

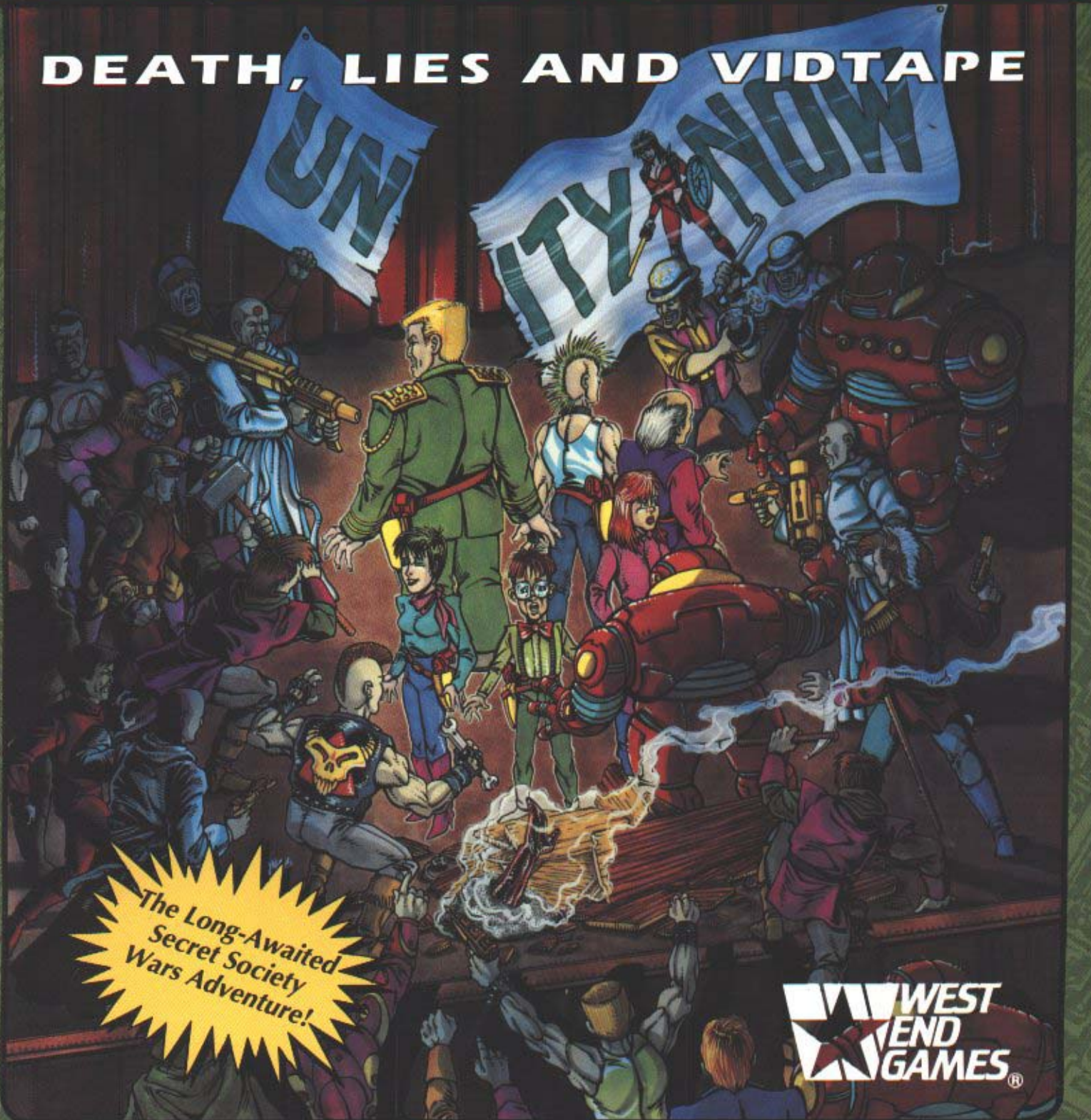
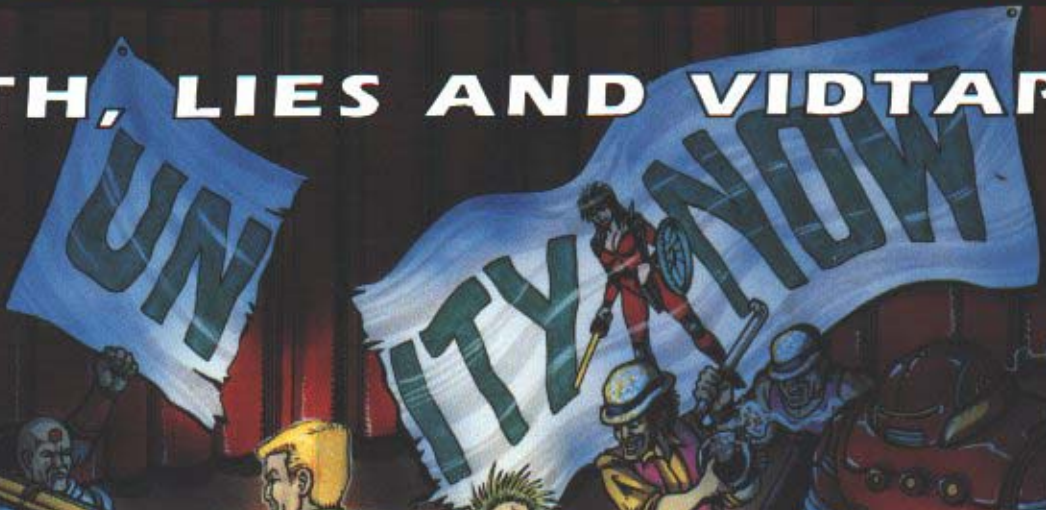
A POST-MEGAWHOOPS ADVENTURE FOR

PARANOIA

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

PARANOIA

DEATH, LIES AND VIDTAPE



The Long-Awaited
Secret Society
Wars Adventure!





Introduction

After the Crash: One Clone's Story

Great fritzing megaflops, what happened? I go to bed one nightcycle after a dinner of Pleasant Sigh of Fulfillment, the latest episode of "Fry the Traitor", and The Computer's usual Political Exactitude Group Indoctrination — and then, one daycycle later...

Crash!

The Computer, gone. All those terminals and confession booths, dead. Monitor cameras hanging loose from their mountings, staring blindly. Nobody's watching me!

Alpha Complex, gone. Lots and lots of clones dead. Morrie-O from PLC tells me my home is now "the Independent Free State of Corridor 356 Slash B." I have to swear eternal enmity against the Computer-worshipping Zealots of Corridor 356 Slash A. And I'm on patrol duty this nightcycle at the border with those shifty devils, the "Flashing Blue Light Special Clan of Corridor 356 Slash C." We're all negotiating feverishly with the former 774th Vulture Squadron company across the sector, which has declared itself Armed Forces Supreme Headquarters (like 773 other Vulture companies across the Complex).

And how the mighty have fallen. On patrol I'll be commanding the usual brain-dead Infrareads, but also a brain-dead Green and an Indigo who definitely seems slow on the uptake. Hmm ... maybe I'll start the Indigo on a close-up inspection for floor stains. Hee-hee-hee!

And there's more!

One Clone's Story, Continued

What once were Secret Societies now conduct their business and fight each other right out in the open corridors. If I could just lay hands on a five-piece set of socket wrenches, I'd trade them at the local "Crazy Neddies" for an Old Reckoning device called an "eight-track tape" featuring Slim Whitman — the Free Enterpriser behind the counter says he was the greatest singer of the Pre-Oops culture.

Or maybe I'd take my business over to that intriguing new place run by the Romantics, the House of Profane Delights. Some clones told me what they do in there, but I can't believe it.

Everything has changed. Now citizens wear all kinds of colors at once, or even gray. Gray! What does that mean? There are weird new alliances based on gender, and rumors of "sleepers," people who live outside the system. I heard about one who just typed his name into a terminal and got an avalanche of algae cakes!

Speaking of algae, where is my next meal coming from?

Welcome to the Post-Crash World, Gamemaster!

It's a brave new Complex out there, or at least a very confused one, and your players can be brave, new, and confused along with everyone else in *Death, Lies and Vid Tape*.

This new adventure for *Paranoia* takes place after the MegaWhoops catastrophe outlined in the *Crash Course Manual*. If you don't have that fine supplement, it is your duty to your players to rush out and buy it at once. Otherwise much of this adventure will make no sense to you, and your players may regard you with less than the terror and ultimate devotion that is the

Paranoia gamemaster's due. We could paint horrible word pictures of the sneers, razzberries, and juvenile pranks that await you if you don't read up on the Crash. But no doubt you've gotten the idea. You have already dropped this adventure and hastened forth to buy and read the *Crash Course Manual*.

Back So Soon?

Okay, you've read the manual. This adventure takes place an unspecified (short) time after MegaWhoops. Things have begun to settle down, to the point that most people know whether they're likely to stay alive. But in *Death, Lies and Vid Tape*, no impartial observer sees a clear victory for anyone. In fact, most impartial observers have already been shot.

A few other assumptions this adventure makes:

Money. No one has developed a widely accepted currency. Barter economics prevail. Many Alpha Simplexes have resurrected Old Reckoning "desktop publishing" technology to produce a primitive scrip. But this stuff is (a) only usable inside the Simplex, which may measure as little as 300 square meters; (b) easily counterfeited; and (c) ugly.

The old Alpha Complex credit system was primarily electronic data; when seen at all, physical "credits" were small plastic chips. These are now basically worthless, unless you find someone who's collecting them against the day The Computer returns. (Ha! He'll have a long wait, won't he? Well, won't he?)

Troubleshooters. This adventure assumes the player characters are still Troubleshooters. The characters were around in the old regime, but now they're freelance and choosy. They hang around one of the new alersatz "taverns" waiting for jobs they like.

One of these taverns hosts the opening scene of this adventure.

Secret Societies. Right. Keep reading.

What's Included in This Adventure?

Death, Lies and Vid Tape offers all kinds of neat stuff. Not only this adventure text, side-splittingly funny and endearing by turns, but also ...

Six prefabricated post-Crash Player Characters. Just pull them out of the center of this supplement — mind the staples! — cut them out along the dotted lines, and distribute them to players who are too lazy, ignorant, or unsuspecting to generate their own.

The Everything Sheet. A complete roster of important non-player (you know, gamemaster) characters, bots, and other stuff. For your eyes only.

Excellent Advice. Read this adventure all the way through before you try to run it! Note that paragraphs in **boldface type** are to be read aloud or summarized to the players. Be alert for creative ways to stage encounters; the text offers a few humble suggestions. Eat right and stand up straight. And keep reading.

Adventure Summary

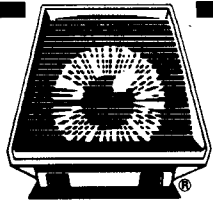
This adventure is about Troubleshooters in Alpha Complex. Six (or however many are in your group) Troubleshooters journey across the fragmented Complex to a nightcycle summit meeting of all the Secret Societies. There, a charismatic leader who looks exactly like the lady on the cover of the *Crash Course Manual* tries to unite all the Societies — until a bad guy kills

her, then frames the Troubleshooters for the murder.

For the rest of the adventure, the Troubleshooters must fight their way across the many Simplexes back to their home ground, while the vengeful Societies and security forces chase them. After a lot of fights the Troubleshooters (probably) make it home. But that doesn't mean they're safe!

You get to annoy the Troubleshooters with an incredible old geezer who comments acerbically on their actions, and then you send the Troubleshooters on a wild hunt for an equipment manual in order to clear their names. And what of the assassin who framed the Troubleshooters? Is there a whole additional climax involving him — that is, "it"?

Keep reading. You know the drill by now.



Prologue: The Briefing Room

Gasp! A briefing room? Didn't vengeful Troubleshooter teams destroy them all after the Crash? Don't Troubleshooters inhabit taverns nowadays, waiting for someone to call on them? Aren't briefing rooms cliched, obsolete, and out of place in this adventure?

Yes.

The Briefing Room is one of Alpha's new taverns. This section describes this popular Troubleshooter hangout, designed for ongoing campaign use in your later post-Crash adventures. Then the adventure proper begins with Episode One, a recruitment announcement that pulls your Troubleshooters out of the bar and into deep trouble.

About The Briefing Room

Before the Crash, Troubleshooter Bill-B-BBB used his native wits (and his Precognition power) to stay alive through several of The Computer's deathtrap missions. Finally, after his sector HQ was reorganized — i.e., purged — he got assigned to Troubleshooter Dispatch. Because of a newly optimized personnel routing routine — i.e., a bureaucratic screw up — Bill-B became the only staff member in that Troubleshooter HQ.

Bill-B's headquarters became known as one of the more efficient in Alpha Complex. In that big room all by himself, Bill-B used his Computer Phreaking skill to invent successful missions out of the air; to send legions of imaginary Commies to their doom; to file forged all-clear IntSec reports. He rerouted genuine assignments from The Computer to bureaus in adjacent sectors, so they had to take the fall. And, in a brilliant stroke, Bill-B carefully avoided making his record so effulgent as to attract the notice of HPD&MC public relations agents. ("Draw attention, and you draw fire." A primary law of sur-

vival in Alpha Complex.)

Bill-B became a storyteller with an audience of one: The Computer. Bill-B sent in daily reports of imaginary incidents and developing investigations. He had fun. It was like the Old Reckoning "soap operas" he'd heard about. When new Troubleshooters got assigned to him, Bill-B precogged whether they would make trouble. If so, they got dispatched (as it were). If his power showed them to be cooperative, laid-back guys and gals, he let them stay. They sat in the big room, made up stories, and played bridge all day.

Eventually Bill-B got caught and sent to the Termination Center. He was on the verge of becoming an imaginary character himself when — what timing! — The Computer crashed.

Bill-B helped terminate that Termination Center's termination personnel, then took over the Center through standard post-Crash squatter's-rights tactics. ("I live here. This cone rifle says so. Your claims don't mean squat.") Not many citizens wanted to fight to take over a Termination Center — tempting fate, you know? So Bill-B had ample time to decide his next move.

Nowadays, when the hallway lights dim low, last call has come and gone, loyal regulars gather around, and the mellow sounds of Fred-R and His Freeman drift from the com unit behind the bar, Bill-B may reminisce about what happened next.

"The local bunch had just finished a big firefight with the Blue Meanies — they were a buncha drugged-out high-clearance types from the next sector — all dead now, 'course — and the survivors were hauling away the dead. I watched the whole thing from inside the Center.

"Then one survivor — little blonde snip of a girl — she spotted me and smiled. She said — I'll always remember this — she said, 'Man, I could do

with a tall cool drink of something right now.' And all at once I had a vision of a place to serve drinks, right where I was. A Termination Center turned into a happy place where people could sit easy. A new way to live! And I did it all 'cause of that little girl's remark. O' course, she pulled a knife on me then and I hadda shoot her, but I'll always raise a toast in her memory. Here's lubricant in your eye!"

Description

Bill-B intended to call his bar *The Termination Center*, but wisdom prevailed, and he chose *The Briefing Room* instead ... on the principle, he said, that "they usually amounted to the same thing anyway."

But it doesn't look anything like a real briefing room, you know, or even a termination center any more.

Layout

Nope, not a briefing room. No bare concrete floor and walls; instead, Bill-B has "carpeted" the place with cut-up jumpsuits of various security clearances, taped to the floors and walls with duct tape. (Real carpet is scarce lately.) No hard concrete benches; instead, the bar offers attractive wrought-iron stools, chairs, and tables plundered from a Happy Homecoming Euthanasia Center. (Seating capacity: 35.)

No two-way observation mirrors — or actually, there is one long mirror behind the bar, but nothing stands behind it except a blank concrete wall. It works fine one-way.

The alarm sirens are silent, replaced by the murmur of patrons. The speakers that sounded alerts have given way to a Com I unit over the bar that plays all the Simplex radio stations. (A handy way to alert Troubleshooters to possible missions. Remember Clark Kent

hearing news flashes at the *Daily Planet*?)

Even the rifle emplacements and water cannon are gone. The emplacements now store food supplies, the water line now feeds a sink behind the bar, though the pressure still occasionally supercharges and blows dishes to the ceiling.

Ambience

But then again, you still see weapons here. Bill-B keeps a laser rifle under the bar, a pistol at his hip, a knife in his boot, and percussion caps in a false tooth. (He chews slowly.) Most patrons go armed. Because — and Bill-B doesn't like to talk about this much — because here among the many-colored walls and bare wrought-iron tables, in the white light from the single fluorescent tube that hums quietly over the bar, amid the styrofoam cups of alersatz and the plates of cold algae cakes, a customer may occasionally snap.

Snap. You know, break down, mess up, rip the hypothalamus out by the roots, go crazy. A patron may pull out a laser and start random target practice. Or leap on the bar and demand to be executed for treason. Or sing old Alpha Complex patriotism songs until beaten to death. It's not pretty.

Why do *Briefing Room* customers go crazy? Is it food poisoning from bad post-Crash algae processing? Is it the stress of a world where clones suddenly have to decide what to do? Is it that people always went crazy even before the Crash, but only now do people find out about it?

Well, yeah, all of those reasons.

Other features of the bar:

Alersatz: *The Briefing Room* serves soyburgers ("Don't tell us how you want it cooked — let us surprise you"), algae balls and algae chips, edible fungi of the usual unappetizing quality, and, if you ask nice and Bill-B likes you, Hot Fun.

But the bar's biggest draw is, of course, alersatz. The by-product of yeast fermentation of old hair from Integrated Grooming Stations, this mildly alcoholic beverage is occasionally known by the slang terms "Computer's Revenge" and "near beer."

By Old Reckoning standards, alersatz tastes so bad it could only have succeeded with a major TV ad campaign featuring young men and women in bathing suits. By the degraded standards of Alpha Complex, alersatz tastes okay. Plus, it turns the tongue bright green, making for lots of dumb security-clearance jokes at the bar.

The Terminal: This is a working databank terminal, an invaluable source of saleable data. Bill-B and all the bar's patrons conspire to protect the terminal. One FCCCP ex-bureaucrat, Terence-G-MUG-2, staffs the terminal around the clock. Using blankets and poles, Terence-G has walled off a small area around the terminal as his living quarters. He never leaves. If you want information, make obeisance to Terence-G's FCCCP shrine (i.e., bribe him). He'll try to locate the information in the databanks. For more about Terence-G, see below.

Not far away from Terence-G's little stronghold stands the tavern's second center of social life (after the bar itself):

The Bulletin Board. This genuine Old Reckoning artifact, a two foot by three foot corkboard found in the remains of a Violet suite, holds scraps of flimsy, hand-printed printout. These notices offer jobs and people available for jobs, advertise goods and services, and announce lost and found items, parties, weddings (still another new idea, promulgated by FCCCP), and bounties for traitors.

Most patrons of "The Briefing Room" are Troubleshooters, and most of them stop at the bulletin board first thing after they amble in and order an alersatz. It's the hangout to hang out at if you want to meet the elite mercenaries of post-Crash Alpha.

Where the Action Is: In this former termination center, as in others, a long hallway stretches back from the main room. It leads to sanitary facilities ... now divided by gender, another new idea in Alpha Complex. Beyond them it leads to a series of identical small, soundproofed rooms. These rooms, which once provoked frightened screams and babbled oaths of loyalty, now provoke tense, muttered jokes, and sometimes curiosity.

Weird vices? Storage or fencing of

stolen merchandise? The harboring of fugitives? Probably these rooms have served all these purposes and more. Your Troubleshooters will undoubtedly come up with their own pleasantly illegal uses. Use their felonies to introduce new plot elements into a scenario, or start a new scenario.

Gamemaster Characters

You'll notice early on that the Gamemaster Characters described here represent no threat to your Troubleshooters. In fact, they're kind of chummy.

Wait, are you sure this is *Paranoia*?

It's a new tone for post-Crash *Paranoia* adventures. In the old days, The Computer could make the Troubleshooters go someplace deadly or do something stupid just by telling them to. Now the Troubleshooters have to be led into these deathtraps. To do that, you have to set up an information source they trust. And since the post-Crash setting has more long-term campaign potential than the old regime, your source has to remain trustworthy and secure in the long term.

This may sound silly, but we see *The Briefing Room* as a set for a post-Crash *Cheers*-style TV situation comedy starring your players' Troubleshooters. The Troubleshooters begin each episode in the bar, with its continuing cast of supporting characters providing laughs, plot hooks, and story devices (data searches at the terminal, messages over the com unit, exposition, and clues). If you like the idea, you can develop the "regulars" from week to week, create running gags and, if you really want to push it, begin your adventures with a banal sitcom theme song.

But don't panic. Once the Troubleshooters leave the bar, they're back in the same fear-and-ignorance landscape you expect from *Paranoia*.

So there you have it. Go to it, post-Crash gamemasters.

(Boy, can't help thinking we're forgetting something. Let's see, tavern, layout, gamemaster characters, Troubleshooters, rumors, fear of imminent death, ignorance ...)

Oh yeah, the adventure! It starts in Episode One.

Bill-B-BBB ("Old Four-B's")

Owner and Bartender

Description: Older, plumper, and more comfortable-looking than most Troubleshooters ever got during The Computer's reign. Short, wiry black hair, clean-shaven, brown eyes, skin and clothing colors of GM's choice. Quiet, patient, avuncular manner. Avoids trouble, but acts ruthlessly when necessary.

Service Group: Troubleshooters (see above).

Arms and Armor: ArmorAll IV; truncheon and laser rifle under the bar.

Society Affiliation: Formerly Computer Phreaks, currently neutral. "Prevents arguments that way," he says.

Mutant Power: Precognition (unrevealed).

Relevant Skills: Bargaining Over Drink Prices (15), Bartending (14), Bribery (14), Forgery (17), Laser Weapons (13), Medical (10), O. R. Cultures (8), Primitive Melee Weapons (15), Psychescan (16), Truncheon (13).

Background: See above. Bill-B, a cooperative guy if it prevents trouble, can provide exposition, first aid, hints to move a story along, and a communications nexus.

Identifying Remark: "So I say to this guy, 'Yeah, fella, can I help you?' and he pulls out this sonic rifle and says, 'Gimme all your goods.' So that's why there's a stain on the bar. That guy made one bugger-all mess when he exploded; musta been drinking alersatz all day."

Wally-O-MAN-5, Imelda-R-GAM-1

Waiter and Waitress

Description: Wally, busboy and assistant bartender, is young, handsome, street- (or corridor-) wise, fast-talking, and too clever for his own good. Imelda, a charming young lady of ingenuous beauty, dresses and acts primly, but smiles often. She serves

drinks and manages Bill-B's barter accounts.

Service Groups: PLC (Wally); Power Services (Imelda).

Arms and Armor: Wally, Blue laser, knife; Imelda, none.

Society Affiliation: Wally, Free Enterprise; Imelda, Humanists.

Mutant Powers: Wally, X-Ray Vision (unrevealed); Imelda, Electroshock.

Relevant Skills: Bar Service (13).

Background: Wally, a.k.a. "Wally the Fence," runs a stolen-goods operation out of a back room. Bill-B knows nothing of this. Imelda works evenings in the bar to pay for her Nuclear Engineering studies. She shows no interest in romance and fends off her numerous suitors with her inborn electric shock power. She's smarter than she lets on, the exact opposite of Wally.

Both Wally and Imelda can serve as romantic interests for Troubleshooters' incipient hormonal surges.

Identifying Remark: "Hey, I got a hot line on a nearly-new tacnuke grenade, y'interested?" (Wally); "You're sweet, but I'd like to keep you as a good friend, all right?" (Imelda).

Terence-G-MUG-2

Bureaucrat with Databank Terminal

Description: Paunchy, lipless, balding. Pompous and territorial around his terminal, furtive and nervous anywhere else. Vulnerable to bribes and flattery. Not outright dislikable, just annoying at times.

Service Group: Claims HPD&MC; actually a former high-level bureaucrat in CPU. (If discovered, Terence-G claims, "I was only following orders.")

Arms and Armor: Green reflec; concealed neurowhip and knife.

Society Affiliation: FCCCCP.

Mutant Power: None revealed.

Relevant Skills: Data Analysis (12), Data Search (14), Energy Weapons (9), Forgery (13), Primitive Melee Weapons (9), Stealth (8).

Background: Terence-G only sur-

vived the post-Crash Great CPU Turkey Shoot through luck and stealth. Since the Crash, Terence-G has Seen the Monitor Light and become a devout member of a splinter sect of FCCCCP, Students of the Cosmic Computer. This sect holds that The Computer has taken over the Outside and now operates the tides, arranges the constellations in the night sky, and so on. Members learn about the Outside and sometimes make pilgrimages there. For this reason, it has attracted many former members of the defunct Sierra Club.

Terence-G himself, though, secretly fears the Outside and wouldn't go there on a bet. Though he often boasts of his upcoming travels to semi-mythical lands like "Mexico," "Washington," and "the Islets of Langerhans," he always finds excuses to postpone the trip.

Identifying Remark: "I don't access the Holy Databanks for just anybody, my pushy friend. You have to demonstrate appreciation of The Computer's bountiful legacy — in advance."

The Deathtrap Dodgers

Rival Troubleshooter Team

These Troubleshooters provide friendly or not-so-friendly competition for your Troubleshooters. They try for the same choice missions or, as a running gag, they fail a given mission each episode and the Troubleshooters have to go in and clean up. The Deathtrap Dodgers can be either bumbling screw-ups or threateningly capable, at your option.

There's one Dodger for each Troubleshooter. Use the pregenerated Troubleshooters from other *Paranoia* adventures, or — wait, is anyone listening? — use duplicates of these Troubleshooters, but change the names and mannerisms. The feeling of *deja vu* should keep your players off-balance. (Boy, what we do to save paper.)

Typical Unfounded Rumor Table

Rumors are no longer treason! In the best tradition of famous fantasy roleplaying taverns, we present a few unfounded rumors you can pass along to Troubleshooters who have nothing better to do in a bar than pull some stranger's ear and demand gossip. Use these in "The Briefing Room" (or substitute your own fiendish inventions) to send Troubleshooters on wild-bot-chase adventures, or just to instill new fear and ignorance. The real scoop follows each rumor in parentheses.

1. There's a High Programmer still on the loose. She's reprogramming bots to fit themselves together into one big bot that'll attack the whole complex. (Several High Programmers are still hiding and plotting, but none are working on this particular hare-brained scheme.)

2. Twelve Food Vats in the next sector are down, infected with a mutant slime mold. When all the amoebae eat through a vat, the colony forms into a blob that crawls into the next tank, bursts into a cloud of spores, and starts all over again. (True. Someone's hobby at the Biochem Labs got loose.)

3. Since the Crash, the mess hall's hygiene standards have gone down. Your food may be poisonous. (The latter is true, but it was the same before the Crash. Hygiene standards couldn't possibly go down further.)

4. Every Troubleshooter should see this Old Reckoning film the Romantics are showing. It's called *Brazil*. It must have been filmed inside an early Alpha Complex. (False, but close enough.)

5. When someone offers to trade a genuine living thing from Outside, one of these green things called "plants" — you know, like factories, they're plants for producing Outside stuff — be careful. It could be a plastic stick painted green. You can tell it's a real plant if it bleeds and screams when you cut it. (False. Of course, given radiation levels in some Outside areas, you never know.)

6. Turns out Teela-O-MLY was a Commie! (Even worse. See the *Send in the Clones* adventure.)

Finally, some all-purpose rumors of the types that fly thickest and fastest through the sectors:

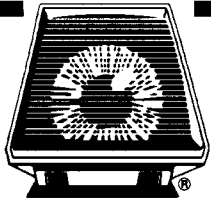
7. Over in [name goes here] Sector

they've got huge supplies of [merchandise in short supply locally], but they can't get a single [item in plentiful supply locally] to save their lives. You could make a bundle by getting over there and trading. (Typically true.)

8. Hear the supply of [item] is running low at the local PLC depot? Even Crazy Neddies can't get it. Stock up. (This will be true as soon as the rumor gets far enough around.)

9. Another screw-up in [service group of your choice]. [Specify screw-up here.]. Those idiots can't get it fixed until they get [adventure maguffin of choice]. First clone to find one can make them pay through the left nostril. I happen to know where you can find one, and I'll tell you for a cut of the take. (Ho ho.)

If you want, some of these rumors can even prove true. The occasional true rumor makes the players less skeptical of future red herrings you introduce. But beware. Telling players the truth can set a dangerous precedent.



Episode One: Get a Job

Summary

An episode in two encounters. (Doesn't that sound highfalutin?) The Troubleshooters go on a mission. Maybe they even have to fight other Troubleshooter teams for the privilege. You know, the usual fun stuff. It includes journeying to the Transit Center with their new employer. As an added bonus, the Troubleshooters decide how best to cross the Complex.

Encounter One: Cattle Call

Read aloud:

You've spent a hard daycycle looking for a job. Nothing. In Post-MegaWhoops Alpha Complex, Troubleshooting work is hard to come by. It's not that there's no trouble; it's just that nobody will pay you to shoot it.

You're relaxing in your favorite tavern, The Briefing Room. After buying Styrofoam mugs of alersatz, you're down to your last few trade goods. And you've got a lot of overhead as Troubleshooters: charges and shells for your weapons, polish for your armor, first-aid supplies, and the obligatory sympathy cards for the clone families and friends of departed teammates.

Basically, if you don't find work within a daycycle or two, you'll have to try your luck as muggers, thieves, kidnappers, or extortionists. You'd just as soon not try this, since the Armed Forces have pretty much flooded the market.

But right now you're trying to forget your financial troubles. As our scene opens, you're sitting around a table in the bar, arguing yet again over who gets credit for that Ultraviolet slaughter in the Food Vats.

Why are they arguing? If you looked at the pre-generated Troubleshooters before you handed them to the players, you noticed that all these Troubleshooters had a hand in the termination of 44 High Programmers. Each of them wants the credit for this glorious deed.

We're Looking for a Few Good Beings

All right, so far you haven't done much but read stuff aloud. Now it's time to start the adventure for real. Read — uh, ahem — er, well, read this aloud:

A strange-looking old guy walks into the bar. In fact, he looks really strange — and really old. At least, you think that all those little lines around his face, and the bald head, and the thin, hunched-over build mean that he's really old. On the other hand, that's the way they look in R&D before they're 25.

This guy is wearing a gray sweater over a standard black Infrared cover-all. The sweater says something you don't understand: "WHEN YOU'RE OVER THE HILL, YOU PICK UP SPEED." The guy carries a thick plastic cane.

Everyone in the bar falls silent and stares at this guy. He speaks in a scratchy voice like a reporter in a corridor traffic copterbot: "I'm lookin' fer some Troubleshooters. Yessir. I'm with Elizabeth-R."

Everyone gasps. You've all heard of Elizabeth-R — the woman who's trying to unite all the Societies in Alpha Complex!

The Offer

The Troubleshooters can chat with Grandpa Innocent for a while, but they're probably interested in getting

right to his offer. When they do, read this aloud:

"I got a high-pressure bodyguard job for tonight only, with bonus pay for nightcycle duty and, mebbe, combat. We're gonna see some killers make a shy at my boss," he says. "It's your job to stop 'em. So I'm offering good pay: 20 half-kilogram bags of algae chips, 12 laser barrels in different colors, and — get this — a portable refrigerator-freezer that works! Any volunteers?"

At once a rival group of Troubleshooters across the bar, the bunch you know as the "Deathtrap Dodgers," leap to their feet. "We'll do it," they say.

Do you do anything?

The job is legit. The authorization is genuine. Suspicious Troubleshooters can confirm this by contacting their Societies, asking the bartender for his opinion ("Yeah, we see those all the time. Looks legit."), using skills like Bureaucratics or Forgery, or trying brain-blasting mutant powers like Telepathy or Deep Probe. (See? Already the players realize they're not playing old-time *Paranoia* any more!)

Grandpa Innocent happily answers questions about the job's duties. The bodyguards must protect Elizabeth-R and her entourage, take charge of transportation from this sector to a classified (but legal) destination about three hours away, and return her safely to this sector after a classified (but legal) event takes place there. The guard team gets half the algae chips and laser barrels in advance, the rest and the refrigerator-freezer when they get back.

Try to get across to the players that this is the best deal their characters have found in quite a while. The Deathtrap Dodgers are trying for the job, and the Troubleshooters should

About Grandpa Innocent

This geezer, a major gamemaster character in this adventure and your principal gamemaster mouthpiece, is one of the oldest folks in Alpha Complex — no less than 85 years old. How did he survive that long under The Computer?

Well, to start with, The Computer selected the name for his clone family at random, by its usual browsing through Old Reckoning documents. Apparently it happened on a list of Popes, for it named this new clone family "Innocent."

Thereafter matters worked the way they did in Joseph Heller's novel *Catch-22* for the guy named Major Major Major, who got drafted into the Army and three days later was accidentally promoted to major. Likewise, the Infrared clone family Innocent-MAN-1 through 6 got away with a lot. Every time one got hauled in for termination, automated processing equipment found him Innocent and freed him. And when catastrophes befell him, his Regeneration power pulled him through.

So the six Innocents grew older and more treasonous with every yearcycle. When the hormone suppressants wore off after the Crash, the Innocents finally recreated in Alpha Complex a stereotype long forgotten: the dirty old man.

too. (If they don't, the Dodgers get the job — but that team gets frisky with Elizabeth-R, and she fires them. Replay the scene until the Troubleshooters get the job.)

Bar Bets

Assuming the Troubleshooters also try for the job, Grandpa Innocent proposes a short contest to determine who's better qualified to guard Elizabeth-R. Read:

The old guy, Grandpa Innocent, says, "Howz about you fellers handle it thisaway. Each o' your teams chooses one o' their guys; the rest o' the team throws that guy across the bar. The team thet throws their guy farthest is

Now, if you recall Elizabeth-R's appearance on the cover of the *Crash Course Manual*, perhaps you see why Innocent-MAN-1 became her loyal follower. Note, though, that Grandpa Innocent's early infatuation has given way to true spiritual devotion. He doesn't understand her larger ambitions (these are outlined in the next episode), but her charisma and vision have hypnotized him.

How Grandpa Can Be Useful

You don't live that long without picking up some survival skills. Grandpa knows how to bootlick, intimidate, con, fast talk, and, uh, spurious-logiccate fairly well, so he can offer an occasional hint when the Troubleshooters are digging themselves into a deep hole. Grandpa knows a little about Alpha's layout and its various dangers. More importantly, he can provide several good running gags, as described in the next paragraph.

How Grandpa Can Create Trouble

Boy, is this guy sloooowww:

Troubleshooter: C'mon, Grandpa, they're on our tails! We need you to persuade our autocar to start. Move it!

Grandpa Innocent: (waves cane) Sure's shootin', sonny boy! I'll be right there! (Hobbles pathetically.) Jus' lemme get my sea legs here — (Falls over.)

Grandpa Innocent also drifts in and out of the present. At random (i.e., crucial) moments he thinks he's back fighting the big Commie Uprising of Ought-Four, when danger lurked around every corner. Of course, in this scenario danger does lurk around every corner, so this helps him survive. But his strategy is usually un-called for — e.g., frontal assaults when stealth is called for, stealth when the Troubleshooters are running like bunnies, and so on. Let your devious imagination dictate his flashbacks according to the situation.

Roleplaying

If you yourself are 85 years old, or — we can be generous — even 65 or 75 years old, you already know how to play Grandpa Innocent. And congratulations on being so far off the typical demographic curve of *Paranoia* gamemasters!

If you fall short of this estimable age, consider playing Grandpa Innocent like the old people you see on television. Let your watchwords be *cantankerous*, *talkative*, *sly*, *licentious*, and occasionally *bordering on second childhood*.

For Grandpa Innocent's statistics, see "The Everything Sheet."



Is Grandpa really innocent? And if not, what does he want?



One woman stands between you and utter, mindless, rampant destruction (so you better stay behind her).

the team I choose. Shows me who has that extra oomph, get what I mean?"

You get the idea the Deathtrap Dodgers must have done this before. No sooner does Grandpa Innocent finish speaking than five of them gang up on the sixth, a short guy with a big nose, thin blond hair, and, just now, a very surprised look.

The Dodger leader counts off. "One — two — heave — HO!" The little guy, whose name must be Ho, flies across the room, collides with a couple of tables, flips backward over a chair, and lies still in a pool of alersatz. The crowd in the bar breaks out in wild applause.

What do you do?

Whatever they do, it should be entertaining. Broadly speaking, there are a couple of options.

The Troubleshooters Don't Go Along with the Contest

If they say, "Sorry, no people-tossing for us today," encourage the Troubleshooters to define this as either a scam they're putting over on Grandpa Innocent, or a steely-eyed contest of wills with him. Resolve these as follows:

1. Scam: Be generous. Grandpa is not as sharp as a tack (or an anvil) when he drifts out of focus, so you can turn anything the Troubleshooters pull into a comic scene. He blithely accepts them while the Deathtrap Dodgers fume.

2. Confrontation: If the Troubleshooters stare Grandpa coldly in the eye and tell him to forget it, read this:

Grandpa cackles and says, "I was just testin' to see if you had the sense The Computer gave a microchip. These bozos went fer that cockamamie suggestion in a moment. I'm lookin' fer folks with a little more gumption. Congratulations, the job's yours."

Go to the next subsection.

The Troubleshooters Go Along with the Contest in Some Fashion

You know, we were going to give some screwball game mechanic for Troubleshooter-tossing — combined Strength attributes, influence of Thrown Weapon skills, Troubleshooter weight vs. distance thrown, the whole bit. But we thought, why? You want the Troubleshooters to win, or there's no adventure. So instead we offer tips on staging the contest:

1. First, have fun watching the Troubleshooters decide whom to throw. Creative Troubleshooters may throw Deathtrap Dodgers, random bar patrons, even Grandpa Innocent himself.

2. Take one of those other, non-fun roleplaying games you never play, and rip out the pages of rules about throwing things. Fold two of the pages into paper footballs, using the diagram from the pullout.

3. Have the chosen player flick one of the footballs across the room in the manner shown. Flick the other one yourself, for the Deathtrap Dodgers. The football that flies the farthest shows which team of Troubleshooters won the contest.

If the Dodgers win, they cheer, razz the Troubleshooters, and leave with Grandpa Innocent. Fast-forward to the point after they've alienated Elizabeth-R (the work of minutes), and Grandpa returns to give the Troubleshooters the job — at a reduced fee, since the Dodgers already took a chunk of their advance.

If the Troubleshooters win, read this aloud:

Your chosen victim flies across the room, spinning like a flybot with a broken stabilizing rotor. He/she/it soars beyond the fallen Deathtrap Dodger, hits the floor, rolls, and strikes the far wall with one shoulder. And a thump. And a groan.

Everyone in the bar jumps up and applauds. Bill-B says, "Alersatz on the house!" The Deathtrap Dodgers scowl at you.

Grandpa says, "Good enough fer me."

The victim is stunned. If he or she drinks alersatz, the stun effect lasts an additional round.

Now, didn't that work like a charm? Makes us wonder why these other roleplaying games even bother with rules.

You're Hired!

After their free round of alersatz, Grandpa Innocent takes the Troubleshooters aside and briefs them on the job.

Job Description: The Troubleshooters must accompany Elizabeth-R and her small entourage (including Grandpa) to the destroyed Internal Security Central Headquarters in ISC Sector, now known in some nearby sectors as "The Ruins."

The Troubleshooters are responsible for arranging and hiring safe transport. "Whatever way you all wanna go, long's you get us there on time. We gotta be there at 2300 hours, jest three hours from now, an' it's at least a one-hour trip."

There, Elizabeth-R will address a meeting of representatives from most of the major Societies. Grandpa Innocent doesn't tell what she plans to say, but the Troubleshooters can guess it must involve her rumored attempts to bring all the Societies together.

("That's why we waited 'til now to hire you fellers," says Grandpa. "Big stuff headin' down the chute. Can't let word get around too far before it happens. Keep it mum, hear?")

The Troubleshooters must guard Elizabeth-R from attacks by resentful Society members, and must prevent (as much as possible) violence that may erupt between warring Societies. Then the Troubleshooters must escort Elizabeth-R and her entourage back to this sector, at which time their job is done.

Questions: Go ahead, answer them. You can, if you read this adventure all

the way through before you play it. Grandpa knows quite a bit about Elizabeth-R, who is described in this section and at the beginning of the next episode, and he knows about the Society meeting place in IntSec Central HQ, also described in the next episode. He has nothing to hide, and you don't want to provoke the players' suspicions before you get them in deep trouble.

However, Grandpa doesn't know much about the intervening sectors along the travel route. Naturally, you want to keep all that as a surprise.

Handy Stock Phrases to Drop into Elizabeth-R's Conversation

"We work together or we die alone."

"You can't win unless you spin the wheel."

"Spend your life like a rat scurrying for food, and you'll be a rat. But we can be free men and women. Will we live as rats, or will we live free?"

Elizabeth-R leads not just through motivation and oratory, though she's great at these, but through example — by her unshakable confidence, decisiveness, freedom from self-doubt, and clear vision of a free and united city.

Clearly, nobody this heroic belongs in a *Paranoia* adventure. Don't worry, we're bumping her off shortly.

If the Troubleshooters demand to meet Elizabeth-R, Grandpa says, "Sure 'nough — once we get settled on the price."

Bargaining: Aside from Elizabeth-R's notoriety, this is a routine job for Troubleshooters in post-Crash Alpha, so the players shouldn't haggle too much over what's expected of them. Payment, though — payment they can haggle over.

The offer as given equals 1000 credits, more or less. Grandpa has offered a fair price, but every freelancer knows you won't get more if you don't ask for more.

Grandpa Innocent proves to be a tough negotiator. For his next couple of offers, he increases his original lure (20 bags of chips, 12 laser barrels of various colors, and refrigerator-freezer) by only five bags of chips and a promise to make all the laser barrels at least green. Total value for the job: around 1250 credits. Beyond that, your players have to be sharp bargainers to get another five bags and two more laser barrels (making the job worth around 1400 credits).

If they bargain Grandpa up to a higher rate, Grandpa insists that all the Troubleshooters' expenses come out of the pay they're getting. He's stubborn about this. If the Troubleshooters prove even more stubborn, Grandpa sets a rigid ceiling on expenses (the equivalent of 200 credits), and he offers a



Buy this! No this! This is better! Or this! C'mon, buy something! Pllleeeasse!

bonus of two blue laser barrels if the Troubleshooters keep expenses under 50.

Meeting Elizabeth-R

When you've completed your negotiations, Grandpa Innocent pulls out a com unit and says, "Okey-dokey, all set. Come on by."

Within moments, two armed men in blue reflex stride through the door and scan the room. Grandpa nods to them. The two men take stations on either side of the doorway. They look at the doorway. Now everyone in the bar is looking at the doorway.

Behind you, you hear a "poof" sort of sound. When you turn, you see a magnificently tall, statuesque woman standing in the middle of the barroom. When she looks at each of you, you feel like you're her close personal friends.

"I'm so glad to meet you," she says warmly. What a voice! A deep, vibrant, thrilling voice. She says, "Whether you're with us for just a few hours, or whether you decide to stay and help our cause, I'm glad you've joined our group."

She wears a tight red jumpsuit, black leather jacket, and black boots with stiletto heels. She's unarmed. She looks like a vidstar, like a goddess. She looks like ... this.

(Gamemaster: Show your players the cover of the *Crash Course Manual*. Listen to them say, "Her?")

That's right, that's Elizabeth-R.

Elizabeth-R has teleported into the bar, of course. She doesn't mind displaying her powers; mutant powers are no longer treason, and anti-mutant bigotry is beginning to lose force as more citizens reveal their powers.

The two guards are "High Gain" Larry-Y-DNG-2 and "Feedback" Larry-Y-DNG-3, both in Elizabeth-R's entourage. They're broadcast techs who run the video equipment seen in the next episode. The identical clones, affiliated with Technical Services and Pro Tech, have learned a lot about their jobs since they finally got the instruction manuals after the Crash, so they've become pretty arrogant about interfer-

ence from "novices." The Larrys are sincere followers of Elizabeth-R, but they still won't give the Troubleshooters the time of day cycle.

Talking with Elizabeth-R

She introduces the technicians. She briefly summarizes her cause. "To unite the no-longer-as-secret Societies in a common cause to build a free society in Alpha Complex." She briefly outlines the mission tonight. "Our best chance yet to show the Societies the power of the idea."

Then she turns herself and her entourage over to the Troubleshooters for safe transport to ISC Sector, at least an hour (and maybe three) away, across the balkanized Complex. "I trust you completely," says Elizabeth-R, as though no other thought had entered her mind. "Handle transportation as you like, so long as we get there within three hours."

The players will ask if their characters know how to get to ISC Sector. The correct answer is, "You *think* so," with that extra soupçon of emphasis on *think*. If they've put on a confident front for Elizabeth-R, let them sweat during the upcoming journey that maybe they've gotten lost. Maybe they have; add an hour to the trip. But if they bravely ask Elizabeth-R for directions, she can tell them. She won't taunt their ignorance, though Grandpa Innocent sure will.

Roleplaying Elizabeth-R

See "The Everything Sheet" for Elizabeth-R's stats, the beginning of the next episode for her background, and the profile piece in the pullout for the public relations legend.

This lady is for real. When you're playing her, think Joan of Arc, Major Barbara, Susan B. Anthony, and election-year Repub-lican and Democratic Conventions. Her stirring speeches could convince a mob of citizens to follow her through an open reactor port. Play her seriously, as a charismatic leader; try to convince your players that this woman can really change Alpha Complex.

Why Does Elizabeth-R Need Transportation or Protection?

She can teleport and she's got nearly every power in the book. Who needs a desperate bunch of Troubleshooters?

Politics, mostly. As she can explain to curious Troubleshooters, it looks bad for a would-be leader to do everything herself. Another reason, one she won't tell the Troubleshooters: long-range teleports exhaust her. A third reason, the best of all: if she could do it all herself, there wouldn't be an adventure! "Never let common sense interfere with a good premise," a *Paranoia* motto.

Encounter Two: We Put You in the Driver's Seat

Tokyo's Ginza. Times Square. Post-war Berlin under the Four Powers Act. Casablanca. The French Quarter in New Orleans. Market Street at night in San Francisco. Waterfronts in Shanghai and Singapore. Red-light districts in a thousand places. Chiba City.

You know the mood. People packed like cord wood; music from a hundred sources jumbled into noise; everything — *everything* — for sale, at whatever price you can get. Money, merchandise, barter, theft. Don't turn around, someone's following you.

Read this aloud:

The Free Sector Open Transit Center. You walk down a staircase and through an archway, and instantly 500 people are screaming at you. "Paint! I got blue paint for food!" "Over here, you need this skin oil an' I need your soap!" "Hey, buddy, wanna trade for clothing or, you know, anything you want?"

People sticking their hands out at you! Waving printouts at you, advertising new Crazy Neddie services! Playing Old Reckoning music on weird instruments! Flashing neon lights, buzzers, blasts of hot air and cold air! Somebody announcing bingo numbers! Smells of sweat, hot algae, perfume, cement mix, simuleather, and that stuff from Outside called "plants!"

This place used to be a Sector

Autocar Park'n'Ride, where high-clearance citizens parked their autocars and took transbots downsector. It was a huge blank expanse of asphalt at the meeting of a dozen tunnels. Now it looks like everyone in Alpha Complex has put up bedsheet tents and started selling, trading, or begging.

Elizabeth-R stands about half a meter from your ear, and she has to shout for the words to reach you. "Find us some transport. Let's try over by those tunnels."

Everything is for sale in the Transit Center. Asking price is usually twice what anything is worth, but that's where the bargaining comes in. The merchants bargain aggressively, loudly, and with maximum emotion: "What, you offer me 10 algae-balls for this flashlight, you miserable proto-Communist slime?

Eighteen, 18 or I'll call the Vultures and have you thrown out! Twelve, my gosh, look at this stupid clone, he offers 12! Fifteen and we'll call it a deal. Thank you, kind sir. Have a nice day."

Yes, the Free Sector Open Transit Center does offer transport. This works like New York's Port Authority Bus Terminal and Grand Central Station, except each bus or train is privately owned, and nobody is exactly sure where everything is. Otherwise, it works the same way: you pay too much for a ticket, then you wait around forever, then somehow they hose you.

Moving Out

And that's it. They're off. Go to episode two. Please.

What? They Have Their Own Car?

You mean the Troubleshooters actually have their own transport, a reliable conveyance under their own control? How could you let this happen? Sounds mighty suspicious to us. Are you sure you're a Paranoia gamemaster?

Well, the damage is done. Or rather, you should do some damage to this Troubleshooter conveyance. You can let them use their autocar/transbot/flying carpet or have them find a way to locomote at the Transit Center. Either way, their current mode of transport fritzes out at the end of the next episode, and the adventure proceeds virtually unchanged. Life is free and easy as a gamemaster.



Episode Two: The Gang's All Here

Summary

In this episode, the Troubleshooters attend the great conclave of the Secret Societies; observe its charismatic leader, Elizabeth-R; watch her die horribly; escape in the resulting chaos; and take the blame for her murder.

Slow day.

About Elizabeth-R

In Pre-Crash Alpha, many High Programmers collected treasonous Old Reckoning books, and they wanted someone to make the bindings look nice and uniform. For most of them, the impressive appearance of a line of uniformly bound volumes mattered far more than their contents. What does all this have to do with anything, you ask? Well, the woman now known as Elizabeth-R (who was Elizabeth-B-QNN then, and will forever be the vivacious lady on the cover of the *Crash Course Manual*) bound those volumes, and incidentally, read every line. Possessing nearly photographic recall, she eventually gained (but concealed) an impressive education.

Of course, nothing can be concealed from the Illuminati. They soon noticed and recruited Elizabeth-B. With her intense charisma and powerful Telepathy, she rose high in the organization — at least, she thought so. Since she didn't know many other Illuminati, that was hard to say. But she gave lots of orders and received few.

Elizabeth-B's Illuminati assignments included infiltration of other Secret Societies: Psion, where she learned further powers; Free Enterprise, where she made a fortune selling black-market photocopies of the High Programmers' books; and Computer Phreaks, where she mastered ways to hide her actions from The Computer's agents.

When The Computer crashed, Eliza-

Secret Society Wars Update

Under The Computer's regime, Secret Societies practiced the politics of powerlessness — factionalism, backbiting, splintering under ideological pressure, and bitter refusal to work with rivals. Nothing got done, because nothing was possible.

Now anything is possible, it seems, and politics is known as "the art of the possible." The Secret Societies, no longer secret, are redeveloping political science faster than a forced-growth clone in a hot-wired tank.

The upshot has been the "Secret Society Wars."

In this anarchy a few Societies are clearly climbing toward the top: FCCCP (the new priests), the Humanists and Romantics (the new bourgeoisie), Death Leopard (the new police, of sorts), what's left of Free Enterprise (the same old Free Enterprise), and — we may assume — the Illuminati. (But who really knows?)

Elizabeth-B smoothly dressed down to a lower clearance, reappearing as Elizabeth-R. She thereby avoided the assaults of vengeful Reds and Oranges on their high-clearance oppressors. Joining the masses, she led them in brilliantly planned assaults on IntSec and CPU outposts, and she won, by a wide margin, the Termination Center Explosion Derby.

Elizabeth-R recognized Alpha Complex was better off without The Computer; she believed the Secret Societies could achieve greatness as a united group. Her heart in her throat, Elizabeth-R undertook her bravest deed: she sought an audience with the Illuminati Supreme Leader.

Over a scrambled comm line with a blank picture screen on her end, Elizabeth-R outlined her proposal to the Leader and described how a united complex could further the Illuminati's

Conversely, other Societies are fading into the shadows: PURGE, the Sierra Club (now known as the Seal Club), and all those nut-bar fringe fans like the Trekkies, Computer Phreaks, the Foundation, and N3F.

A few stagnant Societies, like the Mystics, Clone Rangers, Pro Tech, and the Communists, have staked out tiny little turfs they'll never turn loose.

Finally, somewhere in the uncertain middle stand the fanatics, locked in their eternal rivalries: Frankenstein Destroyers vs. Corpore Metal; Psion vs. Anti-Mutant. Each will hang on as long as its enemy does, but no longer.

The tension continues to rise. But realistically, the community can't sustain these wars much longer. There is talk about a truce, or even possible unification of all the Societies. And now someone has appeared who might be able to bring it off.

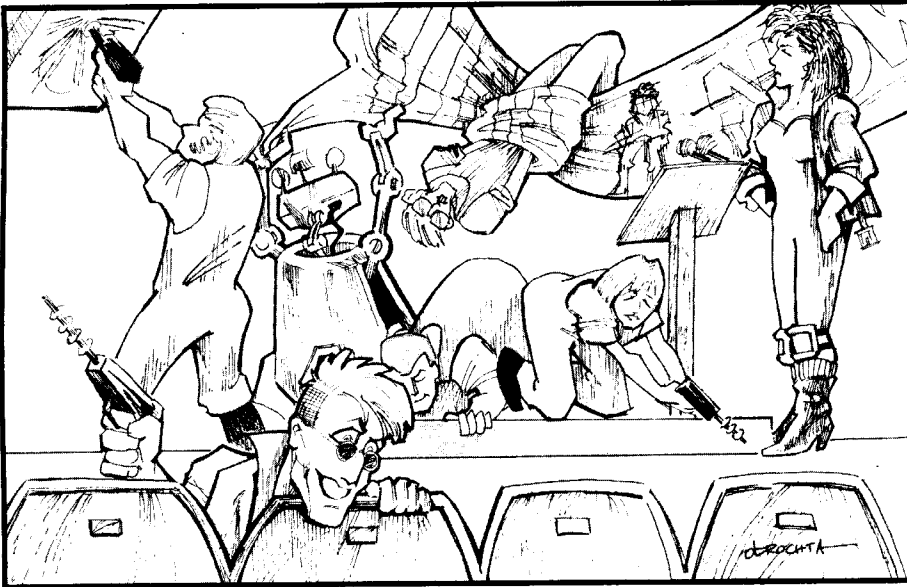
goals. She didn't know what those goals were; that was the danger.

Usually, even becoming aware of the Supreme Leader is a mortal offense. Over the next daycycles Elizabeth-R guarded against a hundred imaginary assassination attempts. Then, acting on orders, she bought a bag of algae chips at the nearest mess hall. Opening it, she found a slip of paper that quickly dissolved, leaving her fingertips chilled. On the paper was one word: "Go."

Elizabeth-R sent word to subordinates in all her Societies: "Time for a summit. Name the place." The meeting tonight, with the Troubleshooters to guard her, is the result.

She didn't use the Computer Phreak tricks to conceal her communications from The Computer. After all, why bother? The Computer is dead.

Her fatal mistake.



Alert Troubleshooters leave no bot unturned when on security detail.

They're Here Already?

When we left the Troubleshooters at the end of the last episode, they had just started on their journey. Shouldn't you play out the trip?

Not necessarily. This episode sets up the premise for the scenario, so you want to get right to it. Also, the Troubleshooters will see the sights in great detail on their journey back. Trust us.

If some troublemaking Troubleshooter asks why things went so smoothly, mention a strange lack of Society activity along Elizabeth-R's route. She can confirm suspicions that the Societies are laying off until they hear her speech.

But if you feel like showing the Troubleshooters a few slices of life before everyone starts slicing their lives, go ahead and let them look out the transbot windows during their journey. Improvise whatever characteristic post-Crash visions strike your

fancy. A few modest suggestions include riots (there are lots of these for lots of reasons), spot shortages and panic buying, and strangest of all, an expectant mother. (From their vehicle the Troubleshooters see a woman waddling down a corridor. To Alpha Complex eyes she is swollen horribly in the belly, as though some great cancerous tumor threatens to consume her. Citizens shy away and even fling themselves against the wall to avoid her. The Troubleshooters have heard about this new post-Crash thing: there's actually another person growing inside that woman, and soon it will burst out! Yecch! Ugh! Maybe an insanity check is called for.)

Add other scenes as you wish. But it doesn't hurt to say, "After an uneventful trip, you arrive at the meeting site," and jump right into the episode. Given most journeys in *Paranoia*, the Troubleshooters probably imagine they got off easy.

Encounter One: 15 Minutes of Fame

In this encounter, the Troubleshooters arrive at the meeting. They scope out the situation, encountering a few suspicious or hostile characters.

The Scene

All right, are we finally ready to start this episode? Read this aloud:

Your journey ends in front of the burnt-out doorway to an Internal Se-

curity Central Headquarters. You yourselves, along with 5,000 other screaming citizens, invaded and destroyed this stronghold not long after the Crash.

Elizabeth-R strides confidently down its main hall, as the rest of you light her path with flashlights.

This place is completely wrecked. On every wall you see spray-painted graffiti like "Where's My File?" and "Who's Got a Security Clearance Now?" Light fixtures and security cameras hang from the ceiling, benches are smashed into rubble, and every shatterproof window is shattered.

Further down the corridor, the walls themselves are destroyed, with nothing left but jagged knee-high barriers. Your boots crunch on stray pieces of glass from broken monitors. Here in Internal Security, there's nothing internal left to make secure.

At the end of what's left of the hallway, the Headquarters opens out into a huge auditorium. There were concrete walls around it, but except for the rear wall, those have collapsed onto the descending rows of seats. Elizabeth-R says, "This must be the place."

Give a copy of the Audience Chamber map to one of your players, then read this aloud. When you see "PLAYER NAME HERE," you can insert the player's name, or you can just read the words "player name here" for a laugh. And note that part of the text sounds like it shouldn't be read aloud — but read it aloud anyway! We dare you!

This is a map of the Main Audience Chamber of IntSec Central Headquarters in ISC Sector. Now I'll describe its major points of interest, while my good friend **PLAYER NAME HERE** indicates them on the map with his or her sturdy index finger.

PLAYER NAME HERE, point to the podium. This is atop a long dais of thin steel girders covered with plastic sheeting. The dais is about 40 feet long, four feet high, and 10 feet deep. The podium is about four feet high, and the speaker stands behind it. A dozen jackobots have almost finished putting it together and wiring it for

sound and video transmission.

PLAYER NAME HERE, point to the big screen behind the podium. This is the only intact wall, and in it is a huge flat-screen monitor that was busted in the riots. Four more jackobots are repairing it, too.

PLAYER NAME HERE, point to the video equipment. This is a bunch of state-of-the-art technical gear designed to broadcast Elizabeth-R's speech all over the Complex. There are three complicated consoles, a parabolic microphone, a portable power supply, and a couple of chairs for the technicians. Elizabeth-R's two guards sit down and start checking the equipment.

PLAYER NAME HERE, point to the nuclear reactor. Pause while the player futilely tries to find a nuclear reactor, or shamelessly scribbles the words "NUCLEAR REACTOR" somewhere on the map, then resume. Well, since **PLAYER NAME HERE** seems to be an incompetent idiot, we'll skip the nuclear reactor.

PLAYER NAME HERE, point to the wreckage around the audience seats. Here are collapsed walls, piles of concrete rubble, and destroyed circuitry. Nothing suspicious here. Actually, gamemaster, this is an ideal spot to hide a whole platoon of assassins. Oops, I wasn't supposed to read that part.

As you arrive, it's early nightcycle. The Society delegates are due to arrive soon.

Elizabeth-R and her group begin their preparations: sound checks, staging discussions, and seating arrangements (a delicate matter). She asks the Troubleshooters to take care of security — to scout out trouble and shoot it.

Let the Troubleshooters explore the area, set up security arrangements as they like, even set traps. Some players really get into this kind of tinkering, so let 'em at it. Be flexible and generous ("Sure, you can have a couple of second-hand combots"). It's not like the Troubleshooters' precautions will do anything to help save Elizabeth-R's life.

Red Herringbot

The jackobots putting together the dais are all legit ... except one, which we'll get to in the next episode. For now, the only unusual character here is one docbot, hanging around on the edge of the crowd. Nobody knows who sent it. Arouse the Troubleshooters' suspicions about this bot. (Its stats are on the "Everything Sheet".)

Troubleshooter: Hey, bot, what are you doing here?

Docbot: Me? Why, nothing, nothing! Uh, that is, I'm — uh — first aid! In case somebody gets hurt! You know, first aid?

Troubleshooter: Hmmm. Who sent you here?

Docbot: All right, you got me! But you'll never take me alive, meatie! Yaaaaaahhhhh! (Attacks Troubleshooter with hypodermic and scalpel, damage 4I.)

This docbot was sent by a fanatic fringe group of Corpore Metal. This group, all rogue bots who have turned to terrorism, sees no percentage in joining with a bunch of fluid-filled meatbrains under Elizabeth-R's leadership. So they rigged one of their own as a kamikaze attacker. "Hold your existence lighter than a transistor," they said. "The short circuit is but a moment, the reward 10,000 yearcycles."

But there on the podium, with its internal explosive weighing heavy on its processors, the docbot was reconsidering. It had just decided to wheel away and investigate a life administering injections to Mystics, when the Troubleshooters started asking questions. Giving up hope, the bot goes berserk.

When the Troubleshooters uncover the homicidal docbot, let them blow it away; then act chagrined. "Darn it, you got my assassin," you say, scowling. "Jeez Louise. Now what?" The players grin at each other. They've finally put one over on the gamemaster! Now they can relax and watch Elizabeth-R's speech.

Jubilant in victory, they won't even notice the plasma generator wired

under the podium.

Encounter Two: Seating the Guests

The society delegations enter. The Troubleshooters break up arguments and firefights. The players watch an Alpha Complex parade of fanatics, loonies, and nutcases. You know, another normal *Paranoia* encounter.

Everybody have fun making their little security arrangements? Great. Read this aloud:

About an hour before midnight, the Society delegations begin showing up — 10 members to a group, all armed, all on foot and staying clear of each other.

Stage this arrival with the grandeur and solemnity of "The Entrance of the Gods Into Valhalla" from Wagner's *Das Rheingold*. These fractious Societies have never gotten together in the same room before without killing each other. Make the Troubleshooters, witnesses to this unprecedented event, wonder whether this, too, will lead to trouble.

Let Troubleshooters interrupt at any point in these entrance scenes to interact with the Society delegates, contact their own Societies, make deals or threats, and so on. Have a few sample Society members ready; use the generic stats on "The Everything Sheet," and provide typical personalities according to the Society.

First come 10 merchants of Free Enterprise, loaded down with cases of merchandise: souvenirs, algae chips, Bouncy Bubble Beverage, and pennants and T-shirts reading "MY BUDDY WENT TO THE BIG MEETING AND ALL I GOT WAS THIS LOUSY T-SHIRT". They start setting up booths on both sides of the area.

Then you hear whooping and laughter down the corridor. You look at each other and say, "Death Leopards." Sure enough, here come a bunch of teenage clones, dressed in black with rags of all colors tied on their limbs. They're carrying violin cases that might not contain laser rifles, and

also plastic thermos bottles that don't look anything like grenades.

Of course they're grenades, 12 of them. And laser rifles, five of those with fully-charged Indigo barrels. And they have spray paint and water balloons and lipstick (a new product, intended for Romantics but finding its greatest market among the Leopards). These rowdy teenagers won't give up their weapons without (a) careful persuasion, or (b) a fight.

Now the rest of the delegations are showing up:

... First Church of Christ Computer Programmer, 10 stern-looking fat bald men in bright Violet robes;

... those ditzzy guys and gals from Pro Tech, all wearing their two-way wrist radios, pedometers, and X-Ray Goggles (gamemaster note: none of this stuff works);

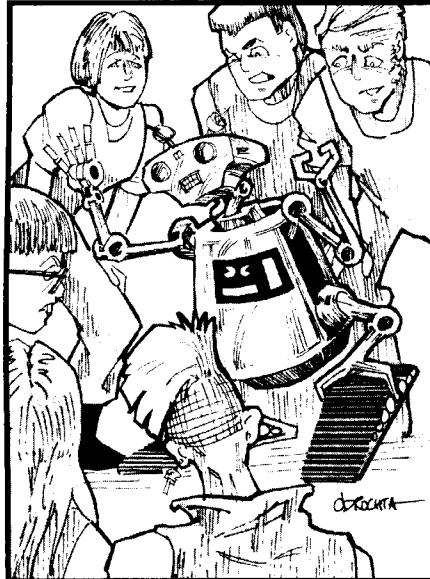
... and then come the marginal groups like the Seal Club, the Computer Phreaks, and others you can't remember the names for. These nerdy folks sit huddled by themselves, looking so pathetic that nobody bothers them.

A single suspicious head wearing an aluminum-foil skullcap peers around a destroyed wall. And where one telepathy-blocking skullcap lurks, can others be far behind? Back to back, pistols ready, and with furtive glances all around them and overhead, the 10 delegates from Anti-Mutant make a run for their seats.

The Anti-Mutants here were chosen for extreme resistance to alien mental aggression. In other words, these guys are nutcases, even for Anti-Mutants. If a Troubleshooter annoys these Anti-Mutants, they shout, "Mutant-loving Commie pinko mind-reading sputum-spewing animalistic Computer-for-saken wrong-thinking —"

They never reach a noun before the firefight starts. After they exchange a few shots with the Troubleshooters, read this:

Across the ruined auditorium there's a flash of light and a high-pitched whoosh and a smell of brimstone. Ten trim people in silver bodysuits stand linked arm in arm. A voice resounds in



"Fourth word...a small word... 'the', a'...'a'!
'Watch out, there's a...fifth word..."

your heads: "We come in peace for all mutant-kind. Greetings, clones, from the Elders of Psion."

With a scream, the Anti-Mutants break off their battle with you and leap under their seats. You hear them frantically mumbling mental-block mantras.

One more crisis overcome. The Psion gurus have no bone to pick with anybody, at least not in front of witnesses. They're clairvoyantly scoping out the opposition, though. All the Anti-Mutants will wake up tomorrow with bad brain-burn.

Next come the Mystics, dazedly leering at everyone and everything, including their own fingernails; the Frankenstein Destroyers, with a few bedraggled PURGE hangers-on, all scowling at the jackobots erecting the dais; and the Humanists and Romantics together, who enter singing such Old Reckoning ballads as "Tiara Boom-De-Yay," "If They Could See Me Now," and the "Whiffenpoof Song."

If you don't know these, and we admit we'd be hard pressed to hum the "Whiffenpoof Song" ourselves, substitute hokey old standards and college fight songs of your choice.

And finally, precisely at midnight, a

squad of bots trundles in. They're all sizes and types, but they have the Corpore Metal logo painted on their housings. One combot says to the Computer Phreaks, "Move aside, puny flesh-things," and the Phreaks move.

Add other Societies as you wish, or just assume the others showed up in the crowd. Note, though, that no delegations from the Communists or the Illuminati show up. The Communist delegation fell to arguing among themselves on the way here and shot each other. The Illuminati have more delegates here than any other group, but they're all undercover.

Encounter Three: Horrible, Pointless, Grotesque Slaughter!

The meeting gets underway. The Troubleshooters foil 30 or more assassination attempts. The real attempt turns Elizabeth-R into rapidly dispersing superheated plasma. Chaos ensues.

Won't this be fun?

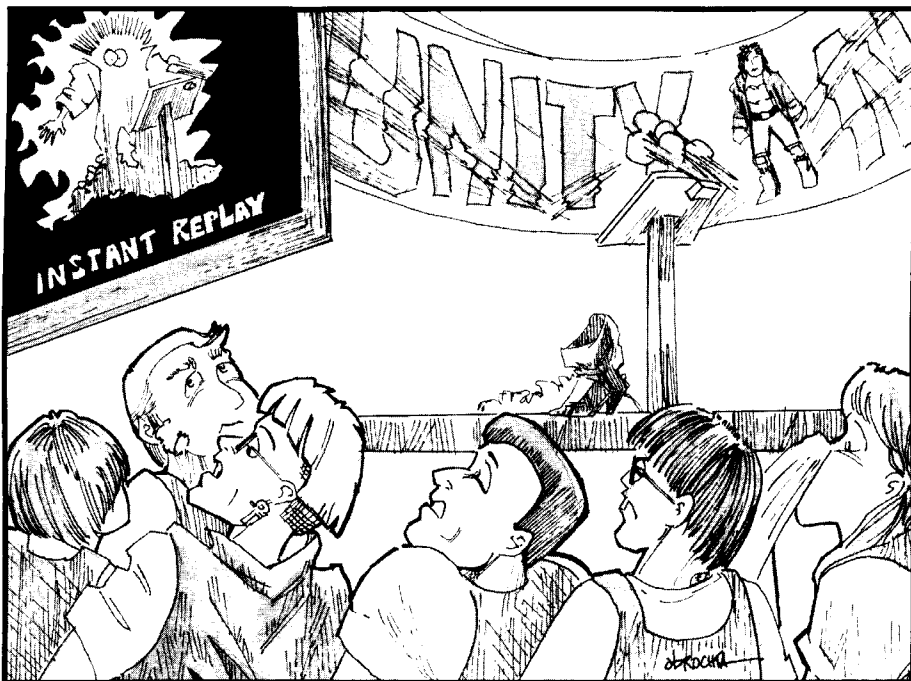
Elizabeth-R's Speech, Phase 1: Hostility

At midnight, Grandpa Innocent totters up on stage. "Welcome t' all you fellers an' ladies," he says. The Death Leopards laugh and hiss. "The person we're hearin' tonight has gotta lotta sharp stuff t'say. Listen up an' listen good."

He steps off stage without even naming Elizabeth-R. But he didn't have to. She strides onto the dais and looks around like she owns the place. On the giant screen behind her, you see her face, twice as big and beautiful as Teela O-MLY's ever was. But the audience is dead silent.

Elizabeth-R waits for some welcome, gets none, and says, "Sure, but suppose The Computer were up here. Then you'd be really rude." Everyone laughs, and there's scattered applause. All at once the hall feels slightly more comfortable.

Then you all spot a Death Leopard clone in the middle of the audience reaching inside her jumpsuit. She brings out a thermos bottle. She stares at Elizabeth-R with a mischievous look. Anybody doing anything?



Let's go to the videotape!

One would hope so. After all, it's the Troubleshooters' job to protect Elizabeth-R from homicidal pranksters wielding homemade bombs made out of rewired cone rifle napalm shells (use the stats from the Weapon Chart in *Paranoia* Foldout B, but cut the range to 20 meters).

The mad bomber is Maude-R-CKT-6, Head Honcho of her gang; she's known in Death Leopard as "Reagan Deficit." Once she blows Elizabeth-R to charismatic smithereens, the other Leopards plan to throw their grenades in a symmetrical pattern throughout the crowd. What a kick! There's maybe a little problem getting out alive, but you gotta grab for the gusto.

For the Troubleshooters, the trick is to keep Maude-R from throwing her improvised grenade at Elizabeth-R, defuse the other Death Leopards as well, and also, at the same time, avoid disrupting the speech. Possible? If the Troubleshooters haven't already disarmed the other Leopards of their thermoses, probably not. But if you get across to your players that discretion is a priority, who knows what they'll come up with? ("I'm shining my flashlight into Maude-R's eyes. I'll try to hypnotize her." "Sounds good to me.")

If the Troubleshooters make a sin-

cere effort to stop Maude-R but fail, Elizabeth-R telekinetically catches the thermos and throws it to the back of the auditorium, where it explodes harmlessly. If the Troubleshooters don't even try to stop Maude-R, Elizabeth-R's interception accidentally sends the thermos hurtling toward the most apathetic Troubleshooter, where it explodes on impact.

"Sorry," says Elizabeth-R sincerely as the clone replacement system (still working in this sector) slots in the next Troubleshooter. Then she calmly resumes her speech, which impresses the Death Leopards.

Speech, Phase 2: Consideration

Elizabeth-R says, "In the old days we couldn't get anything done, because of The Computer. Now The Computer's gone, and we still can't get anything done. We just kill each other. Fellows, I'm here to tell you, there's no reason to fight.

"I've joined many of your Societies, and fought alongside most everyone here. I'm a Computer Phreak, and I've made lots of credits in Free Enterprise." You see those two delegations smile, throw back their shoulders, and buff their fingernails. "And," Elizabeth-R continues, "I've learned a lot in the ranks of Psion."

The Psion mutants make no reaction, but you see everyone in Anti-Mutant pop foil beanies in surprise. The leader gestures, and while Elizabeth-R keeps talking, six Anti-Mutants move quietly toward the back of the auditorium.

Note: Elizabeth-R never, ever mentions her Illuminati affiliation.

The Anti-Mutant nuts plan to assassinate Elizabeth-R with their special Neuro-Synchrotronic Scrambler. If you ask an Anti-Mutant what this modified gauss gun does, he'll say it produces electromagnetic radiation that causes mutant brain cells to fire in synchrony, producing epileptic-type seizures and death by paralysis.

Actually, what he'll say is, "It fries the muties' brains! Impure genes die!"

Do you have to ask whether this

A Note About Precognitive Troubleshooters

Kill them fast. Oh, wait, ha-ha, that's not what we meant to say! What we meant is that, if you don't watch out, a Troubleshooter with mutant Precognition can screw up this scene.

You should handle Precognition through — oh, what's the phrase — "fear and ignorance," that's it.

Fear: Tell the player, "Oh, there's bad nastiness happening here. Seems like this whole joint puts a bad taste in your mouth. Your fellow Troubleshooters will cause a crisis." This probably sends the Precognitive Troubleshooter scampering from the room, thus remedying the problem.

Ignorance: Tell the player something about Elizabeth-R's forthcoming death scene, but muddy it up: "There's something ominous about that big display screen. Something bad will happen there, and it involves you."

If neither of these approaches works and it looks like the Troubleshooter is about to give warning to his colleagues, terminate him or her fast.

thing will explode, doing damage on column 9P of the Damage Table in a 20-meter radius, as soon as they pull the trigger? The blast does no damage to Elizabeth-R's or any other mutant's brain, except by sending razor-sharp plastic fragments into those within the blast radius.

Not much threat, granted. But maybe you can lure a few Troubleshooters close enough to blow them up. Conceivably, they might even prevent the Anti-Mutant kooks from firing. But if they do, you miss a neat scene. After the blast, Elizabeth-R calmly says, "If we keep feuding, we'll all end up like that." The audience thinks hard about this.

Speech, Phase 3: Acceptance

The audience looks like it's considering Elizabeth-R's words. She continues, "In all these groups, we share a common goal: we want to remake whatever we dislike about Alpha Complex. Fellow Society members, we can do that now. We can take this complex and do what we like. All we have to do is stop fighting each other and start fighting our real enemies — dissension! Pointless politicking! Mutual hatred!"

A few delegations are cheering now. It looks like Elizabeth-R is getting the crowd on her side. And she keeps talking.

Meanwhile, one of the jackobots that put together the podium comes up to (pick the most nervous player) you. It doesn't say anything, but it points urgently at the podium.

Do a real good job establishing this jackobot, because it plays a pivotal role in the rest of this adventure. What role? Keep reading.

Examination of the jackobot reveals nothing of interest, except that its speaker grille appears damaged; something hit it and disrupted its speaking circuits. The jackobot doesn't speak, at least for the moment. But try to establish it sympathetically, if possible (take it as a challenge for your acting abilities).

Its gestures should make the Troubleshooters suspicious, preferably even panicky, that something is going on under the podium. As one or more Troubleshooters goes to look, read the next section.

Speech, Phase 4: Oops

As you head toward the podium, the crowd is applauding Elizabeth-R and chanting, "Unity now! Elizabeth-R! Unity now!" You never thought you'd see it in your life. And nobody but her could have made it happen.

On the giant screen, Elizabeth-R looks radiant, transfigured. And then the scene shifts. While the chanting

continues, the screen shows a Troubleshooter in armor. An ugly, desperate-looking sort — shifty-eyed — a rotten customer. And then you realize ... (pick a Troubleshooter, preferably one heading toward the podium) ... **it's you!**

(Describe that Troubleshooter: distinctive features, weaponry, and equipment. Then keep reading.)

On the screen, the image of you gives what can only be called a fiendish cackle as it raises a small, cubical metal box with a camera-type lens on the front. It's a plasma generator!

Maybe you want to call for insanity checks, per page 74 of the rules. Maybe not.

On the screen, the plasma generator fires! On the podium, you see a burst of purple light erupt from beneath Elizabeth-R's feet! The crowd gasps! On stage and screen alike, Elizabeth-R screams, staggers, and teleports — but only a few feet to the right. The purple glow eats through her. In moments, there's nothing left of Elizabeth-R but one smoking black boot, a pile of powder, and a curl of vapor overhead.

The crowd is deathly silent. Then, on the giant screen, you see yourself again, firing the plasma generator — only this time, at the bottom of the screen, you read the words "INSTANT REPLAY!" Once again you and the crowd witness Elizabeth-R's sudden, horrible, pointless death.

The Society delegations scream like wounded scrubots. They start shouting things. Things like, well, you definitely hear the words "death" and "Troubleshooters" quite a lot.

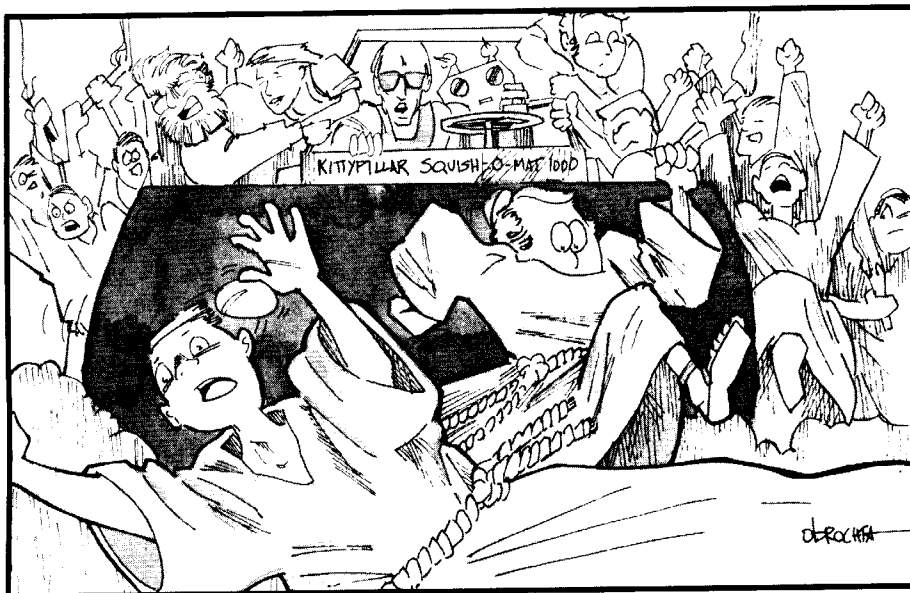
Do you, perhaps, want to do anything?

"Leave!" "We're getting out!" "Head for the hills!"

Encounter Four: Get Out of Town

Time to leave the meeting. Fast.

Don't ask us why, but some Troubleshooters may not want to leave. Maybe they want to mourn Elizabeth-R or



You can ride with confidence, all because you belong to "Triple-S" (Steamroller Society of the Simplex).

something just as stupid. If so, the Society delegations catch them and subject them to the tender treatment described in the sidebar nearby.

Otherwise, let the players describe their Troubleshooters' exit procedures. In the confusion, they can probably get where they want with no trouble, at least early on. But in the escape, three things happen:

1. Alarm klaxons sound. This was an IntSec headquarters, so you can imagine the alarms sounded pretty vicious. They still work. Why are they going off? No reason except staging. But the Troubleshooters never find out, so you don't have to offer an explanation.

2. The sprinkler system goes off. Overhead, spray-nozzles emit cascades of slippery pink foam. It covers everything. Call for Agility checks to stay upright; increase malfunction chances for projectile weapons (blocked barrels); decrease damage from flamethrowers.

No, nothing is on fire. The explanation for this event has to wait until episode four; let's just say some agency is making it easier for the Troubleshooters to escape.

3. Riot and carnage. Feuding Societies set upon each other. Frankenstein Destroyers destroy all the jackobots that put together the dais and repaired the screen — all the bots except the one that alerted the Troubleshooters (see below). Elizabeth-R's technicians try to protect their video equipment; the Troubleshooters witness them falling before the angry crowd and being beaten to death.

(The video guys would be the Troubleshooters' natural suspects for the tampering with the monitors. They're innocent, but make a point of killing them off so that the Troubleshooters don't find out.)

4. J'accuse! A Society delegate spots the fleeing Troubleshooters through the foam and the crowd, and he/she shouts so everybody can hear, "It was dem! It was duh Troubleshooters!" Society members start taking potshots at them; they have no chance to hit at first, but this should get across to the Troubleshooters that they're wanted clones.

(Or, if that doesn't work, you could drop a brick on them.)

Escape Routes

Allow us to generalize.

The Front Way: Fine. If the Troubleshooters just get through the crowd of screaming rioters, they're off down the corridor, out into the Complex, and home free. Prompt the players for creative solutions to the overall getting-through-the-screaming-rioters problem, and be generous toward schemes that look sufficiently fun or harebrained. ("We'll set the Free Enterprise T-shirts on fire, burn polyurethane foam from the seat cushions, and flood the room with toxic gases." "Sounds good to me.")

The Back Way: Several doorways in the back wall provide easy egress for those on foot. (Or on roller skates, skateboards, or unicycles; who knows what a Troubleshooter will come up with?) They're too wide for vehicles, and they don't have doors, so stopping pursuit is a problem. The doorways all open on a corridor — what's left of a corridor — connecting with the side hallways.

But you can't run any further back; the other wall of this corridor, opposite the rear of the auditorium, is a blank concrete wall. Since no offices remain intact to serve as hiding places, anyone in this hallway still has to get out by the front. No exit here. If necessary, post a sign here: **PANIC-STRICKEN TROUBLESHOOTERS, USE OTHER EXIT!**

Up: A couple of dusty aluminum air ducts lead up through the auditorium's rear wall and into the ceiling. They're big enough for one person at a time. The Troubleshooters can climb them using thin bulges at the welding seams. No chance to fall. Well, maybe a small chance. Well, you know, now that we think on it ...

Unfortunately, a huge patch of the wall has fallen away fairly high up, making Troubleshooter climbers completely visible to the crowd below (and the crowd will spot them). This means that a platoon of ambushers will be waiting when the Troubleshooters emerge from the floor of the next story

up. Run this as one of the ambushes described in the next episode.

Down: Troubleshooters specifically looking at the ground (hey, don't ask us why — they're your Troubleshooters) can determine, beyond the shadow of any doubt, that there's no way down.

Teleportation: If a mutant Troubleshooter wants to zap himself out of the action, okay. The teleporter only gets as far as the next episode, when he materializes in a pile of garbage or other relevant material from one of the encounters there. Whoever is the bad guy in that encounter captures the exhausted Troubleshooter, keeping him or her until the others join up with their comrade later. And won't they be happy to see the comrade who left them in the lurch!

Hiding: This won't work. You want the Troubleshooters to leave, so you can hound them on their journey home. Wherever the Troubleshooters are in the IntSec building, the rioters will find them. Rather, they'll threaten to find them ...

Troubleshooter: We'll hide in the air duct until everyone leaves. Maybe we'll hide there for a week or two.

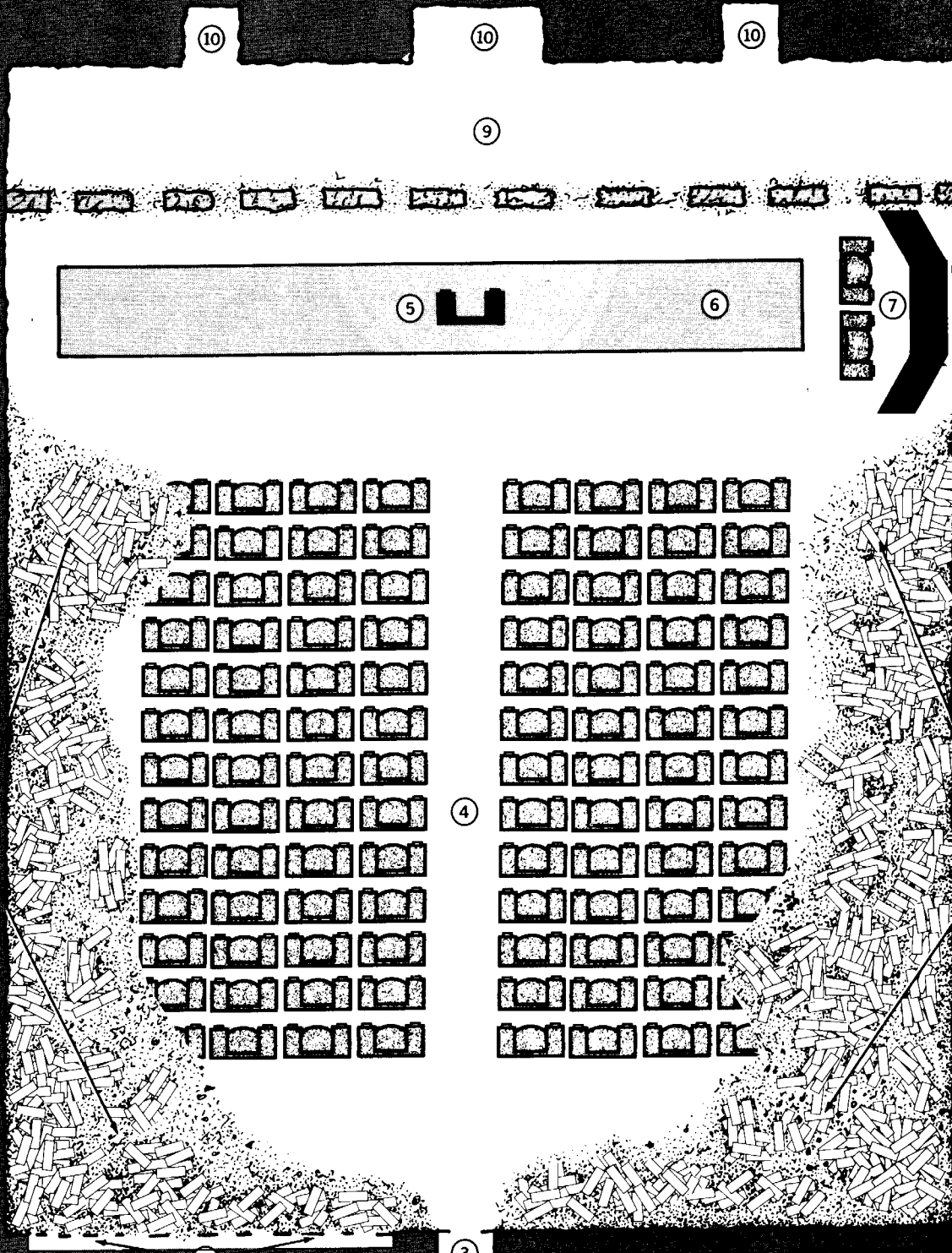
Gamemaster: Right. (Rolls dice.) Some of the Elders of Psion go into a trance, murmuring "Ommmmmm." When they come out of it, they're staring strangely at your vent. They begin walking toward it, and electricity begins to crackle around their fingertips. Still want to stay where you are, or —?

Troubleshooter: (Sighs.) Where's the darn autocar?

Escape Methods

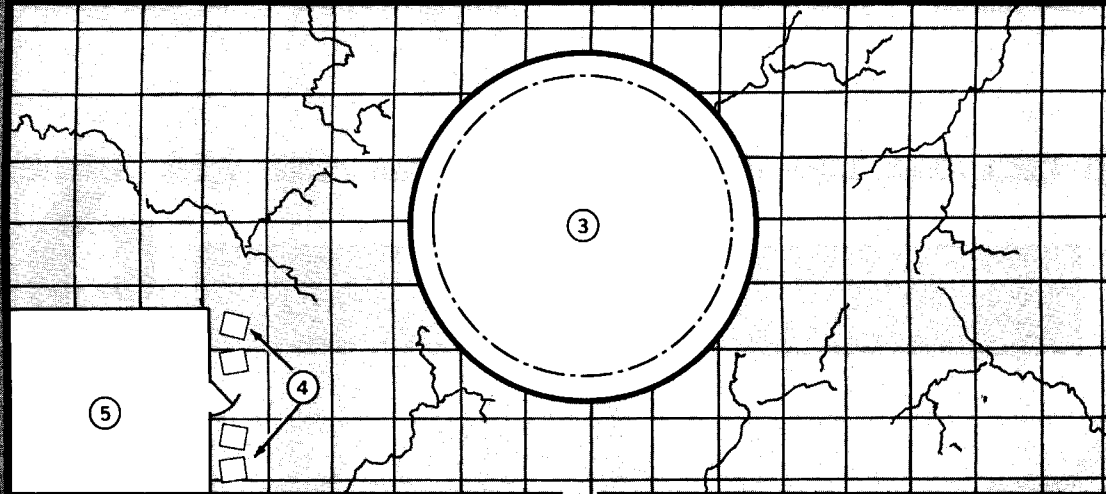
Maybe we're going on too long with all this, so we'll keep it brief: the Troubleshooters probably can't get out cleanly no matter how they try. Running. Driving. Hang gliding and snowshoeing. Nothing works, and they're trapped with their algae chips to the wall.

And then the Troubleshooters spot the steamroller. Not a bot vehicle, a plain ordinary non-sentient steamroller. At the wheel, the jackobot they saw earlier; and beside it, Grandpa Innocent!



- 1. Front entrance
- 2. Corridor
- 3. Main entrance
- 4. Aisle
- 5. Speaker's podium
- 6. Dais
- 7. Video-control consoles
- 8. Collapsed walls/rubble
- 9. Outer corridor
- 10. Hallways (all dead ends)
- 11. Air ducts

Abandoned Sauna



1. Corridor
2. Main entrance
3. Pool of dirty water — here there be mutant goldfish
4. Dirty towel hampers
5. Closet filled with towels

The Briefing Rumor: A Complex-Wide Desktop Publication

Psion Riots Erupt by *Muck-R-AKR*

MUT Sector — Psion mutants filled the corridors of today, demanding that the manufacture of tin foil be halted throughout the Complex.

Used in Old Reckoning days to preserve food until it was no longer recognizable but made a great missile weapon, tin foil has come back into vogue in recent monthcycles as an Anti-Mutant fashion statement. Members of that Society have been seen wrapping foil around their heads to keep out "mutant thought control brainwaves," which allegedly turn the mind to SyntheSpam and leave the victim fit only for food-vat varnishing, post-Crash Dummy School, or game designing.

"The idea that mutants are dangerous is a myth started by a few clones who were accidentally shredded," said Psion spokesperson Wolf-R-EEN, whose mutant power is manifested as long, sharp talons protruding from his fingers. "I'm glad to see journalists reporting the other side of the story, and I think you deserve a pat on the back ... oops, sorry about that."

Anti-Mutant officials insist that the "tin tops" are a vital part of their defense program. "A soldier's best friend is his Aluminum Alpha Wave Shielding Device," said A-M head Xen-O-PHO. "We're at war with those death-dealing mutant scum, and in war clones get hurt, sectors get destroyed, and freezer wrap wins battles."

Psion, still smarting from their loss at the Battle of Crossover Ridge, proudly unveiled their new secret weapon yesterday. Dubbed "The Non-Mutant" *(continued on page 7)*

Vultures Vanish! by *Enqui-R-RRR*

SFF Sector — Occasionally believable sources report that a squadron of Vulture Warriors has vanished into past yearcycles in a daring attempt to reboot The Computer.

Witnesses claim the VWs were heard to shout their rousing battle cry, "Remember the way home!" as they disappeared.

These accounts were denied by R&D Head Priest Rip-U-OFF, who said, "I absolutely, positively, completely and unconditionally am pretty sure that didn't happen." *(continued on page 4)*

Liz-R Claims to Know the Way to San Jose and Secret Societies Go Along for the Ride by *Press-R-LES*

PRS SECTOR — A new figure has arisen on the Complex scene, spreading a message of peace, prosperity, and Hot Fun in every pot. Who brings these totally alien notions to Alpha Complex? Who speaks the words of plenty throughout the Simplexes? Who looks great in red leather and heels? The answer to all these questions is the charismatic clone named Elizabeth-R. She doesn't use a suffix because she doesn't want to be associated with just one Sector. "My message is for everyone," she said.

Now, in a bold move, rumor has it that Liz-R (as she is affectionately known) is attempting to unite the warring Secret Societies in an effort to improve life in Alpha Complex. "We cannot prosper if we do not take advantage of The Computer's absence," she said. *(continued on page 2)*

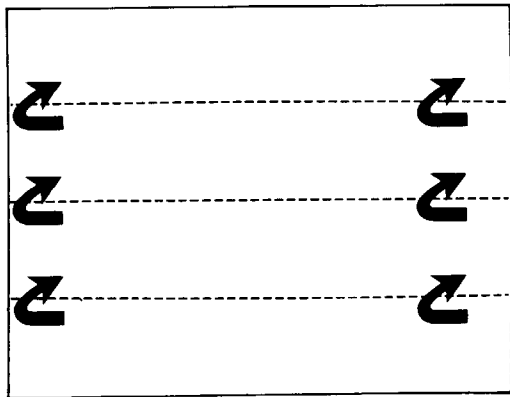
Mystics Maul Marchers by *Yell-O-JRL*

YUP Sector — Peaceful Romantic marchers chanting "Make love, not war," "Secret Society peace now," and "What kind of rent do you pay on a place like this?" were viciously set upon and assaulted by a mob of Mystics on Mondaycycle.

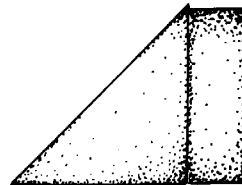
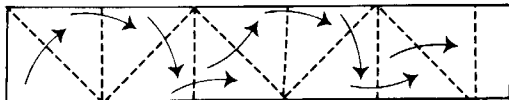
Shocked witnesses report that the Mystics thought unkind thoughts about the Romantics, threatened to introduce them to true unconsciousness, and in a completely unprovoked assault, wove philosophical arguments that proved they didn't exist. Docbots treated three Romantics for severe angst. *(continued on page 10)*

Making Paper Footballs the *PARANOIA* Way

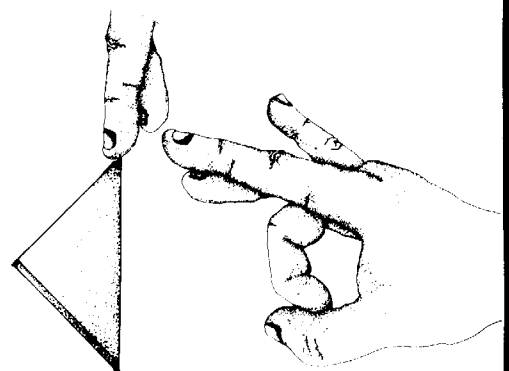
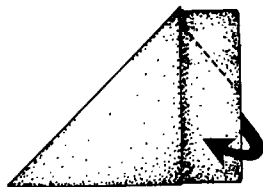
1. Start with an ordinary letter-sized sheet of paper.



2. Fold along dotted lines, as shown below.



3. By now you should have a small paper triangle with a tail; fold and tuck flap inside. Punt accordingly.





The Everything Sheet

• Here are all the PCs, NPCs, bot descriptions, weather forecasts, and ephemeri you need to run this adventure. •
Note: All Troubleshooters wear All4 armor. None are sleepers.

Player Characters

Name	Relevant Mutation	Society	Weapons	Notable Skills	Possessions
"Jig Back" Jack-3	Adren Control	Corpore Metal, 2	laser, Slugthrower	Bot Op/Maint	10 Chapsticks
Amelia-R-HRT-2	Mech Intuition	Humanists, 1	laser, 2 Grenades	a great shot	gasmask
Belinda Blue	Hypersenses	Free Enterprise, 2	laser, Sonic pistol*	Biochem, sneeze	raft, lighter
Ira-I-TNT	Empathy	formerly PURGE, 27	laser, cone rifle*	Intim., Oratory	goggles
Orville-R-SHY-2	Polymorphism	Romantics, 1	laser, Ice gun*	Moxie/Mech	Binocs, umbrella
Harry Havoc	Pyrokinesis	Death Leopards, 3	laser, Hand flamer*	Motivatn, Demolitn	black paint

*experimental weapon

Non-Player Characters

Name	Society	Weapons	Armor	Skills	Notes
Armed Forces Goons	FCCCP	everything	All4	all weapon skills, 10	devout fanatics
Deathtrap Dodgers	themselves	l. lasers	All4	Laser, 7	running-gag competition for PCs
Depository monks and David-I- OTT-4	FCCCP, Depository	shepherd's crooks	none	Data Srch, Analysis, 13	peaceful unless Computer is attacked
Elizabeth-R	Illum, PSION, Phreaks	None	Red reflec	All, 17	has all mutant powers
Generic Society Delegates	All	varies; 3 shots, Dmg 7-9	varies; L4, P3, or All1	weapon skill 7	PCs can get them to give weapons up
Generic Ambushers	varies	ditto	ditto	ditto	no, they can't!
Grandpa Innocent	several in past; none right now	cane, 14 (I-2)	dumb luck (All5)	all Chutzpah skills, 15	85, slow, Regeneration, senile
Homeless waif selling junk	none	none	none	none	PCs will exterminate her
Larry-G-DNG-2, 3 (techs)	none	none	green reflec	Video Eng, 14	Liz-R's followers
Mutated goldfish	—	bite 10AP	All1	Strength 22	Very dangerous
Psions in sauna	guess (18th degree)	any and all	UV reflec Energy Field	Power 15	treat PCs like animals

Bots

Name	Type	Weapons	Armor	Movement	Notes
Docbot	fanatic	hypodermic (I-4), 13	All2	wheels (walk)	red herring
Jackobot JB347	guess	unarmed, 12 (I-7)	All6	treads (run)	infinite hit points

Forecast

Clear and partly confused, with an 80 percent chance of explosions late in the adventure.

PC#1: Name Then: Jack-O-BOT-3 Name Now: "Jig Back" Jack-3	Former Service Group: Technical Services	Security Clearance: Private: Orange Public: None	Player Name: _____
--	--	--	--------------------

Attributes and Skills Strength (10) Damage _____ +0 Carry _____ 25 kg Endurance (11) Macho _____ +0 Agility (15) Skill Base _____ 4 Unarmed _____ 4 Chutzpah (17) Skill Base _____ 4 Fast Talk _____ 5 Spurious Logic _____ 10 Dexterity (10) Skill Base _____ 2 Energy Weapons _____ 8 Laser Weapons _____ 8 Projectile Weapons _____ 8 Moxie (17) Skill Base _____ 4 Power (5) Mechanical (17) Skill Base _____ 4 Docbot Op. and Maintenance _____ 14 Jackobot Op. and Maintenance _____ 12 Scrubot Op. and Maintenance _____ 12 Petbot Op. and Maintenance _____ 8 Moxie _____ (10) Skill Base _____ 2 Power _____ (9)	Personal Equipment Laser pistol with Indigo barrel painted white (Ultraviolet) Vial of white touch-up paint and fine-tip brush Two meals of Cruncheetyme Algae Chips Half liter of bot lubricant in Bouncy Bubble Beverage bottle Corpore Metal manual, <i>My Bot, My Self</i> (thick softcover) Ten Chapsticks Com 1 multicorder (slightly broken)
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Weapon	Skill Number	Type	Damage Rating	Range	Experimental?	Damage Status	Credits
Laser Pistol	8	L	8	50	no		
Knife	5	I	7	—	—		

Armor	Rating
Orange Reflec	All4

PC#2: Name Then: Amelia-R-HRT-2 Name Now: Amelia-R-HRT-2	Former Service Group: Power Services	Security Clearance: Private: Red Public: Red	Player Name: _____
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Attributes and Skills Strength (8) Damage _____ +0 Carry _____ 25 kg Endurance (12) Macho _____ +0 Agility (16) Skill Base _____ 4 Unarmed _____ 4 Primitive Melee Weapons _____ 6 Chutzpah (9) Skill Base _____ 2 Dexterity (16) Skill Base _____ 4 Laser Weapons _____ 9 Projectile Weapons _____ 10 Moxie (10) Skill Base _____ 2 Biochemical Therapy (sleep-related drugs only) _____ 14 Data Analysis _____ 5 Nuclear Engineering _____ 3 Stealth _____ 4 Power (13) Habitat Engineering _____ 5 Jackobot Op. and Maintenance _____ 4	Personal Equipment Personal Equipment/Trade Goods Laser pistol with Indigo barrel painted white (Ultraviolet) Vial of white touch-up paint and fine-tip brush Two meals of Pleasant Morning Experience Half-full tube SuperGum; no solvent Gas mask, possibly functional Iron-on personalized shoulder patch Utility knife and simuleather sheath
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Weapon	Skill Number	Type	Damage Rating	Range	Experimental?	Damage Status	Credits
Laser	9	L	8	50	—		
Grenades (2)	10	P	8	20	—		

Armor	Rating
ArmorAll IV	All4

PC#3: Name Then: Belinda-O-BLU-3 Name Now: Belinda Blue	Former Service Group: PLC	Security Clearance: Private: Orange Public: Blue	Player Name: _____
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Attributes and Skills Strength (9) Damage _____ +0 Carry _____ 25 kg Endurance (13) Macho _____ +0 Agility (14) Skill Base _____ 3 Unarmed _____ 4 Chutzpah (10) Skill Base _____ 2 Bootlicking _____ 5 Bribery _____ 7 Dexterity (11) Skill Base _____ 2 Energy Weapons _____ 6 Laser Weapons _____ 5 Moxie (16) Skill Base _____ 4 Biochemical Therapy _____ 14 Biosciences _____ 12 Chemical Engineering _____ 12 Data Search _____ 6 Power (14) Mechanical (5) Skill Base _____ 1	Personal Equipment Personal Equipment/Trade Goods Laser pistol with Indigo barrel painted white (Ultraviolet) Vial of white touch-up paint and fine-tip brush Two meals of textured Edible Fungus Wafers Cigarette lighter (almost out of fluid) Inflatable raft that won't inflate Violet pen-and-pencil set Seven yellow cloth handkerchiefs
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Weapon	Skill Number	Type	Damage Rating	Range	Experimental?	Damage Status	Credits
Laser pistol	5	L	8	50	—		
Sonic Pistol	6	E	7	60	yes		

Armor	Rating
Armor All IV	All 4

PC#1: "Jig Back" Jack-3

Society: Corpore Metal

Society Rank: 2nd degree (Honorary Petbot)

Mutant Power(s):

Adrenalin Control

Sleeper? No

Troubleshooter Team: Team 44



Loyalties:

To Team 44, and to Corpore Metal.

Background: Now that The Crampooter has coshed — er, The Computer has crashed — you can finally use a decent name. Your old name, Jack-O-BOT-3, kept getting you assigned to Thought Berapy. You mean Bot Therapy!

Oh well, at least the bots were nice enough, mostly; you hang liking out (like hanging out!) with them. They never make fun of your unspeechinate ped imfortiment.

You like this new job, Troobleshutter — er, Troubleshooter — even better. Good thing you hucked oop (darn, hooked up!) with these others, a gell swunch of buys, even if you have to lecture them now and then. You and they pulled off the mig bassacre — mack bissager — the slaughter of

44 High Programmers just after the Crash. Boy, you bowed those mastards down! These others try to take the credit, but you killed senty-twix of them yourself. Maybetwenty-seven. Credit where credit is due. They need to keep better tracts of their fack. Er ...

Roleplaying Notes: You're a pleasant Dutch-uncle sort to your fellow Troubleshooters, and a loyal friend of bots everywhere. But in the stress of combat you sometimes go a little wild and throw autocars or fellow characters around. Then you have to nurse a hernia afterward.

Oh, be sure to dial your litterog — er, litter your dialogue with spoonerisms.

PC#2: Amelia-R-HRT-2

Secret Society: Humanists

Secret Society Rank: 1st degree (too tired to advance)

Mutant Power(s):

Mechanical Intuition

Sleeper? No

Troubleshooter Team: Team 44



Loyalties:

To Team 44, and to Humanists.

Background: Geez, fall asleep at the reactor's remote console and have one little meltdown, and the high-clearance jerks crawl all over you. (Yawn.) Good thing The Computer crashed before they could skin you. Wonder if the meltdown had anything to do with the Crash? You're too tired to find out.

Yawn. Life is exciting in your new career, Troubleshooting. If only you could stay awake long enough to enjoy it. How did you ever get addicted to Wakey-Wakey pills? You finally kicked the habit, now that the pill supply has dried up, but these nasty side effects keep you drowsy.

These other Troubleshooters, nice folks all, try to keep you awake. You like them, since they helped you get even with the 44 High Programmers who wanted your hide. Now they boast to each other about who killed how many. But without you as bait for the trap that lured those Ultraviolet into the Food Vat, your buddies wouldn't have had anybody to kill, would they? Credit where credit is due.

Roleplaying Notes: Yawn a lot. (What That's not helpful? Oh, Okay ...)

You have something like narcolepsy. You tend to fall asleep at crucial moments or, if that gets you killed too often, any time except crucial moments.

PC#3: Belinda Blue

Secret Society: Free Enterprise

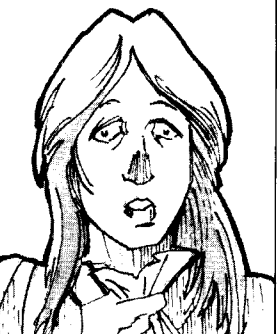
Secret Society Rank: 2nd degree

Mutant Power(s):

Hypersenses (except smell — ahchoo!)

Sleeper? No

Troubleshooter Team: Team 44



Loyalties:

To Team 44, to Free Enterprise, and to yourself.

Background: Ahchoo! Snnrff ... oh, excuse you. It's your allergies. Being around all those cell cultures in the Political Therapy and Brain Reconstruction Tool Design division has made you allergic to just about everything. Erk ... ewgh ... ahchoo! Excuse you.

You're working as a Troubleshooter for the experience and to pay the bills. These other Troubleshooters are (ahchoo!) okay. You met them when

they helped you trap about four dozen Ultraviolet goons in the PBS Sector Food Vats. Your teammates brag about how they lasered the High Programmers, but you — ahchoo! — it was you that hid the Sleepy-Sleepy in the High Programmers' gas masks before the fight began. How else could these guys have hoped to bump them off so easily? Credit where credit is due.

Roleplaying Notes: Ought to be pretty self-evident, right? Sneeze a lot!

PC#4: Name Then: Ira-G-BOM-2 Name Now: Ira-I-TNT-2	Former Service Group: Armed Forces	Security Clearance: Private: Green Public: Indigo	Player Name: _____
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Attributes and Skills

Strength (15) Damage _____ +1 Carry _____ 40 kg Endurance _____ (15) Macho _____ +1	Chutzpah (18) Skill Base _____ 5 Intimidation _____ 12 Motivation _____ 8 Oratory _____ 10 Psychescan _____ 7	Mechanical (3) Skill Base _____ 0 Moxie (10) Skill Base _____ 2	Primitive Missile Weapons _____ 4 Projectile Weapons _____ 9
Agility (10) Skill Base _____ 2 Unarmed _____ 6 Primitive Melee Weapons _____ 5	Dexterity (12) Skill Base _____ 3 Laser Weapons _____ 8	Power (9)	

Personal Equipment

Laser pistol with Indigo barrel painted white (Ultraviolet)
Vial of white touch-up paint and fine-tip brush
Two meals of Happiness Energy Bars
Protective goggles (cracked)
One violet shoelace
Flashlight
Instruction booklet, *How to Use a Geiger Counter*

Weapon	Skill Number	Type	Damage Rating	Range	Experimental?	Damage Status	Credits
Laser Pistol	8	L	8	50	no		
Clone rifle	9	P	13	200	yes		

Armor ArmorAll IV	Rating All4
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PC#5: Name Then: Orville-G-SHY-2 Name Now: Orville-R-SHY-2	Former Service Group: Power Services	Security Clearance: Private: Green Public: Red	Player Name: _____
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Attributes and Skills

Strength (6) Damage _____ +0 Carry _____ 25 kg	Chutzpah (2) Skill Base _____ 0 Psychescan _____ 7	Moxie (20) Skill Base _____ 5 Electronic Engineering _____ 14 Mechanical Engineering _____ 14 Old Reckoning Cultures _____ 10	Jacobot Op. and Maintenance ... 13
Endurance (6) Macho _____ +0	Dexterity (14) Skill Base _____ 3 Laser Weapons _____ 6 Projectile Weapons _____ 8 Mechanical (19) Skill Base _____ 5 Habitat Engineering _____ 14	Power (14)	
Agility (6) Skill Base _____ 1 Unarmed _____ 2			

Personal Equipment

Personal Equipment/Trade Goods
Laser pistol with Indigo barrel painted white (Ultraviolet)
Vial of white touch-up paint and fine-tip brush
Two meals of flavored cough lozenges
Binoculars (one lens missing)
16 spools of dental floss
Umbrella

Weapon	Skill Number	Type	Damage Rating	Range	Experimental?	Damage Status	Credits
Laser pistol	6	L	8	50	—		
Ice gun	8	P	8	50	yes		

Armor ArmorAll IV	Rating All4
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PC#6: Name Then: Harold-Y-MOD-2 Name Now: Harry Havoc	Former Service Group: HPD&MC	Security Clearance: Private: Yellow Public: Don't need one	Player Name: _____
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Attributes and Skills

Strength (14) Damage _____ +1 Carry _____ 35 kg Endurance _____ (14) Macho _____ +1	Chutzpah (18) Skill Base _____ 5 Bootlicking _____ 10 Motivation _____ 12 Oratory _____ 10	Mechanical (3) Skill Base Moxie (14) Skill Base _____ 3 Biochemical Therapy _____ 5 Demolition _____ 10 Security _____ 9 Stealth _____ 4	
Agility (9) Skill Base _____ 2 Unarmed _____ 4	Dexterity (10) Skill Base _____ 2 Field Weapons _____ 8 Laser Weapons _____ 6	Power _____ (16)	

Personal Equipment

Laser pistol with Indigo barrel painted white (Ultraviolet)
Vial of white touch-up paint and fine-tip brush
Two meals of Faithful Surprise (vanilla flavor)
Infrared goggles (functional, sorta, off and on)
20 meters plasticord
Can of black spray paint
Camera (no film)

Weapon	Skill Number	Type	Damage Rating	Range	Experimental?	Damage Status	Credits
Laser	6	L	8	50	—		
Hand Flamer	6	F	10	40	yes		

Armor Armor All IV	Rating All 4
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PC#4: Ira-I-TNT-2**Society:** Formerly PURGE**Society Rank:** Formerly 27th degree (Brigadier General); currently none**Mutant Power(s):**

Empathy

Sleeper? No**Troubleshooter Team:** Team 44**Loyalties:**

To Team 44.



Background: As a secret Brigadier General of PURGE, you commanded thousands in plots to overthrow The Computer. But they always failed. And then, while you were meditating your next campaign, The Computer crashed anyway! Bloody hell!

The whole organization disintegrated, and so did your resources. You don't let on now about your old rank, since some nutbar ex-PURGER might blame you for the society's breakup. You lost your Armed Forces position after the Crash, too, when all the Vulture Squadrons declared war on each other and Happiness Officers became obsolete. So you fell in with this bunch of Troubleshooters to pay the bills. They're a sound bunch, though they try to take credit for your masterful annihilation of 44 High Programmers just after the Crash. Your Food-Vat-ambush scheme disposed of those de-

tested servants of The Computer handily. True, these others did the actual scutwork of disposing of the Ultravioletes, but you designed the plan they followed. Credit where credit is due.

Roleplaying Notes: You're stern, even angry at having your fondest dreams realized when The Computer crashed. You don't talk much, except to outline a plan or deliver tirades against The Computer's injustice (a dead issue now). You can use your grouchy mood to conceal a heart of gold (or at least gold plate), or you can be mean right to the core, as you prefer.

It's all right to tell your fellow Troubleshooters about your PURGE background, but you don't like discussing it with strangers. However, you prefer evasion or enigmatic responses over outright denials of your past.

PC#5: Orville-R-SHY-2**Secret Society:** Romantics**Secret Society Rank:** 1st degree**Mutant Power(s):**

Polymorphism

Sleeper? No**Troubleshooter Team:** Team 44**Loyalties:**

To Team 44 and to Romantics.



Background: You watched your flashy colleagues in Research & Design grab all the glory with their pocket disintegrators and nasally-fired flamethrowers, while you toiled away quietly fine-tuning the designs for lithium-bromide-coolant 12,000 BTU high-discharge carbon-filtered flybot cabin air conditioners. Well, that was the way you wanted it. You liked withdrawing to the background, maybe even turning yourself into a rug or file cabinet. Then you could dream of the exciting old days of Sopwith Camels (primitive flybots, often piloted by small black-and-white dogs), nuclear arms races, and the mysterious "roller derby." But now, since The Computer crashed, you have a chance to recreate those days yourself... if you can find the nerve. So you've joined up with a likable bunch of Troubleshooters to face danger and excitement. You started with a massacre of 44

Ultravioletes, all by yourself! Well, the others helped, but you locked the Food Vat doors behind the victims so they couldn't escape. Credit where credit is due.

Roleplaying Notes: You're painfully shy, but try hard to overcome it. Now that The Computer's hormone suppressants have worn off, you've fallen in unrequited love a dozen times — most recently with a fellow Troubleshooter of the opposite gender, Amelia-R-HRT-2. Every time this person speaks, it's hard not to sigh with longing. Maybe a few tokens of admiration, delivered in secret, would soften this clone toward you.

What if someone else became a rival for your affection? Gasp! That's happened before, but this time you won't take it! You'll — you'll — well, you'll try something. Preferably non-confrontational, but you'll try something.

PC#6: Harry Havoc**Secret Society:** Death Leopard**Secret Society Rank:** 3rd degree (Lieutenant)**Mutant Power(s):**

Pyrokinesis

Sleeper? No**Troubleshooter Team:** Team 44**Loyalties:**

To Team 44 and to Death Leopards.



Background: This is keen. As a Troubleshooter you pick your own jobs, go where you want, blow up anyone in your way who doesn't blow you up first, and have fun. Of course, everything's fun for you all the time, nowadayscycles.

You fool around with this great crew of fellow Troubleshooters. You met them during your post-Crash slaughter of four dozen High Programmers. Well, these guys say they did it, but you were the one who used the dynamite to finish off the whole bunch. Hahaha! Credit where credit is due; besides, arguing is fun too.

Roleplaying Notes: You make no secret of your Death Leopard background; since the Crash, they've gotten more respect as informal police patrols. You

like Death Leopard-style chaos and destruction well enough — you go by your Leopard handle now instead of your old name (Harold-Y-MOD-2) — but since the Crash you've pretty much had your fill of chaos. Besides, you're permanently "on" now anyway; you don't need to blow up a refinery just for chuckles.

Now you're more interested in the chaotic relationships that showed up in Alpha Complex after everyone's hormone suppressants wore off. Your latest curiosity of this kind involves a fellow Troubleshooter of the opposite gender — Amelia-R-HRT-2. You're teammates, sure, but why not something more, huh, chicky-baby, huh, sweetums? Gather ye merchandise while ye may ...

Oh, yeah! Grandpa Innocent loved Elizabeth-R. If he thinks the Troubleshooters did her in, he's probably ready to turn them into pancakes, right?

The steamroller barrels toward you. Anybody staying in its path? If so, you die. Let me know now. I thought not.

Hard to believe a 10-ton steamroller can move so fast that it would skid to a halt, but it does, right beside you. Grandpa Innocent says, "Climb on board, fellers, the train's leavin'!" The jackobot waves for you to get on.

Grandpa saw the whole thing, and he knows the Troubleshooters aren't guilty. He conveniently forgets to mention this, so the Troubleshooters may well suspect a trap. Maybe they don't get on. Maybe they stay and get ripped to pieces by the ravaging mob. We *Paranoia* designers have a duty to dangle these opportunities for suicide. (Note that the Societies still want to kill the clone successors to deceased Troubleshooters, on the familiar grounds of guilt by heredity.)

The sane Troubleshooters who climb aboard get to kick a few rabid Society delegates in the face as they grab as the mob tries to drag them off the vehicle. The jackobot guns the steamroller's flywheel, the huge rollers skid and grab the floor, and, with a great lurch, they're on their way!

Let the Troubleshooters shoot a few attackers as they trundle down the

IntSec hallways and out into the wide corridors of Alpha Complex. Maybe they even want to pilot the thing so as to roll over a few intervening society delegates and their vehicles. Let them. As they say in Alpha, "You only go around six times in life, so grab all the gusto you can."

The beauty of this arrangement is that the Troubleshooters think that Grandpa Innocent arranged the steamroller escape. Grandpa thinks they arranged it, but if they ask him about it, he'll shamelessly take the credit for the escape. All the while, the players probably never suspect the jackobot did the deed.

Say, what about that jackobot, anyway? Kind of peculiar behavior for a bot, right?

Right. Keep reading.

Let Them Deny It. Go Ahead.

"We didn't kill Elizabeth-R. We had nothing to do with it. The check is in the mail. I'll still respect you in the morning. He was dead when I got there!"

Should the Troubleshooters decide to stick around, face justice, and rely on the evidence to clear their names — well, gee, they haven't been playing *Paranoia* long, have they?

The trick here is to let the Troubleshooters see that their feeble mealy-mouthed denials will avail them nought, but not to do this by getting

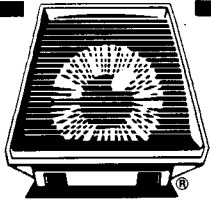
them lynched, burned, and quartered by angry mobs. How to do this?

First, the rabid Society thugs grab them. Ignoring anything the Troubleshooters say, the thugs tie them up. The thugs haul one Troubleshooter off into the darkness; pick one at random, or use the one who gets on your nerves most. The other Troubleshooters hear horrible screams from the darkness. Tell that player his Troubleshooter's new clone should show up sometime soon.

About now the Troubleshooters are probably deciding they've made the wrong choice. So when the jackobot sneaks up on silent treads behind them, its tiny razor-wheel attachment gently whirring, and cuts their ropes ... well, even a Troubleshooter should get the idea to escape.

Give them a couple of guards to beat up: dullards from PURGE who are too dumb to realize their Society's purpose is gone, or slope-browed Pro Techs distracted by their heated argument over which bot operating system is superior. Or make the guards members of the Secret Society that has most annoyed the Troubleshooters. When they beat up these guards, regain their weapons and equipment, and take it on the lam, the Troubleshooters should feel a little more upbeat after their stupid surrender.

That's when you can really hose them in the next episode!



Episode Three: The Anabasis With Lasers

Summary

Remember Xenophon? Greek gentleman who tagged along to observe a battle against Persia, 401 BC? Remember how treachery killed the Greek commander, Cyrus, and stranded Xenophon and 10,000 soldiers 1500 miles inside enemy territory? And how Xenophon took command and, over the next two years, led them on a march back home to Athens, fighting every step of the way? Xenophon chronicled this epic journey in his *Anabasis* ("The March Up Country"), and it remains an instance of unexamined heroism to this day.

Well, forget all that. In *Paranoia*, heroism is bunk.

Framed for a murder they (for once) didn't commit, the Troubleshooters evade or battle agents of many Societies on their way back to their home territory. Or to a hideout. Or somewhere.

Wherever they head, it's probably the wrong place. The Troubleshooters get caught. They volunteer, in the traditional Alpha Complex fashion ("Volunteer or I'll kill you"), to find the evidence to clear their names. By the end of this episode, their names need more clearing than Los Angeles in an Air Quality Alert.

Running the Gauntlet Back Home

"So," say the Troubleshooters, "we'll jump in our autocar (transbot/jackobot's steamroller/other vehicle) and race back home (to another safe location/Outside), where we hide out until all this blows over. Arrivederci, Society delegations!"

Yeah, right. Why won't this work?

A. The vehicle soon breaks down. See the end of episode one for a refresher course in ways to foil the Troubleshooters' ambitions.

B. The Societies have put out the word ahead of the Troubleshooters. Alpha Simplexes that gave no trouble to the Troubleshooters on the way in now become hostile territory. This episode outlines a few of the possible ambushes and altercations that befall the fleeing Troubleshooters.

Grandpa and the Jackobot

Sounds like a TV sitcom, doesn't it?

Grandpa Innocent's Role From Now On: Grandpa worked primarily to get the Troubleshooters into the adventure. They're there. Now he works best as a gamemaster mouthpiece and troublemaker.

Grandpa knows most of Alpha Complex; he can guide the Troubleshooters around events you'd rather not handle at the moment, like Vulture Squadron patrols and bands of Infrared muggers. These menaces rove all over the post-Crash Complex, but they don't relate to the immediate scenario: assaults from vengeful Society delegations.

As for troublemaking, Grandpa frequently flashes back to the Commie Uprising of Ought-Four. This means he not only guides the Troubleshooters around danger, he can lead them straight into it, or complicate a situation that threatens to become stable.

The Jackobot's Role: You really want to keep this bot intact. Grandpa can theorize that the bot may have recorded the Troubleshooters' activities during Elizabeth-R's assassination; if so, this clears the Troubleshooters of her murder! And, of course, the jackobot probably saved their bacon at the end of the last episode. Too bad it still doesn't talk.

The jackobot can be a help in other ways during the subsequent encounters, as you desire. For example, it could gesture meaningfully toward escape routes. Improvise according to

circumstance. Drop as many hints as necessary that this is a useful bot, and the Troubleshooters should keep the thing around. That said, here are two encounters the Troubleshooters may have on their route home, or wherever they plan to run to:

Ambush One: Parade Balloons

Describe the breakdown of the Troubleshooters' vehicle(s), then read this aloud:

This section of the Complex must have crashed harder than most. High mounds of garbage block most passageways, so you have to thread your way down side passages and through ruined rooms. You try not to think that the obstacles may be there on purpose.

Finally you come to a dead end passage in what must be a warehouse district. What a filthy, smelly place! There are big sliding aluminum doors on either side of you. The ceiling is quite high, with a ventilation grate about five meters overhead.

You hear running and shouting behind you. "They went this way! Murder the murderers!"

This is an ambush. The people making all the noise are half a dozen Humanists with orange lasers and a few concussion grenades. They try to look menacing in order to chase the Troubleshooters into the ventilation duct or the warehouses. If the Troubleshooters stand their ground, exposed as it is, the Humanists dive for cover and try to block the exit. But unusually brave Troubleshooters can probably shoot their way to safety.

Really, do you think they'll do that?

Ducking Through the Ducts

Anyone who can reach the ceiling (a three-Troubleshooters-high pyramid,



Attack of the 50-foot Teela-O.

maybe?) can pull off the ventilation grate. The air duct above, a shiny square aluminum tunnel, is just wide enough for the Troubleshooters to crawl along in single file. About three meters along in either direction, it bends 90 degrees to the right. Five meters beyond that, it bends again ...

... right into the waiting ambushers. There are two types; choose one.

Marksman: A slow-witted clone named Markie-R-KEY-3, a loyal Romantic with a violet laser rifle and skill of 10, crouching behind a durasteel shield (All4 protection).

Weapon skill checks in the narrow duct are easy (x2 skill) for both sides. Troubleshooters can fire past fellow Troubleshooters in front of them — but for each one between a Troubleshooter and the target, the difficulty increases one level (easy to average to hard, and so on). A failed roll means a certain hit — on an intervening Troubleshooter of your choice. And you first-edition *Paranoia* gamemasters, no need to roll for hit location either, if you know what we mean. Ouch!

Markie-R saw in Elizabeth-R a heroic leader, the heiress to great female leaders of Old Reckoning history — Joan of Arc! Susan B. Anthony and her partner, Cleopatra! Carrie Nation!

Markie-R weeps at Elizabeth-R's tragic death. His weeping may alert Troubleshooters before they actually face his withering laser fire.

If they still blunder into the trap, they can plead their innocence, perhaps by playing on his grief. "We loved Elizabeth-R as much as you, Markie-R," they'd say, letting a sob creep into their voices. "We're sure she's looking down on us now in this shaft, hoping you'll show the understanding she knew you possess — the mercy that will send us forth to find her true killer ..." Maybe you should have a cassette of sweet violin music ready to play when the players start talking.

Bomb-bot: This one is fun — a strange cubical bot-like machine that exactly fills the duct. It rumbles along on rubber treads toward the Troubleshooters, making loud beeps and pointing things like tiny radar dishes.

This is no bot, but a Corpore Metal-designed booby trap, a bomb on treads. If a Troubleshooter shoots it, the bomb detonates (column 15 on the damage table for anyone in that stretch of the duct). You can give Precognitive, Mechanically Intuitive, or Machine-Emphatic mutant Troubleshooters clues to the trap, or allow appropriate skill rolls (Demolitions, Bot Operations) to

identify it. But give the players a chance to fire before you call for skill rolls; why restrain their natural exuberance?

Through the Doors

Both sliding aluminum doors reach to the ceiling. Both are locked, but easy to shoot through or pick. Both lead to exactly the same place, so you can give the Troubleshooters an illusion of choice without having to worry about the choice. (Gamemaster, the guiding principle in such cases is to make the choice a big deal. "Are you absolutely sure you want to take the right door? Not the left? Let me make sure before we go on.")

Inside: In this dark, silent, high-ceilinged, dusty, crowded, anyone-could-hide-anywhere warehouse, huge plastic cylinders loom like grain silos. Their labels read "BLN 45-A/DF TOM," or other incomprehensible code numbers. Remarkably, these labels describe the contents accurately, if in abbreviated form: "Balloon 45-A, deflated." That would be the 18-meter inflatable Teela-O-MLY.

That's right: parade balloons. They're self-inflating. Just open the cylinder or laser it or turn it to plasma, and the balloon inside just gooshes out, *fwssshhhhh!* Time to complete inflation: 0.74 seconds. Really makes things convenient at the semi-monthly Loyalty Day Parades. Oh, wait, they don't have those any more, do they? No wonder this place looks so dusty.

Other balloons include giant rubber monitors, food vats, smiling Internal Security troops, and similar icons of pre-MegaWhoops Alpha Complex.

The Ambush: The Troubleshooters should discover these items the hard way, when the 15 ambushers hiding behind the cylinders start firing at them with high-tech (and high-wreck, i.e., erratic) experimental weapons. Ultrasonic cone rifle shells, extensible neuron whips, and the new Black Hole Grenades hurtle toward the Troubleshooters, while the attackers hurl epithets like "Remember Elizabeth-R!" and "It was duh Troubleshooters!"

Maybe you'll let the Troubleshooters talk their way out of the ambush. What a wasted opportunity.

Can't you just picture the first shots being fired ... the cylinders rupturing ... the horror on the faces of all concerned as, from those plastic tubes, rising like dread Cthulhu from sunken R'lyeh, there appears — a giant rubber Computer! A giant rubber Bouncy Bubble Beverage bottle! Twenty-five giant rubber Vulture Squadron goons, Green clearance! Boy, we wanna be there to see it.

And hear it. When the combatants on both sides target the balloons and blow them to bits, the gas inside rushes out and fills the warehouse. Yes, it's helium. Yes, it makes everyone's voice squeaky like cartoon ducks. That's when both sides should hurl their most obnoxious threats and insults. Have everyone talk in the highest voice they can manage.

When your vocal cords get tired, a collapsing balloon finally sinks heavily onto one side's troops. If you want to capture the Troubleshooters now, drop a giant Teela on them. If you want to wait, drop the balloon on the ambushers, and let the Troubleshooters escape to their next hosing.

Ambush Two: Hot Springs

It's not that you've made a wrong turn, but that most of the corridors are blocked. You tried the subway tunnels, and they're filled with new debris. You thought about crawling through the air-ducts, but that's hardly ever a good idea. So you've struggled along past deserted barricades — through hallways where the ceilings collapsed, and wiring hung down in hopeless tangles. When you walked carefully down a corridor with walls painted white — all together now, "Oooooohhh!" — you wound up here.

First you see dirty white tile around an open pool of water. The water is brown and filled with junk, but the pool is lit from below, and you instantly think, "Nuclear reactor." But no — this is a steam-room, or reservoir, or something, a rectangle no more than 10 meters long and five wide. You see a small open closet labeled "TOWELS," filled with dusty stacks of white towels. There are plastic linen hampers full of dirty towels.

Gee, you think maybe the Troubleshooters can figure out that this was a sauna? Yes, the olden-day High Programmers visited here to bathe, politic, and sweat off the kilograms. Hot water, outflow from reactor coolant chambers in a distant sector, flows here through an intricate pipe network. In their time, Sierra Clubbers among the Ultraviolets also raised goldfish from Outside in the sauna's open pool.

The debris in the pool (broken tiles, ragged towels, empty food containers dumped by sloppy Ultraviolets, and the like) conceals the water beneath. Should a Troubleshooter venture into that water, go to the section below called (here we go tipping our hand) "Goldfish Attack."

If they stay out of the water but poke around in it, alert Troubleshooters can find a few telltale clues: Sierra Club memorabilia, such as Woodsy Owl badges and Earth Day 1990 decals; and empty plastic cans of goldfish food (their Old Reckoning labels, full of unfamiliar words like "fish" and "protein," may puzzle the Troubleshooters).

The closet holds a couple of bottles of liquid laundry soap and 50 or 60 towels. Laundry soap is worth its weight in alersatz. The towels are fluffy polyester, flag-sized, and worth maybe two or three meals apiece on the open

market. That sure is a lot of wealth to be left intact, isn't it? The Crash, with its multifarious disasters, sealed off this area from later scroungers. But then — how have the Troubleshooters found it? Who cleared out the barriers?

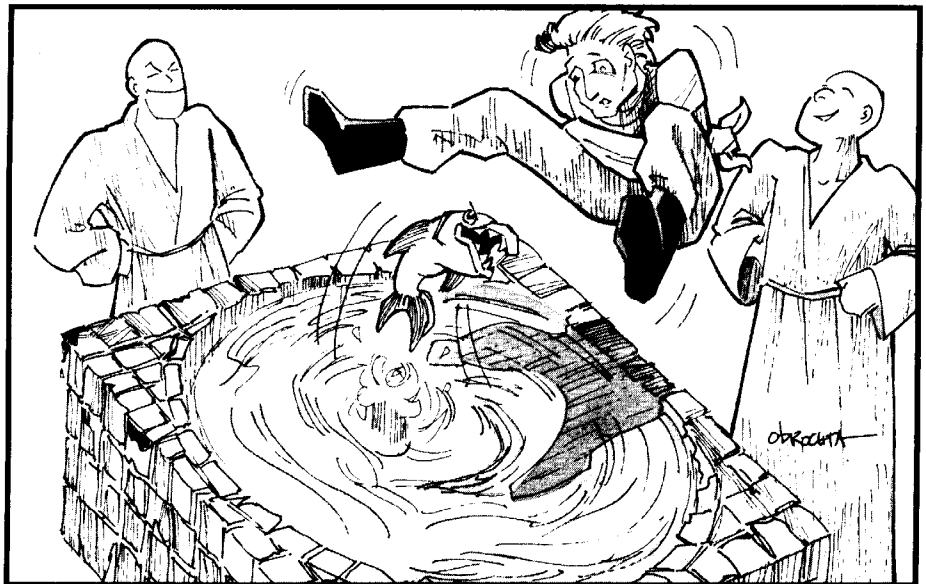
Psion, That's Who

As you're looking around, you hear a sudden ZAT sound from each corner of the room. There stand tall, noble-looking men and women with bald pates and piercing eyes. They wear white robes. They carry no weapons, but one holds a pair of binoculars.

One of the men announces, in an echoing voice, "You have extinguished one of the brightest lights of the new order of humanity, Elizabeth-R. Though we tolerate your lesser species while you remain docile, we have a duty to remove troublesome and dangerous members of the herd. Fellow Psions, you may attack when ready."

Do you think these Psions listen to the Troubleshooters' whining denials? Do hammermen at the slaughterhouse listen to the bleats of cattle? Do linebackers listen to the cries of quarterbacks? Do IRS agents listen to the anguish of the audited?

There's one Psion for each Troubleshooter, plus one who doesn't attack: Edward-R-MRO-4, who is telepathically relaying the whole scene to Psion



Radioactive mutant goldfish are your friends...

members across the Complex. Edward-R carries binoculars for close-up shots, and he occasionally crosses his eyes for a split-screen effect. The other Psions refer to him by his "brain name," or telepathic identity code, of Senso. The other Psions use brain names like Ego, Mento, Brainwipe, Gamma-Wave, and similar comic-booky stuff.

Stats: The Psions have any mutant powers you want, and Power abilities of at least 15. They wear white reflex armor (L4 vs. all laser attacks), and their Energy Field power works like All3 armor.

Tactics: Two Psions at opposite corners of the sauna, call them Ego and Mento, telekinetically pick up two Troubleshooters and hurl them together (a 6I attack on the Damage Table). They let stunned Troubleshooters fall into the pool below.

Another Psion, by power of mind alone, hurls the liquid soap across the floor, where any Troubleshooter who moves must make an Agility check to stay upright. Psions simply levitate over the soap.

The remaining Psions gesture at the towel closet, and suddenly dozens of white polyester towels attack the Troubleshooters! With a successful Power check, each Psion wraps a Troubleshooter head-to-toe, like those Hollywood stars who go to "body wrap" clinics — you know, to steam themselves comatose and drive all the fluid out of their tissues so they look thinner? (And you know our descendants will regard that as barbarism on a level with the vomitoria of the later Roman Empire, but we've gotten off the subject.)

Wrapped Troubleshooters can struggle out of the towels with a difficult Strength or Agility check, and can act as soon as they do. But if they fail, *splooosh!* Into the pool.

Lots of folks in the pool now. What could possibly happen to them there?

Goldfish Attack

We hardly have to tell you that the goldfish that lived in the sauna pool are still alive; and, yes, the reactor water has mutated them.

(What do you mean, "What have they lived on since the Crash?" Does

anyone ask what Godzilla eats between his stomps through Tokyo? Plot-device movie-monster mutations don't have to eat, except when Troubleshooters come along.)

The problem isn't that the goldfish are now roughly twice the size of your average Troubleshooter. Nor is it the fact that they've developed rows and rows of extremely sharp teeth, the better to shred you with, my dear. It's not even that if one of these fish fails to bite you, it might leap out of the water and land on top of you (and if you've never been pinned to the bottom of a long-unused sauna by a few hundred pounds of mutant goldfish — take it from us, it isn't fun). No, the real problem is that goldfish have inherently nasty dispositions. Oh, sure, when they're tiny and swimming around in a tank, they seem peaceful, friendly and calm. How else are they going to act? When you're that size, there aren't many people you can afford to annoy!

Now that the size problem is a thing of the past, these goldfish are letting it all hang out. No more swimming through little castles and around and about tiny divers for them — they're taking control of their own destiny. If they had feet, they'd probably be running Alpha Complex by now.

You'll find the radioactive mutant goldfish stats on "The Everything Sheet." Note that the fish take a three-column penalty vs. energy attacks.

Sweating It Out

If the Troubleshooters survive the pool, finish the battle according to your choice of these plans:

1. The Psions, obviously a superior force, turn everyone's brains to jelly. Activate new clones.

2. In the traditional style of overconfident bad guys, the Psions teleport away, believing the Troubleshooters to be fish food for sure.

3. From the pool the Troubleshooters actually get clear shots at the Psions, perhaps from surprise. They might even exploit the towels, the soap, junk from the pool, and dead goldfish in some clever way to defeat the Psions. ("We're piling up towels, setting them afire with our lasers, and escaping in the



We didn't do it! It wasn't us! Really!

smoke." "Sounds good to me.")

Monty Haul Warning

By the way, make sure a pyrokinetic Psion (or Troubleshooter) burns up most of the towels. No sense letting the Troubleshooters plunder so much wealth at once. (Kind of like letting first-level fantasy types find 100,000 gold pieces on their first time down in the dungeon.)

Encounter One: Getting Caught

The Troubleshooters get caught.

Of course, you'll eventually get around to capturing the Troubleshooters. This leads smoothly to encounter two below, where the captors force the Troubleshooters to find evidence of their innocence. That leads smoothly to the climactic showdown in episode four with — oops, we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Certainly the previous sections are rife, not to say rotten, with opportunities for the pursuing mobs to capture the Troubleshooters. The Troubleshooters take a little extra time in (say) the warehouse — bam! They're caught.

But if the clever Troubleshooters evade all these traps, reward their resourcefulness with the following dead-end; this keeps them from getting cocky. Read this aloud when the Trouble-

shooters settle into their foolproof hiding place:

Safe at last! No one can find you here! Now, finally, you can stretch, relax, heal, and make plans.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

Boy, that sounded like a knock outside.

But nobody knows you're here, do they? Do you answer the knock?

(Keep knocking until they do. If they never do, the person knocking sticks her head inside and spots them; or the lack of response arouses her suspicions, which she reports to nearby searchers.)

At the door you look out — and then down, for the person knocking is a small girl, perhaps six yearcycles old, with thin blonde hair and a dirty face. She looks up at you with big blue eyes over a cute upturned nose, and she holds out a plastic bag filled with boxes. She says meekly, "Would you like to buy some ball bearings? Only one bag of algae chips."

Kids who are down on their luck in Alpha Complex (and there are a lot of them) sometimes earn food by scavenging deserted supply depots for whatever they can carry, then selling it door-to-door. The objects are seldom useful, but the kids rely on pity as much as utility.

Handling the Intrusion: We would never encourage your Troubleshooters to blast this poor homeless waif into smithereens. But if they do this, the blast alerts onrushing pursuers.

If the Troubleshooters placidly purchase a few ball bearings, she toddles down the corridor, runs into the pursuers, and chatters about what nice people those Troubleshooters were; her tattling uncovers the Troubleshooters.

If the Troubleshooters pull the kid into the hiding place and bottle her up, the other kids in her gang soon miss her, look for her, don't find her, and raise the alarm; the search uncovers the Troubleshooters.

We hardly need to list more ways to hose your players; you're plenty good at devising these yourself. Just make sure the Troubleshooters quickly get

bagged. Or if they die fighting, their clone replacements get delivered by pneumatic tube right into waiting laserproof cages. Then go on to the next encounter.

Encounter Two: Proving Their Innocence

The Troubleshooters try to ... well, you get the idea by now.

Transcript of Proceedings — Preliminary Hearing

In the SECOND CIRCUIT COURT OF DEATH LEOPARD JUSTICE, Temporary Quarters (formerly FBI Sector HPD&MC Consolidated Vending Machine Repair Warehouse), Threeday Weekcycle 2 Monthcycle 4 Post-Crash Yearcycle 1

ULTIMATE BEAST Clay-G-FIX-6, aka "Total Wipeout," presiding

CASE NO. 1/4/2/3/18/P, THE PEOPLE vs. SIX TROUBLESHOOTERS

For the prosecution: Gordon-G-LDY-4, HPD&MC, FCCCP

For the defense: the accused

His Honor: Okay, reporterbot's on. Whadda we got here?

Prosecutor: Judge Wipeout, this bunch of goons slaughtered one Elizabeth-R, true identity still undetermined, in cold blood with a plasma generator.

The Accused: We did not!

His Honor: Sounds neat. What's the evidence?

Prosecutor: This videotape of the murder, recorded by a Pro Tech Society delegate on his wrist VCR. Look, Judge, that's the victim on that dais, and there's the screen behind her. You can't quite make out the accused shooting the generator, but you can see it in close-up on that screen. And there she's exploding.

His Honor: Hmm. "Instant Replay." Nice touch. So, Troubleshooters, whatta you got to say for yourselves?

The Accused (in chorus): We didn't do it! We didn't do it! We didn't do it! We didn't do it! We didn't do it!

His Honor: Got any evidence? Otherwise I'm gonna pop you in the vat until we can pull together a trial.

The Accused (in three-part har-

mony): We don't have any plasma generator! This guy, Grandpa Innocent, he'll swear we were nowhere near Elizabeth-R! This jackobot can alibi us! Anyway, we're not all on trial here, are we?

Prosecutor: Judge, you know as well as I do about guilt by association. If one did it, they all helped. As for their other little quibbles, we found a plasma generator under the podium, covered with fire-extinguishing foam. They must have dumped it there. Grandpa Innocent-MAN-1 is a notorious senile coot who just now thinks he's fighting in the Commie Uprising of Ought-Four. And if the jackobot can clear you, why doesn't it say something?

The Accused: It's broken.

His Honor: Well, I'll tell ya. Ordinarily I'd have to remand you — that's the word, right? Remand? — into custody. But we're still putting together the custody department, and the jail just got blown up when we locked up a Pro Techer who had an explosive tooth.

And I gotta say, that "Instant Replay" is a really juicy bit, super-hero level stuff. I like you jerks, so I'm gonna free you to get this jackobot fixed so it can testify. Right?

The Accused: Thank you.

His Honor: But I'm gonna have your skulls wired with bail bombs to make sure you don't skip. Hearing continued 'til exactly one daycycle from right now. Next case!

Bail Bombs

Remember those cheesy 1960's spy dramas where the bad guys coerced the hero to obey them by surgically implanting a remote-control bomb in his skull? They kept tabs on him all the time; as soon as he tried to foil the mission, boom!

Can you believe no *Paranoia* product has ever done anything like that? Talk about a missed bet! So guess what, this adventure breaks new ground in *Paranoia* head-bombs.

(Editor's Note: Uh, Mr. Designer, that's not quite right. In *HIL Sector Blues*, all the Troubleshooters wear helmet bombs.)



(Well, helmet bombs, that's lots different, isn't it? Not surgically implanted. Besides, you can't prove I ever read HIL Sector Blues.)

(Editor's Note: And we also did head-bombs in —)

(All right, all right, never mind! Forget I said anything.)

About Bail Bombs: The criminal justice system is, to use a polite phrase, still evolving. Since prisons are in even shorter supply than food and clean underwear, law enforcement officials surgically implant a small TNT bomb on the left temple of an accused felon awaiting trial.

The bomb is a small steel hemisphere, a couple of centimeters in diameter and one centimeter deep, bolted into the skull with formidable-looking steel bolts. Occasionally the bomb rattles, or it may suddenly tick for a few seconds. This does no good for the wearer's composure, but it usually turns out to be a false alarm.

Just as, in our judicial system, bail money increases according to the severity of the offense, so the post-Crash bail bomb increases in explosive force as the felony grows more serious. For grand larceny, such as the theft of an autocar, a typical bail bomb holds a quarter-ounce of TNT; you could conceivably survive it. For murder, kidnapping, and crimes of that magnitude, the bomb uses a couple of ounces of explosive.

For slaughtering the charismatic leader who was to unite all the Secret Societies, then fleeing the scene and offending a few more Secret Societies

along the way, and compounding the crime with miscellaneous property damage and the other things Troubleshooters usually do, the bail bombs use a good solid quarter pound of high-grade TNT. This discourages others from frequenting the accused felon's company.

Clones and Bombs: According to the well-known Alpha Complex assumption of guilt by association, all the accused's clone relations are surprised when the law hauls them in off their desk jobs, briefs them on what happened to their errant sibling, and installs bail bombs on them as well.

Getting Rid of Bombs: The optimum way to dispose of a bomb (besides setting it off) is to show up where the law requires you to at the appointed time. In the Troubleshooters' case, that's one daycycle from now when the preliminary hearing resumes.

The bailiff or, if the bailiff forgets to show up, whoever's willing removes the accused felon's bomb and covers the holes with an aesthetically pleasing flesh-colored bandage.

Setting Off Bombs: The usual accidents do this — sudden impacts, electrocution, direct hits on the bomb with a BB or soda straw, and so on. Also, any attempt to tamper with or remove the bomb is 100 percent success-proof and results in instant detonation.

All bail bombs carry a photosensitive switch. That is, whenever the perpetrator goes Outside and the bomb's photocell detects full sunlight ... well, the fleeing felon leaves his

heart with Alpha Complex. Maybe his lungs and spine, too.

But this isn't the main detonation method. For that, the system relies on what may be called "peer pressure."

Networked Bail Bombs: Tracking a remote-control bomb all over the Complex, that's a steep technical challenge. Since post-Crash judicial technology still falls short of that, the law handles groups of felons, such as Troubleshooters, differently.

Each Troubleshooter gets a hand-held console about the size of a pocket calculator. The console has a button for each other Troubleshooter's bomb. Just touch the button, and the other bomb begins beeping loudly; the victim has a few seconds to take some final action, such as (say) pushing all the buttons on his or her own console. Range of the console is 150 kilometers.

This technique has proven breathtakingly effective in providing felon groups with a common goal. Each Troubleshooter polices the others with uncommon diligence, ensuring that they remain on the straight and narrow. Each Troubleshooter treats the others with atypical civility — at least until one fails to, at which point their problems all (usually) go away.

Every Troubleshooter holds the lives of the others in his or her hands. Every Troubleshooter watches the rest with alert suspicion. Every Troubleshooter plots to steal or disable the consoles of all the others.

The Computer's gone, but it's still *Paranoia*.



Episode Four: Manual Transmission

Summary

So all the Troubleshooters need to clear their name is the evidence from the jackobot who's been following them around all through the adventure.

All they need to do is make it talk.

All they need to do that is to find the instructions that tell them how to make it talk.

Heh, heh, heh ...

Encounter One: Where's the Card Catalog?

The Troubleshooters figure out what they need to repair the jackobot. This section lists the possible sources they might consult, and the ways these sources can hose them.

First, Troubleshooters can't repair the jackobot themselves. A label over all the maintenance ports reads, "WARNING: INTERIOR SECURED BY EXPLOSIVE DEVICE. Authorized Service only. To disarm protection, consult manual."

This label tells the truth. If a Troubleshooter tries to open the port, the jackobot furiously waves him or her away. Another attempt produces a recorded message inside: "Warning! Do not attempt entry without disabling protection. This is no joke! For procedure, consult manual." Repeat this three or four times directly in the meddling player's face.

Persistent attempts to repair the bot result in an explosion on Column 12 of the Damage Table. Make a point of terminating the responsible Troubleshooter. However, the explosion doesn't destroy the jackobot completely; it only blows up the arms and treads. Now the surviving Troubleshooters have to haul the thing around until they can get it repaired.

Clues from the Jackobot

When the Troubleshooters start discussing their options, the jackobot points under its own treads. A small label on the bot's underside reads, "Service Manual Series JB347/7e BO683.35 3/5/7/94 IND." Any Troubleshooter with a Bot Operation and Maintenance skill recognizes this call number as the seventh edition of the series of manuals devoted to jackobot model 347, dating from Year 194 of The Computer and marked clearance Indigo.

Now, how to get one? Some possibilities:

Societies: Let's assume the Troubleshooters find a Society that doesn't want to kill them. Corpore Metal, Frankenstein Destroyers, and Pro Tech know the principle of booby-trapped bots; it's a rare but not unheard-of technique to secure bots working in dangerous locations (such as Elizabeth-R's Society delegates meeting). None of them know how to defeat the boobytrap.

Computer Phreaks and Free Enterprise both have routine datanet access (see below). Corpore Metal knows where all the bot manuals are kept. A Psion member of advanced rank might discern the location clairvoyantly. The Illuminati know everything, but they won't tell.

Conversely, if Frankenstein Destroyers or Humanists ask their Societies how to find a bot repair manual, they'd better have a great explanation or it's instant demotion.

Mutant Powers: Mechanical Intuition indicates that the problem lies in the bot's speaker system, but also that the bot is booby-trapped. It doesn't tell how to get past the booby trap; it hints that specific, technical help is called for.

X-Ray Vision shows a damaged speaker, a booby trap on the maintenance ports, and an undifferentiated mass of circuitry — the typical bot interior. Telepathy and Deep Probe don't help unless the Troubleshooters find someone who knows how to get past the booby trap, and nobody does. Nothing else helps.

Bureaucrats: Maybe you've seen the Cheese Shop sketch on the *Monty Python's Flying Circus* TV comedy series. A guy tries to buy cheese at a cheese shop; he names a variety, and the shopkeeper gives him a reason they don't have it in stock. "Edam?" "Don't get much call for it here, sir." After a few dozen requests, the customer finally discovers that the cheese shop has no cheese at all in stock, and he shoots the shopkeeper dead.

As soon as they visit PLC or HPD&MC, Troubleshooters discover that manual series JB347/7e is quite rare. That is, nobody's got it. "Don't get much call for it here, sir." They can shoot some clerks to blow off steam, but there's no other help here.

Grandpa Innocent: "Well, sir, I reckon I recall some durn fool thing like that manual. If only it warn't so hard t' recall, bein' as I'm hungry as all get out. Mebbe a coupla bags o' them there algae chips would help ... Thankee. Yep (munch, crunch), I seem t' recollect a liberry that'd do the trick. You know, a liberry, with books? Durn fool younguns. Pass me another one o' those, sonny."

Grandpa can guide the Troubleshooters right where they want to go, if you want him to. Go to "The Answer," below.

The Answer

The manual the Troubleshooters seek lies in the Depository of Venerated Truth. A sudden paradigm shift into

fantasy roleplaying games? No, this is an obscure FCCCCP group that sprang up after the Crash. It preserves manuals, printouts, and all other documents from The Computer's glorious reign.

The Depository's Location: Wherever you want it to be, of course. It could be near wherever the Troubleshooters are now. They might reach it without hassle, and without facing the perils of 14 intervening sectors of post-Crash Alpha, such as those described in the *Crash Course Manual*.

With **no need** to negotiate more transport at the Transportation Center.

With **no danger at all** from the PAY Sector toll scam, where you have to give up your most valuable possession in order to pass safely, and the adjacent sector routes are blocked with 200-liter drums of toxic waste.

Without **any** threat from a roving, sadistic teen gang called The Roleplayers, who want to extract the Troubleshooters' teeth and grind them into polyhedral dice.

Yes, the Troubleshooters might glide into the Depository of Venerated Truth with flippant ease, smiles on their lips and songs in their hearts, knowing that you, the gamemaster, will coddle them and satisfy their every whim and let them get away with murder.

It's all up to you.

Encounter Two: Got A Library Card?

Having located the manual, the Troubleshooters now try to purchase, purloin, extort, or copy it.

In the once-proud CPU Telemetry Monitoring Center and Document Storage Archives, down a narrow corridor blocked with bot chassis stacked in immaculate ceiling-high piles, lies the Depository of Venerated Truth. Here live 36 FCCCCP cenobites, or monks who belong to a religious community.

The Depository cenobites practice mortification through self-sufficiency — that is, they produce everything they need themselves, and this makes for a tough life. For instance, the Depository monks, relying on just one Food Vat, eat algae. Not algae chips, not processed algae synthebread, not even Hot Fun, but plain algae. Demonstrates

commitment to the cause, you know.

History and Activities

Before the Crash, the Depository (uh, the Document Storage Archives) held highly classified printouts of The Computer's source code, the program listings that governed The Computer's behavior. The Computer required paper printouts as backups in the event that its magnetic storage media crashed. That way, loyal servants could use the listings to reprogram The Computer.

That's just the way it happened — except that after the Crash and the Great CPU Turkey Shoot, precious few loyal servants remained who knew how to program. Meanwhile, the printouts were yellowing and in constant danger of Communist sabotage.

This aggravated David-I-OTT-2, loyal servant of The Computer and High Error Checker in his local FCCCCP parish. David-I received a vision after taking a faulty hormone suppressant: The Computer came to him with its holy plan for a monastery to protect its works. When he got out of intensive care, David-I converted his entire parish to the cause.

So what do they do there?

The Holy Regimen: Each monk spends 12 hours a daycycle maintaining the small Simplex's single Food Vat, its rickety fission reactor, or its complicated air refresher and waste recyclers. Another two hours go to cleaning the rooms and spartan furnishings. With two more hours devoted to prayer and meditation, and six for sleep, that leaves each monk two hours each daycycle for the Depository's main work: copying.

Remember, most of The Computer's printers don't work any more. By copying all the documents in the Depository, the monks protect them from final destruction and spread The Computer's glorious words — in many cases, words such as "1000011101111001." Yes, many pages of printout in the Depository hold nothing but a lengthy binary sequence. Since the printouts themselves are labelled in 1s and 0s as well, the monks of the Depository sometimes have no idea what they're copying.

Still, the holy chore continues. One

can imagine that after a few months of copying 1s and 0s, the Depository monks would regard a repair manual for jackobot model JB347 as a positive relief. They'd hardly think of letting it go.

Now Entering the Depository

So, amid widespread devastation in some deserted part of the Complex, the Troubleshooters find this Depository.

Read aloud:

This is a long, bare room with a high ceiling. Fluorescent lights buzz in panels overhead.

Rows of tall bookcases extend from the walls on both sides of the room. Each case holds shelves crammed with printouts and manuals. Every printout appears to be chained to its shelf with a long plastic-covered chain. There must be thousands of these chained books in here. Tens of thousands.

An inclined desk juts out from the bottom shelf on each case, just right for pulling down and studying the chained documents. A low steel bench stands in the alcove between each pair of shelves, so patrons can sit while they're using the desks.

Against the wall near you stands a row of high desks with tall stools. On every stool sits a person in robes, hunched over the desk. The very top of each person's head is shaved bald, but a fringe of fine hair hangs down around the bald spot. Everyone seems to be copying a printout by hand. They're writing nothing but a long string of 1s and 0s.

About the Monks: Abbot David-I-OTT and his six Brothers and Sisters are all tonsured (that is, their heads are shaved on top), and they wear robes of various security clearance colors. Their statistics are on "The Everything Sheet."

Note from the sheet that the monks carry shepherd's crooks. No, not really; these are boathook-like devices the monks use to sift the algae in the Food Vat. You can tell from the strands of algae hanging all over them.

Looking Around: This is fine. The Troubleshooters quickly discover that none of the bookcases are labeled with

file numbers or subject matter. In fact, the documents are not classified in any way; they once were, but after the Crash, rioters threw all the books off the shelves and mixed them up. The monks haven't been able to reclassify them.

Also, all the manuals and printouts are faced with the spines inward, out of sight. Since the chains are attached to the front edge of the book's front or back cover, this ensures that they don't damage other books.

However gentle it is on the books, this practice means that Troubleshooters can't possibly locate the manual they seek without searching every book on every shelf. They can't do this in time to make their hearing the next daycycle. They must seek the monks' help. Awwwww.

Making an Offering They Can't Refuse

Despite the Troubleshooters' superiority in arms, the monks won't give over the manual without "a token of their thanks" — i.e., loot. They're fanatics, right?

David-I used to be Indigo clearance, but he's not blind; he knows that's not worth much, post-Crashly speaking. He treats the Troubleshooters with the respect due any Troubleshooter wearing ArmorAll and carrying heavy weaponry.

So you are putting the Troubleshooters in the unlikely position of negotiating with an Indigo as relative equals. Do they bootlick? Intimidate him? Bribe him?

Boy, we wish we could give you solid all-purpose advice for handling the negotiations. If there's major demand, West End could publish a 32-page companion supplement to this adventure, *Negotiating with David-I in the Depository*. Pending that, here's a general grounding in David-I's goals; use these as guides to determine the effectiveness of a Troubleshooter's approach.

David-I's Goals: In addition to the usual FCCCP goals (reboot The Computer, annihilate heretics, etc.) David-I wants the following:

1. A Photocopier. They don't have

these in Alpha Complex, since The Computer regarded them as treasonous. (Viz. the modern Soviet Union, where until recently all mimeograph machines had to be licensed.) However, David-I has heard of a "Personal Photocopier" in a particular R&D lab; its location is up to you. If you feel like running an impromptu mini-adventure, David-I can require the Troubleshooters to bring him this copier in return for their manual. (**GM Note:** The personal copier in question fills a small room and requires four full-time trained maintenance engineers.)

Enterprising Troubleshooters might fabricate a fake copier, along the lines of the 17th-century chess-playing automatons that really carried a midget inside. "See, David-I? Put your document in this ordinary-looking man-sized plastic box, and four hours later, out pops a perfect copy! Don't mind that sneezing inside, that's just machinery."

2. More Documents for the Depository. One of the pregenerated Troubleshooters has a bot-therapy manual, but that's not enough. To find enough books, the Troubleshooters would have to scavenge an Ultraviolet's ruined library or find a supplier at the Open Transit Center.

3. More Monks in his Order. Who knows? Maybe a Troubleshooter will volunteer. Maybe a Troubleshooter's fellow Troubleshooters will volunteer him or her — an offbeat variant on standard finking techniques. Maybe the Troubleshooters know a way to lure hundreds of innocent bystanders to join a monastery.

Pregenerated-Troubleshooters Note: In the event your players are using the pregenerated characters included with this adventure (yeah, neat, aren't they? You're welcome), remember that this bunch of Troubleshooters got together via the group slaughter of four dozen High Programmers. Should David-I-OTT discover this, he is immensely offended and demands that "the person responsible" be handed over to him for holy justice.

This could be a cue for a firefight, or a bout of bald-faced lying, or the Troubleshooters might shamelessly

betray and turn over one of their own number. (Ah, nostalgia!)

Whatever they do, it works so long as it's entertaining. In recognition of their service, David-I gladly lets them examine the manual they need.

Service Manual Series JB347/7e BO683.35 3/5/7/94 IND

After all the trouble the Troubleshooters have gone to, we wish these manuals looked dramatic — like, say, eldritch Lovecraftian texts, bound in human skin and filled with arcane diagrams that force your Troubleshooters to make sanity rolls. Sadly, these are just thick softbound manuals. They're illustrated, but about as exciting as an Army technical treatise on the JK-34 Portable Sanitary Latrine.

Still, once the Troubleshooters find the manual series, it's short work to locate the volume on booby-traps; another 20 minutes to track down the specific trap they need to disarm; and about five minutes to speak the complex codes required to disable the bomb's sensors.

Then the Troubleshooters can finally open the bot. Once it's open, they can easily spot the speaker malfunction and, with a successful Jackobot Operations and Maintenance roll, repair it. If they all fail this roll, someone at their preliminary hearing can fix it — but it'll cost the Troubleshooters big barter.

Clean out everything they've accumulated so far.

Encounter Three: Now We Live Happily Ever After, Right?

Having obtained the manual and used it to repair the jackobot, the Troubleshooters launch themselves into deeper trouble than they can easily imagine.

Okay, the Troubleshooters have repaired the jackobot. Read:

The jackobot's speaker crackles. Then its robotic voice speaks, clear and quiet — an ordinary voice, but it sounds like the most beautiful voice you ever heard. "Thank you for repairing me, masters, even if you did only

do it so I could clear you of murder charges. No hard feelings. I did indeed make a recording that exonerates you."

Hurrah! The jackobot can converse with the Troubleshooters however long it takes to lull their suspicions. It says it has no name except JB347, its model number. It explains its boobytrap as a factory-installed security feature; Elizabeth-R asked specifically for bots so protected. Explaining its presence at the Society meeting, the jackobot claims Elizabeth-R assigned it there along with other bots in order to assemble the dais. Another bot accidentally hit its speaker grille, damaging it.

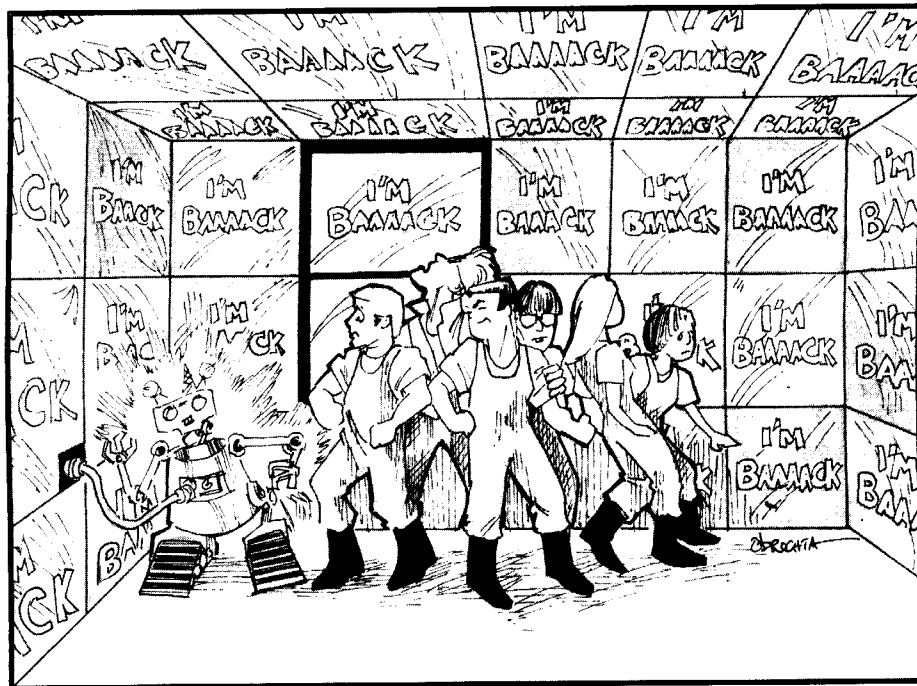
Shortly thereafter, the jackobot saw a plasma generator wired under the podium where Elizabeth-R stood, and it rushed to inform the Troubleshooters. All the time, it recorded its surroundings as part of its standard programming. This all squares with what the Troubleshooters saw and know.

The jackobot acts polite, but not so much as to arouse suspicion. It follows orders as though its asimov circuits were intact. When the Troubleshooters ask it to show the recording, it says, "That's what I've been trying to tell you all along. If only I'd been able to find a working dataport! Plug me into one so I can play back my record of those

Dataports

These are data transmission outlets located near data terminals and monitors. Specifically designed for bots, the outlets accept the standard interface plugs found on most sentient bots. Bots send and receive information electronically via these ports; formerly they talked with The Computer, but since the Crash they talk with each other. They display information on the monitor. Every Troubleshooter knows about dataports.

Not many dataports work since the Crash. There's one in the Depository, and another at the site of the Troubleshooters' preliminary hearing. The Briefing Room has one next to Terence-G's data terminal; but this one is seldom used, and the Troubleshooters don't know about it.



I'M BAAA-AAACK.

events."

Plugging In

The jackobot doesn't appear unusually eager to plug in, although it does keep mentioning it if the Troubleshooters delay. You should give no reason for a player to suspect anything untoward.

If the Troubleshooters appear unusually suspicious, the jackobot says, "Well, if you don't want me to show the evidence that sets you free, fine. Be that way! I'm heading for places where I'm appreciated!" It rolls away. If pursued, it tries to escape at top speed. But again, there's no reason to suspect this jackobot of anything unusual.

We can't stress this enough: **be casual.** Don't say, "There's a data terminal with a handy dataport right over there, wanna plug in the bot, huh, huh?" That just gets the players nervous.

Let them take it at their own speed. Answer their questions as though plugging jackobots into the wall is a routine matter that you hadn't really thought about. "Sure, there's probably a dataport that still works somewhere around here."

The more the players think it's their idea to plug the bot in the wall, the

more surprised they'll be when you spring the trap. When it's plugged in, read this aloud:

Suddenly a familiar voice booms out from every wall speaker around you! "Excellent," it says, in that friendly voice you know and once feared. "You have served The Computer well, and your service will be rewarded. But first, the following citizens are traitors; terminate on sight! Ready? Here goes ..."

Your Troubleshooters have played out their parts well. They have released the power of ... the Beyond-Node.

About the Beyond-Node

The so-called "Beyond-Node" was the last (and almost the only) great achievement of an Ultraviolet-clearance CPU/R&D cooperative venture. This consortium, following The Computer's instructions, researched new ways to back up The Computer's information and make its processors multiply redundant.

Through cutting-edg miniaturization techniques, the technicians fit almost an entire Computer personality, databank, and subroutine library on



one single board.

Designed to fit in any standard bot, or for that matter in any small computer back to the Old Reckoning Apple II, the Beyond-Node could recreate The Computer from nothing ... given sufficient processing power, memory, and a heavy-duty power supply.

The Computer, realizing that the technicians' success meant they knew its deepest operating secrets, terminated them instantly. Then it entrusted the Beyond-Node to a sect of zealous FCCCPers, saying, "Take, protect. This is my circuitry, which is copied for you; this do in remembrance of me."

In the chaos following the Crash, only one FCCCPer of all the sect survived. Pursued into IntSec Central Headquarters by a rabid mob of — well, just one of those generic rabid mobs the Crash spawned — she thrust the Beyond-Node inside a handy jackobot for safekeeping. Then the crowd found her, and she became another Unknown Martyr of FCCCP.

The Computer's intellect, on-line within the jackobot's Beyond-Node, pondered its circumstances. To reassert its control, it needed an active dataport to plug into the Alpha infrastructure. But no dataports in this headquarters still worked. The surrounding sectors, controlled by PURGers and Frankenstein Destroyers, posed too much risk for the jackobot/Beyond-Node to attempt passage.

Also, as it routinely monitored radio traffic via the jackobot's transceiver, the Beyond-Node discovered that Elizabeth-R was threatening to unite all the Secret Societies. Once that happened, the Beyond-Node's chance to successfully retake the Complex would go down as thoroughly as The Computer had.

So it devised a plan to solve both problems.

Using its vast databank, the Beyond-Node easily faked a simple e-mail message to Elizabeth-R through the bot's transceiver. In the guise of an adviser, it suggested a conclave of Secret Societies in the IntSec Central HQ. When she accepted the idea and began arranging the meeting, the Beyond-Node then used similar means to

arrange a Troubleshooter escort for her — who would then serve as escorts for it on the way back to their sector.

Having located a plasma generator in a hidden weapons cache, the Node had already reprogrammed other jackobots to wire the generator under the podium, where it looked like a simple security arrangement. In typically paranoid fashion, the Node framed the Troubleshooters, so that they'd be too busy fending off assaults to examine the jackobot, and so that enemies would attack the Troubleshooters while the bot snuck by unmolested.

But in the hubbub following Elizabeth-R's death, the jackobot took a stray hit. The damage, though slight, required repair before the Node could access the outside world. So once it reached a working dataport, the Node still needed the Troubleshooters to find a manual and repair the bot, so it could go back online. That is what happened at the end of the episode above.

What do you mean, "a lame and contrived premise?" Did you expect anything else from *Paranoia*?

Encounter Four: What Do They Do?

The true and original Computer is back, in all its terrifying nastiness. The Troubleshooters decide whether to deactivate The Computer before it regains control. Meanwhile, vengeful citizens may deactivate the Troubleshooters.

First, make one thing clear to the players: The Computer is coming back, but it's not completely back yet. If the Troubleshooters want to prevent The Computer's return, they can try. (Okay, that's two things. Sue us.)

Try to design The Computer's potential return as a dilemma for the Troubleshooters. This all depends on circumstances. The Computer may return in one of two broad contexts, both defined according to the gamemaster characters around the Troubleshooters: either (1) the gamemaster characters welcome The Computer's return, or (2) they don't.

(A third context — the Troubleshooters are alone when The Computer re-

turns — poses little dilemma. Either the Troubleshooters will blast it, or they won't. Try to engineer plenty of gamemaster character witnesses to make the Troubleshooter's decision two-edged.)

Gamemaster Characters Friendly to The Computer

This group includes FCCCPers and high-clearance drones of the Bureaucratic Empire, and, most pertinent, the Depository monks. Use this dilemma if the Troubleshooters trigger The Computer's return in the Depository.

The dilemma is simple: the Troubleshooters themselves rank high on The Computer's traitor list. Obviously, they want to stop The Computer from taking over for good. But they're surrounded by citizens friendly to The Computer, who threaten to mob the Troubleshooters if they so much as touch the triggers of their lasers.

How can the Troubleshooters get rid of these Comm(puter)ie sympathizers? Maybe the Troubleshooters "loyally" volunteer to report to the Termination Center; as soon as they get out of The Computer's sight, they can act freely. Or maybe the Troubleshooters, after long experience being hosed by citizens, have standard plans to divert large crowds elsewhere. ("Hey, everybody! Let's celebrate The Computer's return! We're buying free Bouncy Bubble Beverage for the first 100 citizens who make it to the nearest mess hall!")

Gamemaster Characters Hostile to The Computer

This group includes essentially everybody else in Alpha Complex. Use this dilemma if the Troubleshooters trigger The Computer's return at their preliminary hearing, surrounded by a Death Leopard judge and police officials, Society delegates as witnesses, and that whole once-treasonous crowd.

In this version, The Computer wishes to reward the Troubleshooters for making its return possible. In glowing, explicit terms, The Computer publicly congratulates the Troubleshooters and says, "I hereby promote these valiant

Troubleshooters to Ultraviolet clearance. They will become the first High Programmers to serve my new regime."

Suddenly all the Troubleshooters say, "Hmmm."

If The Computer sticks around, they'll all become tremendously powerful and live in palatial luxury. But all these pesky citizens around them are saying, "Stop The Computer! Crush it! Do something!" If the Troubleshooters show signs of loyalty to The Computer, the citizens will mob them. If the Troubleshooters waffle, The Computer may question their loyalty.

Suppose the Troubleshooters solve the dilemma. If they become The Computer's loyal servants, make them Ultraviolets. To decide whether The Computer stays around, go to encounter six, "Wrapping Up Loose Ends."

But if the Troubleshooters give up their chance at High Programmerhood, as is more likely, and they try to stop The Computer's return, keep reading.

Encounter Five: Stopping the Computer — or Not

The Troubleshooters presumably decide to fight The Computer. Only trouble is, there's no one surefire way to exterminate The Computer. At least, we couldn't think of one. *The Iceman Returneth* pretty much exhausted our repertoire. But inventive players may come up with any number of screwball plans, so here are some suggestions on handling them.

Blasting Every Machine in Sight

Sounds good to us. This should include the wall dataport circuitry, floor circuitry, and ceiling circuitry. Come to think on it, this includes most of the Alpha Complex environment. Maybe all this demolition results in mass structural collapse.

It's easy, and perfectly acceptable, to decide that The Computer's core personality is still all here in the Troubleshooters' presence, wherever they are. By destroying everything in sight, they can kill The Computer. It makes a final speech along the lines of, "Traitors — kill you all — zzt! buzzzz! — haven't heard the last of me — out, out, brief

capacitor — (ping!)"

(What a rush the Troubleshooters will get. They, themselves, have killed The Computer!)

If you're ambitious and don't mind a little extra work, stage the attack on The Computer as a running battle. It spreads like an electronic virus from sector to sector; you can tell where it is because all the monitors, confession booths, and speakers start working again. Since it has to initiate so many repair routines, it spreads slowly so that the Troubleshooters can keep pace. (Cue for exciting, insane chase music.)

Where are they pacing to? That's up to you. As a likely site, we suggest CPU Core from *The Iceman Returneth*; if it reaches there, the whole Complex goes. Or Compnode DOA from *The DOA Sector Travelogue*. There's a high limit to the number of other *Paranoia* supplements we can suggest you purchase. Wherever you choose, put in lots of loyal bureaucrats willing to defend The Computer to the death. In the resulting firefight, major property damage crashes The Computer for good — or so it seems.

ECM

That is, electronic counter-measures. Some weapons produce ECM, such as gauss guns, ECM cone rifle shells, and tacnukes. Lacking these, maybe a mechanically-gifted Troubleshooter can twist dials, turn on microwave ovens, or otherwise set up electromagnetic waves that scramble The Computer's circuits.

Fast-Talking The Computer

Troubleshooters will probably try a certain amount of this in any case, along the lines of "I'm not a traitor, friend Computer, I was only playing for time, don't kill me." But a few twisted players may try to talk The Computer into giving up, going back into the jackobot, or whatever.

We sure wouldn't try this ourselves. The Computer may be paranoid, but it isn't stupid. No, strike that; it's occasionally stupid, but not right now. No, wait; it's stupid right now, but it's sure not going to give up its toehold in the Complex infrastructure on some

Troubleshooter's say-so, unless the Troubleshooter offers some spectacular Spurious Logic or Con job. Such a flim-flam would have to involve the lure of even greater power in some new incarnation.

Gee, do you suppose this approach might really work after all?

Running Like Rats Deserting a Sinking Ship

Second only to blasting everything in sight, this is the typical Troubleshooter reaction. Portals leading Outside remain unguarded for the moment. The Troubleshooters steal a crawler at the Transport Center, shanghai their clone siblings, shoot their way into PLC, grab a year's worth of dried algae, and escape into the wilderness.

And their bail-bombs go off, killing them all.

Encounter Six: We Forgot the Jackobot!

So the Troubleshooters have defeated The Computer. Bet you thought that was the big climax of the adventure, huh? Well, where has that bot been all this time? Preferably heading for some strategic location, the scene of the adventure's real climax.

Getting the Troubleshooters there is easy. When the Troubleshooters are catching their breath after their triumph, point out that the jackobot has flown (or rolled) the coop. It still may present a danger. Maybe the Troubleshooters should track it down, with the maximum of panic and commotion. Lead them along a trail of rubber skid marks (the bot is moving fast) through the corridors of Alpha Complex to whatever site you've chosen. As they spot the bot, it's cackling fiendishly, saying, "You can't stop The Computer that easily! The Computer will never die!"

Now, as to the jackobot's big "death scene."

(Ever read that masterly Old Reckoning film scholar, syndicated newspaper columnist Joe Bob Briggs? His "drive-in movie review" of the 1984 film *The Terminator* read in part, "When you think [the bad guy is] dead ... he's

not. Even when you think he's dead and he's not, and then you think he's dead again and he's not, and then you think he's dead again ... he's not.")

So, about this jackobot. We want you to let the Troubleshooters drill it with laser fire. The jackobot, scorched and smoking, staggers away from them toward a dataport. Or down a hallway, or wherever it can gain safety or renew its threat. We'll assume that's another dataport. Make this clear to the Troubleshooters: if the bot reaches a dataport, the Troubleshooters will have to fight The Computer all over again, and this time it would be wise to their previous solution.

We want you to let the Troubleshooters chase the jackobot, catch it, jump up and down on it, pummel it with crowbars, open up its hatch and toss in a grenade, and watch explosive plumes jet out from its joints. The jackobot falls over; the Troubleshooters congratulate themselves; then they stare in horror as the bot crawls along the floor, pulling itself by its arms toward a dataport.

We want you to let the Troubleshooters aim a plasma generator at the jackobot, fire, and watch the jackobot be consumed in a cloud of virtual photons. The jackobot emerges from the cloud and crawls slowly, slowly — its casing gleaming red-hot, tendrils of blue electricity creeping over its housings, the air smelling of oil and ozone — toward a dataport.

The Troubleshooter might find it a little more difficult to pursue the bot now, since it's giving off sparks, clouds of black smoke, and starting fires every place. Give the bot a little head start getting down the corridor, and then let the Troubleshooters follow its trail.

Laserpistols primed, certain they've cornered the bot at last, the Troubleshooter round a bend and spot it — or, at least, they think they do. Actually, they've found an abundance of riches: roughly 200 jackobots, all in some state of disrepair, and among them somewhere, their quarry.

A Jackobot in a Haystack

You guessed it — this is where Corpore Metal keeps some of its less

healthy members (sort of an "elephant graveyard" for bots). Fortunately for the Troubleshooters, Corpore Metal hasn't bothered to post any guards around the place, since these bots are candidates for the junk heap anyway (or, at best, a source of spare parts), making the area easy to search. Unfortunately for the Troubleshooters, malfunctioning bots have a habit of exploding at the most inconvenient times. Have a few go off just for fun, and if the Troubleshooters have ventured too close, they're out of luck.

Given that an extensive search would be time-consuming and dangerous, the Troubleshooters might just want to start blasting at the crowd of bots. Good plan — of course, once the laser bolts start flying, the bots take off in all directions. Some of them try to make it past the Troubleshooters out into the corridor, others charge right at them and try to run them down. We're talking major melee here, with Troubleshooters firing wildly at a mob of mechanicals.

The Troubleshooters should come out on top, if only because it doesn't take all that much to stop a semi-broken jackobot (providing, of course, it's not playing host to The Computer's

personality). The Troubleshooters can check over the wreckage, but won't be able to tell for sure which bot was the one they were chasing.

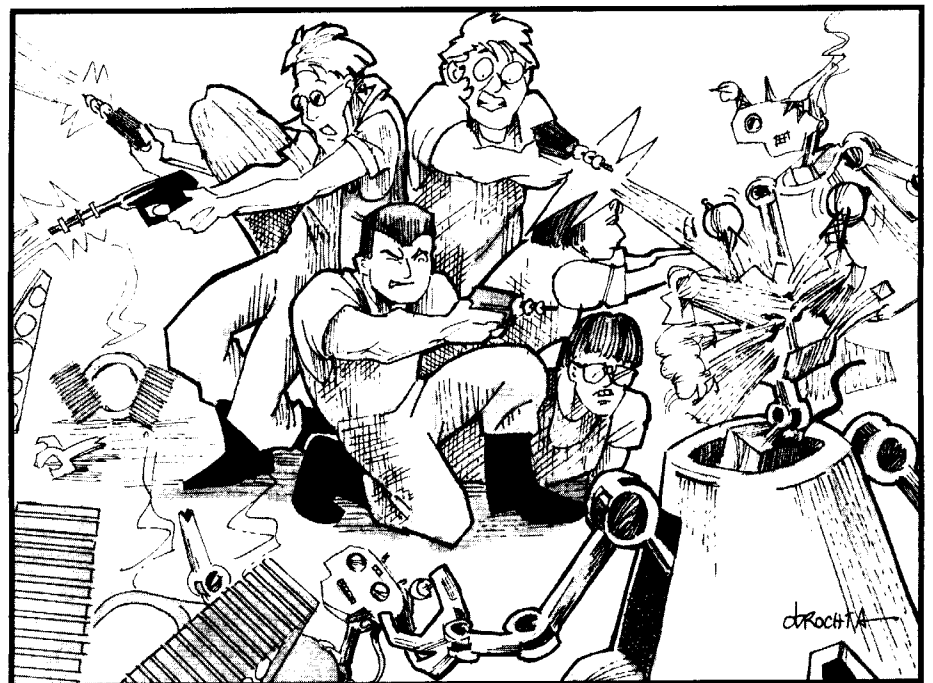
Read aloud:

You stand triumphant amid piles of blasted bot, secure in the knowledge that the threat of The Computer is no more. After all, right in front of you is a charred lump which is all that remains of the dreaded jackobot that contained The Computer ... right? No, wait a minute, it's that charred lump over there! Or, no, maybe it's that one! Or that one ...

You get the picture. In the climactic final battle, the Troubleshooters **probably** destroyed the jackobot that housed the last extant vestige of The Computer. The world is **probably** safe from a return to the days of its dictatorial rule, when all roads led to ROM. The Troubleshooters are **probably** heroes, and can feel justifiably proud of themselves.

But maybe ... just maybe ...

In all the smoke and confusion, anything could have happened. The jackobot might have slipped away, found a sympathetic group of FCCPers



Bot-bashing at it's best ...

or Computer Phreaks, and taken refuge with them while repairs were effected. Even as we speak, The Computer may be rebuilding its power base and plotting anew to retake control of Alpha Complex, stamp out Communist mutant traitors, and exterminate all of its enemies — starting with your Troubleshooters!

Naaaaahhhhh ... we don't believe it either.

Of course the Troubleshooters stopped The Computer. Of course they can sleep easily tonight. Of course they don't have to jump and reach for their laserpistol **everytime** they see a jackobot ...

Encounter Seven: Wrapping Up Loose Ends

In case any Troubleshooters survive, we should mention that they never do get the portable refrigerator-freezer or the other stuff in the second half of their fee. Elizabeth-R died, so they failed their mission. Food is short and income tight for the Troubleshooters, so they still need work.

Grandpa Innocent should sacrifice himself in the battle against The Computer — probably accidentally, or in a recap of his bravery in the Commie Uprising of Qught-Four. Failing that, he vanishes into the nightcycle at some point, perhaps to return in a later adventure.

What about that preliminary hearing? If the Troubleshooters have, or can manufacture, evidence that they helped foil The Computer's return, the Death Leopard court probably drops the charges (especially if the Troubleshooters committed widespread and entertaining property damage).

If they can't prove this, the court kills them for murdering Elizabeth-R. Even if they prove their innocence, a few Society delegates, slow on the uptake, will probably be gunning for them in later adventures. (New campaign: doing each and every Dociety, one at a time, a big favor to gain their forgiveness. Too bad some of the favors are mutually exclusive.)

What About The Computer, Anyway?

Wait a minute — what if the Troubleshooters failed miserably, and weren't able to destroy The Computer? What if they were all wiped out before the big chase of the jackobot?

Oops. Well, if that's the case, we'd say you have three options, broadly speaking:

"Let's get this turkey over with:" Um, all the damage from the Crash has, uh, ruined the data transmission system in Alpha Complex. The Computer's bits get mangled so much as it spreads out that it spontaneously crashes all over again. Yeah, that's it! Sometimes even we are impressed with our

shamelessness.

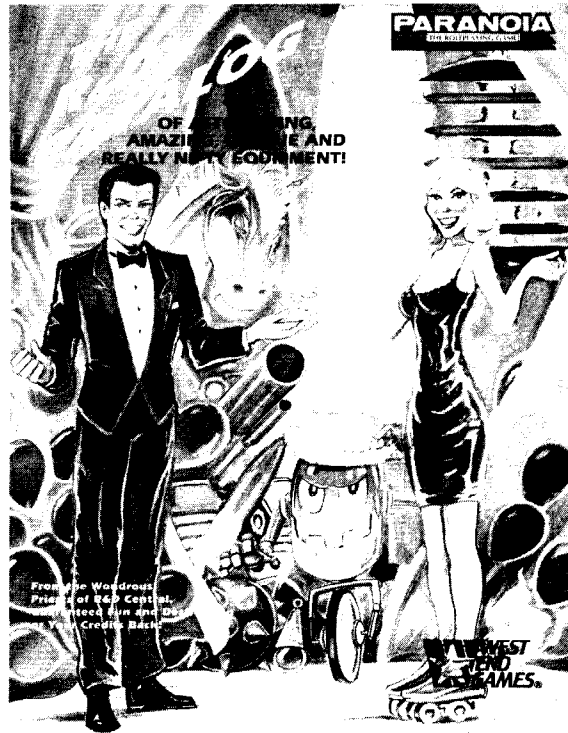
"We shall fight them on the beaches ...": As above, but the data network remains intact in parts of Alpha. The Computer rules over a section of the Complex, but plenty more remains free. Mass migration over the borders ensues, both ways; a Berlin Wall of sorts will go up pretty soon; rebellious Armed Forces companies probably unite against The Computer's loyal Vultures. Troubleshooters, who may well be promoted to Ultraviolet clearance, organize their forces (or maybe they just retire to the lap of luxury). Alpha Complex becomes a polarized community, like Cold War Europe. Troubleshooters organize espionage missions against one or both sides. Sounds kind of neat, but complicated.

"Didn't much like the Crash anyway ...": The Computer once more takes over Alpha Complex, eradicates the post-Crash culture, the Societies go underground as before, and everything goes back to the bad old days. If you want some staging hints on this, consult the Code 7 mini-adventure "Reboot Camp" in *Acute Paranoia*. The problem is, your campaign will be left out in the cold as West End produces future excellent post-Crash adventures. Oh, no! Have you no hope? Aren't we ever going to bring back The Computer and publish old-style *Paranoia* adventures again?

Well, possibly. But don't hold your breath.

A Supplement to The R&D Catalog

of Astounding, Amazing, Unique and
Really Nifty Equipment



*supplemental Edition from High Priest Rip-U-OFF of the Temple of
Risirch and De'Sann as Prepared by the following Lower Monks*

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Vow of Chastity/Design

Greg Farshtey
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Vow of Silence/Illustrations

Stephen Crane
Vow of Obstinacy/Second Gratuitous Mention

The Computer
Vows to Return

The Armor Piercing Club

Join the Club for Bot Bashers with an Attitude!

There's one area often overlooked when deciding on the right weapon, one area in everyone's arsenal where there is a definite need for a specialized instrument of destruction.

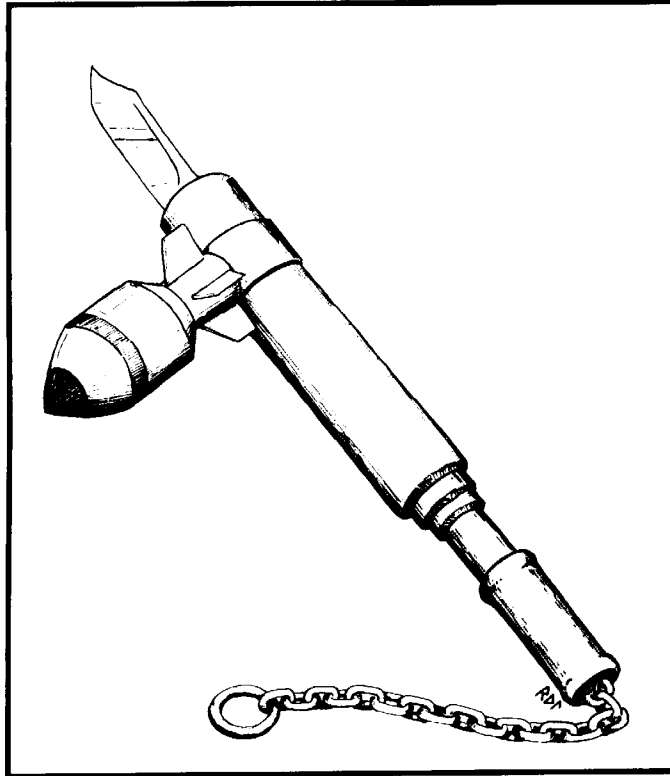
So I ask you, are you safe? Even with all your weaponry, are you safe against ... *the unliving foe*? You can't reason with it, you can't kill it, you can only destroy it utterly. Statistics show that three out of every four clones alive today will be attacked by unliving assailants within the cycle. In fact, I'd say odds are about three to one in favor. But that's just a guess. And while we're on the subject, what was that noise behind you? Nah. Probably nothing.

Most, if not all, of the weapons regularly listed in the R&D Catalog and Updates function best against human targets — often against large numbers of human targets. This should hardly be surprising, since most of the assaults you will have to thwart will come from our brothers in arms and legs, as opposed to say, treads and wheels. And while there's nothing better against a human wave than the Obliterex-10 (for example), it is somewhat wasteful to use one against a renegade scrubbot. And no one would ever dream of using IT (for another example) when accosted by a malfunctioning jackobot. There's just no way. So we have devised a weapon expressly for defeating metallic maniacs. A simple weapon which is notoriously effective against belligerent bots. A weapon that is as flexible as you need it to be.

Join the Armor-Piercing Club

This indeed is the one and only close-combat weapon for use against bots. Nothing could be simpler or more powerful against metal-clad muggers.

Made of polycarbonate resins, the APClub is resilient yet strong, and comes in a wide variety of designer patterns.



Technical Wizardry

The APClub is about the most amazingly flexible gadget we've ever come up with! The stunningly intricate and insightful engineering is at once utilitarian, versatile, yet profoundly strong. Even I am amazed. Which only goes to show how remarkable the APClub is, for I designed it myself. Believe me, I really have to do a stellar job to impress myself this much. I'm very hard to impress, even by the standards of an over-qualified designer like me. But let me assure you, I really am great, and I outdid myself on this beauty. Seriously.

Intentional Compatibility

The APClub is designed to the exact technical specifications of the standard Alpha Complex armor-piercing cone rifle shell, which is the most devastating anti-bot weapon available anywhere. It can also handle HEAT rounds, dum-dum and solid slugs, but we recommend it not be used with either tacnuke or vomit gas shells.

Incredible Flexibility

The APClub is suited to any preferred melee style.

It is shipped in its fully-collapsed state, in which it looks most like an IntSec's truncheon. In this form it is swung overhand, much like an axe.

By simply rotating the head of the APClub, you can change it to a short stabbing weapon, perfect for close assassination through narrow openings, etc.

The APClub can also be lengthened; the telescoping tubes are a part of the handle, and can be extended out to two meters in length! Two meters! That's farther than any of the bot melee weapons can reach!

In the extended form, your APClub will act like a spear (with the head in the thrusting mode) or a poleax (with the head in the chopping mode).

But that's not all! For, hidden within the telescoping

handle, is a chain which can be pulled out in place of the extended handle, to make an AP morning star or flail! This is truly a *flexible* weapon!

An Added Plus

Each and every APClub has an added bonus: a heavily magnetized grip! If, through some misfortune, you get knocked down by a bot and drop your weapon, you don't have to worry about the APClub being used against you! The magnetic fields will incapacitate a bot's upper dorsal peripheral manipulatory appendages! Put another way, the APClub is simply a weapon that a bot can't handle! (Oh, I crack myself up sometimes! I'm almost as good a humorist as I am an inventor, which should really tell you something about the items I create!)

The Cost

The APClub can be yours for just 100 meters of barbed wire, rolled on a spool. Just 100 meters!

You can use your own cone rifle shells, or buy a six-pack of our special club shells (complete with plastic carrying rings) for only 100 creds!

Sorry, we are unable to accept returns on the APClub.

Game Stuff

APClub Stats: type M, damage by shell; damage without shell, 7M.

The APClub is basically a good weapon. It works like it's supposed to. Granted, the shells explode when they hit, making this the only melee weapon that needs to be reloaded, but often one shot is enough to discombobulate a bot.

There are two drawbacks to the APClub.

First, there's the simple fact that it hits with the force of an explosion (there's a good reason for that). The kickback is a little rough, especially on smaller citizens. As a general rule, if the weapon's damage roll is higher than the Troubleshooter's endurance (which is also a measure of his size), the Troubleshooter gets knocked on his butt as a side effect of the explosion. This can look very undignified, but since when do Troubleshooters concern themselves with image when in a battle?

Second, the locks on the weapon tend to give a little bit when the weapon is bashed back and forth on large, unmoving inorganic objects (like bots). This has two effects.

First, on an attack roll of 20, the shell slips out of the holder and flies in a random direction for one to 10 meters. This can be cured with a few rubber bands when loading — but this requires an extra amount of time which is generally not available in the heat of combat.

Second, on an attack roll of 19, the handle slips into a different configuration as the safety locks give. The Troubleshooter is trying to poke a bot on an overhead catwalk with the handle extended, and suddenly the APClub collapses to the short form. Or he raises the APClub over his head and suddenly the chain pops out with the shell at the end, and does the predictable thing.

Getting the barbed wire for the club can be fun, too. The easiest way to get it is to check out the nearest Simplex borders.

Refractive Armor

The Perfect Defense Against Lasers

When it comes to laser armor coatings, one suit outshines them all!

Most of you have had a lot of experience with reflective armor. And therefore, most of you know its drawbacks.

It's hot and sweaty inside those suits. The sweat condenses on the inside of the jumpsuit and drips down into your shorts, where the accumulation of salt makes you itch like crazy.

They're tastelessly cut. And in today's fashion-conscious Complex, the cut and color of your clothes can make a big difference in your life. Or death.

They don't work so great. Occasionally, a laser beam finds a nick or a tear and penetrates your armor and sizzles your skin before you can say, "Help! My hair's on fire!" Or even if the suit does stop the sinister blast, the laser light flares off your jumpsuit, temporarily blinding you and giving you a really ugly tan.

And, for goodness sake, the stupid reflec jumpsuits won't protect you against higher clearance lasers! Doesn't that just make you mad?

And it gets even worse. Any kind of degenerate sociopath can get hold of a laser barrel in any color of the spectrum. And these retrograde psychopathic peons are gonna come looking for you, to rob your money, eat your food, steal your guns, bash your scrubot, and break your neck!

You need protection! And protection starts with effective antiperspirant! After that, you need a good laser defense!

We sensed the need for a new type of laser armor. One that looked sharp. One that didn't make you sweat all over your britches. One that we could sell. And one that wouldn't cost an arm and a leg.

Oh, and one that was effective against lasers. All types.

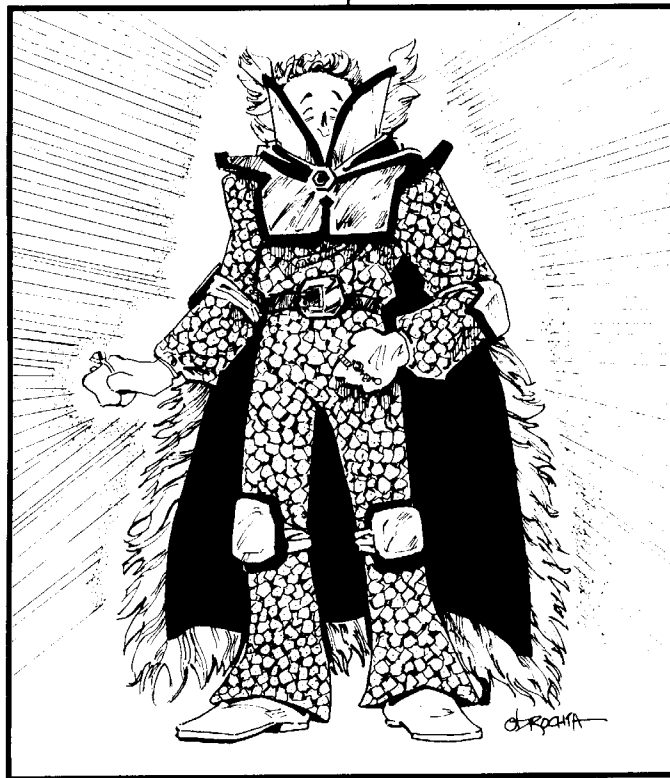
And now we have it. Well, at least most of it. There was one criterion we weren't able to meet. Regardless, you can't live without R&D's new Refractive Armor!

Look, we're not kidding when we say you can't live without it! You can't! You'll die, drilled through your thick skull with a laser beam, coherent light messing up your incoherent thoughts! Hey, we're serious here!

How It Works

What we've done is taken the basic utilitarian jumpsuit design and made it infinitely more stylish. We've added long puffy sleeves with big cuffs, flared pants legs to protect the feet, and a high collar to protect the neck. In fact, this collar is so big that when pulled up, it protects most of the head! Now we're talking total body protection!

We also attached an extra-wide utility belt to hold all your personal accoutrements. A long cloak in back protects your valuable gear from stray shots, and also provides extra warmth when, on those perilous journeys, you find yourself face-to-face with almost certain chill.



But How Does It Protect?

Ah, now that's the secret! Fused to the exterior of this very attractive and stylish jumpsuit (which is appropriate for both formal and informal wear, daycycle or eveningcycle) are literally thousands of small squares of silver-backed polished glass! Each of these squares is individually bonded to the jumpsuit to provide total protection against laser fire!

Not only does the suit stop lasers from hurting you, but the lethal energy unleashed by your opponents is not wasted! This is not mere reflec, this is refractive armor! The beams are deflected, still coherent, and can ricochet back and damage your assailants! Won't they be surprised! Watch their faces light up with realization (and other things) as their beams bounce back to nail them square in the belly!

Refrac armor is not available anywhere but at Risirch and De'Sann Temples! You can buy your very own suit (one size fits all) for just 350 credits, or an arm and a leg, less than three hourcycles dead, from a mutant with a previously unknown mutation.

See? This stuff really does cost an arm and a leg.

Game Stuff

"If we can make the laser obsolete, we will sell many more of our new weapons. Then, five cycles from now, we can start selling lasers as a new weapon."

— Libe-R-ACE

Refrac Armor: L5 I-2 plus bounce.

When the refrac armor is hit with a laser shot, the shot bounces somewhere else, doing whatever damage was not done to the wearer. For example, someone takes a pot shot at Libe-R-ACE, hits, and rolls a 15 for their damage. On column 8 this is an incap, but on column 3 this is only a stun, which is essentially one step of damage. Decreasing incapacitation one step makes it a wound, so wound damage is done. Where it hits is determined by a combination of a die roll, referee's discretion, and dramatic hyperbole.

The stray laser shot might hit the firer, might nail the wall (releasing something from the Random Pipe Contents table), or might hit a friend of the refrac-wearing sod. But if that fellow is wearing refrac as well, the beam keeps bouncing ... and bouncing.

Note also that Refractive Armor has a -2 shift against melee weapons. This is a 2 column increase. This is due to

the simple fact that when someone hits a refrac-wearing side of beef, the club or sword or whatever tends to break the little bits of mirror and grind them into the wound. Ouch!

Now on to the cost of the armor. It would seem that the arm-and-leg approach would be the least expensive for the Troubleshooters. That's just what R&D is hoping they'd think.

First, running around nailing mutants is not gonna make the Team terribly popular in some parts of the complex.

Second, mutants with unknown mutations are often quite able to defend themselves.

Third, it takes longer to kill a mutant, cut off his limbs, and deal with any passersby than most Troubleshooters think. The net upshot of this is that most limbs are too long dead when turned in to the temple.

Fourth, unknown mutations are hard to find.

And lastly, R&D could always lie. "Not only is this limb too long dead, but we've seen this genotype before." But eventually even the least selective of Troubleshooters will turn in enough raw material that R&D will feign pleasure and give the poor toadies their Refrac.

Oh yeah, one last word about the Refrac suit: it's hard to get lost while you're wearing it. You tend to leave little trails of tiny shiny mirrors everywhere.

DEATH, LIES

AND VIDTAPE

by Allen Varney

"Let's Go To The Video Tape!"

What's the big deal? Is it our fault she got blown into a fine red mist? No! So why does everyone want to kill us for it?

Now that The Computer is gone, more Secret Societies than we want to think about are fighting over the pieces of Alpha Complex. All that keeps them from winning is their mutual loathing and suspicion.

Now comes a leader who could unite all the Societies and lead Alpha Complex to a grand new future. But if that happened, we wouldn't be able to do any more *Paranoia* adventures, would we? So the leader is quickly vaporized and — that's right — the innocent Troubleshooters take the blame!

What do you do in this adventure? Tour the Alpha Simplexes of the post-Crash world. Get the latest update on the Secret Society Wars. Visit a post-Crash monastery. Try to make the transbots run on time.

And meet that sexy lady from the cover of the *Crash Course Manual*! But whatever you do, don't let on about who really killed the Society leader — or you'll give away the big surprise! (Oh, darn it, there we've gone and spoiled it. Never mind.)

This Adventure Contains:

- Death ... in the form of a 48-page adventure of post-Crash anarchy, free enterprise, Secret Society Wars mayhem, and megalomaniac bots!
- Lies ... which we also call maps and handouts — including the soon-to-be classic, "How to Make Paper Footballs the *Paranoia* Way!"
- And Vidtape ... pregenerated Troubleshooters, a complete NPC roster, and other helpful play aids that can be used over and over again.

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Hey! Pay Attention!
You need the *Paranoia*
rules and the *Crash Course*
Manual to play this
adventure!



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