


Send in the Clones is a **PARANOIA** adventure for a Gamemaster and 2-6 players. Someone is singing treasonous old hit songs over the Alpha Complex public address system, and the Troubleshooters must track the Commie traitors through — yes — the sewers, serenaded all the while by traditional favorites like “I’m An Alpha Complex Dandy” and “Top Hat, White Tie, and Laser.”

This 48-page adventure tells all, and, if you buy right now, you’ll get a bonus selection of pre-generated player characters, complete descriptions of all non-player characters and robots in the

adventure, a table of organization (such as it is) of Alpha Complex’s maze-like bureaucracy, and a collection of traitorous song lyrics, unsuitable for Troubleshooter singalongs. So you won’t forget, buy *Send in the Clones* before midnight tonight!

Oh, and if you’ve heard nasty rumors (rumors are treason) about Teela O’Malley, the darling of Alpha Complex, forget it. No such rumors exist. Belief in the existence of said rumors is treasonous so forget it immediately. If you’re still thinking about the last statement, you should probably report for termination. Thank you for your cooperation — have a nice day.

Recommended for ages 12 and up.

 **West End Games, Inc.**
251 West 30th Street
New York, N.Y. 10001

Copyright ©1985 West End Games

PARANOIA and *Send in the Clones* are trademarks of West End Game’s science fantasy roleplaying game and adventure.

ISBN-0-87431-033-4

#80104

